

AGENDA ITEM NO: 2

CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held in Conference Room 1, County Hall, Ruthin on Tuesday 13 September 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; M A German, Lead Member for Children and Young People; P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Finance and Personnel; D Owens, Lead Member for Lifelong Learning; S Roberts, Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire and J Thompson Hill, Lead Member for Property and Asset Management. Observers: Councillors R E Barton, G C Evans and G O Rowlands.

ALSO PRESENT

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

APOLOGIES

Councillor E W Williams, Lead Member for Environment.

ANNOUNCEMENT

- 1 Councillor R W Hughes referred to an article in the Surveyors' Journal regarding winter maintenance carried out by Denbighshire County Council. The Corporate Director: Environment said Denbighshire was the only Authority in Wales which used fully demountable bodies on its fleet of gritters, thereby maximising the use of the lorries for tipping and other purposes. The Highways Maintenance team were seen as innovative across the UK and had been nominated for the Public Sector Innovation of the Year Award in the Energy Saving Trust's Green Fleet Awards. Councillor Hughes asked that the Corporate Director pass on congratulations to the officers involved.
- 2 Councillor R W Hughes referred to the Childline Charity, who recently reported they were receiving less donations since the Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina disasters for example. She had been in contact with the Charity and received sponsorship forms. She had agreed with the relevant Cabinet Members that sponsorship forms could be used by those participating in Denbighshire's Walking Festival as well as for general sponsorship. Councillor Hughes urged everyone to participate and sponsor Childline.

1 URGENT MATTERS

There were no Urgent Matters.

2 MINUTES OF THE CABINET

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 July 2005 were submitted.

Item 3 A Vision for Denbighshire - A Vision for the County: Councillor R W Hughes said the Vision would be launched at 2.00 p.m. on 26.09.2005.

Item 5 Modernising Education in Denbighshire: Councillor R W Hughes said consultation for the proposed new school in Prestatyn had commenced.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 July 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

3 YOUTH SERVICE ESTYN REPORT

Councillor M A German presented the report seeking Members' approval to implement the 3 year improvement plan produced to address weaknesses and risk areas, as a result of the Youth Service review and self assessment using the ESTYN Guidance on the Inspection of Youth Support Services 2004. He took the opportunity to thank the County Youth and Community Officer and team for all their hard work.

Councillor P A Dobb supported the recommendation and said she was delighted to see an Improvement Plan in place. The plans would ultimately help reduce costs in adult and health services and also homelessness. The report also addressed the need to ensure disabled children had the same quality of service. Councillor R W Hughes said she also agreed with the report but expressed her concern that 50% of the budget for the service was drawn from outside sources and approximately 60% of the staff employed were on a temporary contract.

Councillor R E Barton referred to be deprivation indicator of access to services in the South of the County and said it was impossible for young people in many instances to get to the nearest town to use the facilities. He suggested more full time Youth Leaders be employed and given a "roving role" which would address the lack of youth clubs in some rural areas.

Councillor G O Rowlands said he was also pleased to see the report and said his own ward had 567 young people without any provision at the current time. He hoped that the "relevant funding" referred to in the Recommendation would always be found.

RESOLVED that Members agree the Youth Service implement the improvement plan, subject to the relevant funding being identified.

4 REVENUE BUDGET 2005-2006

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report for Members to note the budget performance figures for the current financial year as detailed in the appendices to the report and consider any actions necessary to bring the Directorates' projected spending in line with available budgets.

The current potential overspends totalled £333k which was an improvement on the previous report. However, it was likely that additional pressures in SEN were liable to increase the current overspends. He hoped to clarify the overspend by the next Cabinet meeting. With regard to Personal Services, the larger than anticipated level of Supporting People grant had helped and staff in the Directorate were to be commended for addressing issues as a worst case scenario on this matter. Although they had commenced the year with a carry forward figure, the Directorate were operating on a deficit of £450k. Councillor P A Dobb said the Directorate were addressing problems.

The main shortfall was within the Lifelong Learning Directorate and work was in progress to address some of the issues. School and College Transport continued to be overspent each year. Current increases in fuel prices would also affect this budget. Councillor Marfleet said it was important to ensure the Authority were aware of its liabilities in regard to College Transport and suggested that as some Authorities made nominal charges for College Transport, Denbighshire should also give consideration to the matter. It was likely that SEN pressures would continue and possible that pressures on the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn budget would occur.

Councillor E C Edwards asked for an explanation of the increase in vandalism and other costs at the Ffrith Beach and also the reduction in Countryside Council for Wales grant. The Acting Head of Culture and Leisure said the Ffrith Beach complex had been transferred back to Culture and Leisure and the costs were due to a lack of general maintenance and vandalism which would have to be addressed, resulting in pressures of £40k. He said the CCW had been good partners in the past, this was the first year where less grants had been received as they were changing their priorities, resulting in a loss of £12k to the Authority.

It was important for officers to report all issues to Members, and for officers to ensure external funding was applied for. Councillor Marfleet mentioned the overspend on Land Charges and said the County Clerk's Department and the Environment Directorate should resolve the issue. He reminded officers that all Directorates should be aware of the high energy prices which would have an impact on all services and suggested measures should be taken if possible to reduce the costs of the Authority's energy bills.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the staff mileage rate was fixed and there was little further officers could do with regard to the fleet vehicles although they checked for best fuel consumption when purchasing new vehicles. With regard to Land Charges, he agreed an overambitious income target had been set at an earlier date and this was unachievable. The Corporate Director: Environment was considering the matter with a view to absorbing the pressures in his Directorate's budget.

Councillor E C Edwards said consideration perhaps be given to lease cars for senior officers, which could prove to cost less to the Authority than paying mileage rates. He stressed that Members would be extremely reluctant to cut services and that would be considered intolerable, however, any savings made through efficiencies which did not lessen service provision should be supported.

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

5 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2005 / 2006

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report for Members to note the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2005-2006, which showed a potential net underspend of £321k at the year end.

Councillor Dobb said work was on schedule with the capital schemes and work on window installation in houses was going well and as planned.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account for 2005-2006.

6 TRANSFORMATION OF RUTHIN CRAFT CENTRE

Councillor S Roberts presented the report seeking endorsement of the Ruthin Craft Centre Development Study and agreement to proceed to the implementation phase of the project, subject to funding availability. Agreement was also sought to recommend to Council that the Capital Plan make provision for a £480k contribution to the capital cost of the project. She congratulated the Craft Development Officer and Craft Development Assistant on their work on the project.

Councillor P J Marfleet said he had met with the consultants and agreed a great deal of preparation had been given to the report and the project. He stressed the need for checking whether there was asbestos in the current building, which if found would have an adverse financial affect on the scheme. He said once completed, the visitor numbers to the Craft Centre could increase by 130,000 and this could have a positive effect on the new Tesco store once built. He suggested that every opportunity be taken to work with Tesco for sponsorship.

Councillor E C Edwards seconded the report and agreed with Councillor Marfleet and said the town would be making various demands on Tesco. He said their support in respect of the roads around the sites should be sought.

The Acting Head of Culture and Leisure said a type 2 asbestos survey had been commissioned and it was not possible for a full survey to be carried out until all personnel had left the premises. He said the department were

working with Tesco in regard to provision of roads, landscaping and so on. With regard to funding, the ACW was the largest contributor but it was possible Tesco would wish to contribute to the Craft Centre in some way. Revenue funding possibilities would be explored wherever possible.

Councillor R W Hughes said the Ruthin Craft Centre had both a national and international reputation. The Craft Development Officer thanked Members and officers of various departments for their continued support.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- [i] *endorse the Ruthin Craft Centre Development Study and agree to proceed to the implementation phase of the project, subject to the availability of funding.*
- [ii] *recommend to Council that the Capital Plan makes provision for a £480k contribution to the capital cost of the project, and notes the case for increasing the annual revenue allocation to the Craft Centre by £16k in the financial year 2006/07 and by a further £4k annually from 2007/08.*

7 DENBIGHSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN [LDP]: PROCESS AND PROGRESS REPORT

The Head of Planning and Public Protection presented the report [in the lead Member's absence] to advise Members on the emerging reforms to the Local Development Plan [LDP] system and the constraints created and to approve the approach currently adopted in producing the Denbighshire Local Development Plan. He said the Unitary Development Plan [UDP] would remain relevant until an LDP was adopted and the two Plans would work in tandem for a few years. Work had started on the LDP and it was hoped to reduce the number of statutory plans to 4 or 5 and incorporate the Visioning exercise and Spatial Plan into the work.

The Senior Planning Officer referred Members to Appendix 1 of the report which detailed the fundamental changes in the new LDP system, and the key stages for producing the plan detailed in paragraph 2.5 of the report.

Councillor P A Dobb said she was part of the LDP working group felt it was a good base for cross-Directorate working and it was important for the County to move together as one.

Councillor R W Hughes asked Members to contact Councillor S A Davies if further training was required.

RESOLVED that Members:

- [i] *Confirm any areas where they may require further training from officers on the Local Development Plan system / process with Councillor S A Davies;*

- [ii] Recognise current constraints of working within the new system; and*
- [iii] Approve the approach currently taken by officers in producing the Denbighshire Local Development Plan (LDP).*

8 EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM SOCIAL WORK SERVICES IN DENBIGHSHIRE

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report seeking Members' agreement in principle that Out of Hours Social Work Services are provided within a specialist team across Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham from April 2006 and that the team would be based in Wrexham and line managed by Wrexham County Borough Council, subject to satisfactory negotiation of service/management agreements as a more workable system was required. The report highlighted the need for more funding within the Children's Service as some costs were borne by the Adult Service budget.

Councillor M A German seconded the report and thanked officers for their work.

The Chief Executive took the opportunity to thank all officers for their out of office work. He said the agreement sought in the report was a good example of cooperating with other Authorities. The Leader was in discussion with other Leaders in North Wales and it was hoped to work together on providing other services, more efficiently.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree in principle that Out of Hours Social Work Services are provided within a specialist team across Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham from April 2006 and agree the team would be based in Wrexham and line managed by Wrexham County Borough Council, subject to satisfactory negotiation of service/management agreements.

9 CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY: ACTION PLAN

Councillor S A Davies presented the report seeking Cabinet approval of the recommendations in the Corporate Communication Strategy Action Plan. He thanked the Public Relations Manager for her work on the Action Plan.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree the recommendations of the Corporate Communications Strategy Action Plan.

10 EXEMPTION OF CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULE 23.4

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report for Members to approve the exemption of Contract Procedure Rule 23.4 as set out in the Financial Regulations 31, CPR 23.4 for a period of 6 months specifically for construction contracts as tendered in the main by Development Services. Members were also asked to approve the method of examining tenders for construction contracts during the period of the exemption, as laid out within the Construction Industry Board's Code of Practice for the selection of main contractors (1997). He thanked the solicitor for her work on the report.

RESOLVED that Members:

[a] approve the exemption of Contract Procedure Rule 23.4 as set out in the Financial Regulations 31, CPR 23.4 for a period of 6 months specifically for construction contracts as tendered in the main by Development Services.

[b] approve the method of examining tenders for construction contracts during the period of the exemption, will be as laid out within the Construction Industry Board's Code of Practice for the selection of main contractors (1997).

11 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor S A Davies presented the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

Councillor R W Hughes said the Denbighshire International Strategy report would be considered by Cabinet in October 2005. The Chief Executive said the Corporate Improvement Assessment report would be considered either at the end of September or October 2005.

Councillor E C Edwards informed Members that a team from Ysgol Brynhyfryd would be working closely with the Authority regarding the Urdd Eisteddfod to be held in the school in 2006.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

12 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, 9 and 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

PART II

13 DRIFT PARK, RHYL

Councillor R W Hughes presented the report seeking Cabinet authorisation for the Head of Development Services to enter into a contract for the artistic works within the West Promenade, Rhyl Drift Park project. She said she was pleased with the local involvement of schools in the project for provision of the artistic works. The Corporate Director: Environment said schools involvement was an integral part of the project and many Rhyl schools would be involved in designing interpretative sculptures or plaques.

Councillor J Thompson Hill reminded officers that care must be taken when awarding any contracts.

Councillor S Roberts seconded the report and congratulated the Development Officer on his work.

In response to a query from Councillor P J Marfleet, the Corporate Director: Environment said the Authority's costs were contained in the Capital Plan as part of the Rhyl Going Forward provision and there would be no overspend on the budget allocated. Grants had also been received from outside organisations.

The Chief Executive raised concerns about the frequency of such exemptions and asked that the Corporate Director: Resources, the Head of Development Services and the Legal and Procurement Teams consider the tender process in future for whole projects, which would enable future schemes to be tendered just once and the need for exemptions to the Contract Procedure Rules would cease in such cases.

Councillor E C Edwards supported the scheme and reminded Members of the importance to have Project Managers involved as early as possible in such schemes.

RESOLVED that Cabinet authorise the Head of Development Services to enter into a contract for the artworks, with the contractor named in the report, as part of the main construction contract of the West Promenade, Rhyl Drift Park project.

17 SINGLE STATUS

Mr A Rutherford, Unison Branch Secretary attended for this item.

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report for Members to note the progress to date with Single Status and to gain Members' agreement to recommendations for negotiation with Unions, for subsequent approval by Council.

Agreement has already been reached with the Unions to use the Greater London Provincial Council pay/grading scheme for ex-manual worker posts and completion of evaluation is planned for 31.12.2005. Both the Council and Unions are keen to ensure that a reasonable solution and a not unreasonable financial burden was reached. Councillor Marfleet congratulated both the Unions and Personnel Department for working together and said Denbighshire was ahead of other Authorities in Single Status negotiations.

The Head of Personnel indicated that both Central Personnel and Directorate staff were currently heavily involved in agreeing and evaluating job descriptions with the Unions, and negotiations on implementation would start this week. The Unison Branch Secretary, who attended this Part II item,

indicated his support for the process and shared the view that there was a need for a quick resolution.

The Chief Executive said Single Status was a major business risk for the Authority and it was essential to progress the matter quickly.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the progress to date and agree the remit for negotiations with the Unions as outlined in the report.

The meeting concluded at 11.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO: 3

REPORT TO: CABINET

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

DATE: 27TH SEPTEMBER 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 That Cabinet approves consultation with all tenants on the basis that the Improvement Programme can be delivered through the Housing Stock Business Plan whilst giving fair information about the alternative option of Stock Transfer.
- 1.3 That following the consultation process, a further report be presented to Cabinet to lead to a final recommendation to Council.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 Progress to Date

- 2.1.1 Cabinet on 22nd March 2005 requested a further report on the options of Stock Transfer or Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing. The Lead Member for Health and Well-Being was authorised to submit a draft Housing Stock Business Plan (HSBP) to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). The HSBP is the basis of the Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing Model.
- 2.1.2 WAG responded to the HSBP on 7th July 2005 seeking further clarification on four issues and a meeting between Denbighshire Officers and WAG Officers was held on 17th August 2005. As a result a revised HSBP has been submitted and WAG have now confirmed that "so long as the Council is satisfied that its Business Plan proposals are "acceptable" to its external auditors, comply with legislation and relevant HRAS and Capital Financing regulations then it may proceed with this Plan at its discretion".
- 2.1.3 The Housing Options Working Party will meet again on 22nd September 2005 as the main formal channel for continuing consultation with tenants, their views will be reported to Members.
- 2.1.4 In February 2004 Full Council resolved that the preferred option should be Stock Transfer. However, subsequent developments have shown that the HSBP is viable without excessive rent increases. It is therefore appropriate to seek the views of tenants before Cabinet makes a final recommendation to Full Council.

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 current information.
- 2.2.2 The option remains open to Denbighshire provided that it received the support of tenants in a postal ballot following the issue of a formal offer document on the transfer of the stock to Dyffryn Community Housing Ltd.
- 2.2.3 WAG Officers have asked that Denbighshire Members and tenants are made fully aware of the potential financial advantages of the Stock Transfer option. These include that the Treasury will write off overhanging debt, Housing Revenue Account Subsidy will not be paid to WAG and Capital Receipts from preserved Right to Buy will be retained by the Council. However, other costs such as VAT will become payable and the Council Fund will have to absorb or delete central costs currently paid by the HRA.

2.3 Retention with Prudential Borrowing Option

- 2.3.1 This revised Housing Stock Business Plan appears to provide a viable way forward, subject to formal confirmation from WAG that they support the assumptions made. There are a number of critical variables, particularly the actual annual subsidy, number of sales and inflation levels.
- 2.3.2 The plan provides funding for the investment required to achieve Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2012 together with Management, Maintenance, Subsidy and Capital financing costs for 30 years until 2035. Rents will increase steadily by approximately 3% above inflation each year until 2012 when average rents will be at "benchmark".
- 2.3.3 Sensitivity analysis of the Housing Stock Business Plan, within any reasonable expectation of these variables, shows the plan working well for at least the first ten years. Actions outside of the plan might be required at that stage to bring it back on line, such as selling vacant properties on the open market or even considering Stock Transfer again.

2.4 Consultation with Tenants

- 2.4.1 Commitments have been made to tenants that they will be consulted and that they should continue to be involved in the future. The question is how to test their opinion short of a formal ballot which is only required for Stock Transfer.
- 2.4.2 A draft Newsletter has now been prepared for tenants setting out the latest position. It emphasises the expanded Improvement Programme and the way that this can be funded through Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing. In accordance with WAG requirements and to give a fair picture to tenants it also includes the information about Stock Transfer.

- 2.4.3 All the indications are that most tenants wish to remain with the Council provided that this is realistically possible. This should be formally tested by a statistically reliable sample survey of tenants following the Newsletter.
- 2.4.4 Investigations are continuing into the possibilities of formal involvement of tenants in management of housing, possibly through the scrutiny function. Personal Services Scrutiny Committee has already invited a representative from the Denbighshire Tenants' & Residents' Federation to attend their meeting as an observer.

2.5 Economic Benefits of Housing Investment

- 2.5.1 The increased investment in housing improvements will amount to over £4 million per annum for at least 5 years. This investment is very significant in providing improvements for tenants but will also provide additional procurement needs in construction and other housing services. It is important to ensure that as much of this investment as possible is spent locally with obvious advantages for apprenticeships and suppliers.
- 2.5.2 WAG have commissioned national research on the economic benefit issues and are supporting pilot programmes in Bridgend where major works have commenced following transfer of the Council's stock to Valleys to Coast Housing.
- 2.5.3 Discussions have taken place locally with WDA, Estyn, Llandrillo College, the CITB and others, and with the contractors currently working on the programme. Research is now being commissioned from appropriate experts to establish what are the local gaps in provision and actions required to fill them.

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

Costs as detailed in the report will need to be contained within the funding identified for 2005/6 and 2006/7. The potential impact on 2007/8 will need to be considered as part of the budget setting exercise for that year.

It is also considered prudent that financial due diligence work is carried out on the financial model, whilst this consultation takes place.

6. CONSULTATION 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 was held on 14th March 2005 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 for tenants. Rent increases above inflation would impact on Anti-Poverty policies. The level of tenant involvement and empowerment in the selected option will have implication for community governance.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That Cabinet note progress on consultations with Members and tenants, and with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).
- 8.2 That Cabinet approves consultation with all tenants on the basis that the Improvement Programme can be delivered through the Housing Stock Business Plan whilst giving fair information about the alternative option of Stock Transfer.
- 8.3 That following the consultation process, a further report be presented to Cabinet to lead to a final recommendation to Council.

Pq/he/13.09.05

REPORT TO CABINET

**CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR P.A DOBB
LEAD MEMBER FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING**

DATE: 27th September 2005

SUBJECT: SUPPORTING PEOPLE OPERATIONAL PLAN 2006/07

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To agree the Supporting People Operational Plan for 2006/07.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 The National Assembly for Wales have requested the Supporting People Operational Plan on an annual basis (See Appendix 1 for introduction and Overview).

2.2. The Supporting People Operational Plan 2006/07 outlines new and remodelled service for development and delivery in 2006/07.

2.3 The projects identified will bridge gaps within existing services and meet local needs

2.4 The Supporting People Operational Plan will inform the revenue resource allocation process for the Supporting People Grant and Supporting People Revenue Grant in 2006/07.

2.5 The Supporting People Programme is profoundly cross portfolio with significant implications for health and wellbeing, children and families, community safety, environment and finance.

2.6 A Summary of New Services/ Projects for development not listed in any priority order are as follows, based on detailed needs analysis. The resources to enable delivery of these have been via careful review of "legacy" projects i.e those inherited in 2003 following the process of maximising THB (Transitional Housing Benefit) take up.

- 1) A high level supported housing project consisting of 5 units to provide support to individuals with complex mental health support needs. To prevent admissions and facilitate discharge from the Ablett unit and prevent residential care admissions.
- 2) A low level floating support project for 6 people to enable people with mental health support needs to live independently within their own home. To facilitate a gradual reduction of support intensity for people leaving high and medium level supported housing projects.
- 3) High level supported housing consisting of 5 flats for young people aged 16-25 in the south of the county. To provide support to individuals with high support needs in a secure environment to enable young people to develop independent living skills.

- 4) 2 dispersed units of high level supported accommodation for vulnerable single parents in the south of the county. To provide supported housing to single parents with high support needs who can no longer remain at home. To prevent homeless presentations and enable vulnerable single parents to integrate into their community.
- 5) A floating support project for 6 people aged over 40 with alcohol dependency support needs. To provide support to individuals to maintain living independently in their own home and facilitate integration into the community.
- 6) A floating support service for 6 ex-offenders aged 18 and over across Denbighshire. To provide a floating support service to individuals who have left prison to help them maintain a tenancy, manage their home and re-integrate into the community.
- 7) A Supported Lodgings Scheme for 6 young people aged 16 -25. To provide supported accommodation for young people within a family home. To enable the young person to develop the daily living skills necessary to live independently. To provide a more appropriate alternative to B&B emergency accommodation.
- 8) A Keyring Scheme in Denbigh to provide supported accommodation for 9 individuals with a mild learning disability and/or socially vulnerable. To encourage greater levels of independence and enable tenants to support each other and to provide an alternative to high cost social work support.

2.7 A Summary of Existing Projects which will be “Re-modelled” is as follows:

- 1) The remodel of Beechwood Hostel from 14 units to 6. The withdrawal of a provider from Supporting People has left a gap in provision. Remodelling to 6 units will release funding for a new high and low level project for mental health. This configuration will more appropriately meet the presented need in Denbighshire.
- 2) To provide 4 additional low level units to a mental health project where service users need ongoing support to maintain independent living. This will allow for turnover in the higher level part of the project.
- 3) The remodel of Children and Family services will ensure the services meet the identified need for families in Denbighshire. Supporting People and Family and Children Services have identified a need for 4 floating support projects consisting of 8 medium level units and 20 low level to concentrate support in the following areas:

Domestic Abuse
 Vulnerable Families
 Parents with Substance Misuse Issues
 Accommodation support for young people

- 4) Remodel phase 5 Dyfodol to 6 low level floating support units. This will facilitate a gradual reduction of support for young people moving on from the high and medium level phases of the project.
- 5) Remodel the Youth Offending Team project from 4 units to 8. This project provides floating support to 16 and 17 year olds with criminal justice issues. The remodel will provide 4 units for the North and 4 for the South.
- 6) Remodel the Community Support – Rhyl Coastal Strip to remove the rural allowance. This project currently receives a rural allowance given to projects, which cover a wide area and will therefore incur high travel expenses. This is not necessary as the project operates in the Rhyl area.

2.8 A Summary of projects which require remodeling/changes to specification or possible additional resources but further development work is needed. An additional SPOP report will be produced by April 2006 to update on these priorities.

- 1) Welfare Rights – Long Term Help project/Vulnerable Adults Team (from 05/06 SPOP)
- 2) Acorn Move-on - additional accommodation and low level support to facilitate 'move on' requirements may be required.
- 3) EMI floating support project for the south of the county (05/06 SPOP) – 6 x LLS and rural – revised budget £15,600
- 4) Adult Placements for people with a physical disability/ learning disability
- 5) Housing support worker scheme and sheltered housing wardens remodelling to include support to older people in private tenancies and owner occupiers
- 6) Domestic Abuse – Floating Support to single people and couples in their own home
- 7) *New Provision* – Keyring Project – Prestatyn
- 8) A small 24hr staffed supported housing scheme for ex-offenders/ substance misuse
- 9) Y Gelli Residential Care – the SPG funding will cease in March 2006, Supporting People Planning Group to review provision.
- 10) Premier/Cambrian/QCare – mixed services that do not currently form a project. Service users to be allocated to appropriate projects. Supporting People Planning Group to consider released funding.

2.9 A copy of the full Supporting People Operational Plan 2005/6 can be obtained from the Supporting People Team, Warren Drive, Prestatyn, LL19 7HX (Telephone 01824 712305). A copy will also be available on the Denbighshire Information Centre once agreed by Elected Members.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

To determine the content of any plan, strategy or other policy document requires approval by the Lead Cabinet Members in accordance with Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2291 (W,179) Regulation 4 (3)(c) + (d)

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

The new projects and projects for remodelling identified within the 2006/07 Supporting People Operational Plan that need additional funding will be funded from the Supporting People budget allocated to Denbighshire by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Projects identified within the Supporting People Operational Plan for 2006/07 which need additional resources but do not have funding allocated, can only progress if / when savings can be made to existing Supporting People Contracts as a result of the Initial Service Review and Supporting People Commissioning processes.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The continued close monitoring of project costs and future commitments, together with ongoing reviews of service delivery are necessary to ensure that expenditure is contained within the grant funding available and that services continue to provide value for money.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Links have been established with the Mental Health Strategic Planning Group, The Strategic Planning Group for People with a Learning Disability, The Physical Disability and Visual Impairment Planning Group, Denbighshire's Drug and Alcohol Forum, Domestic Abuse Forum and Age Concern Forum of Forums for Older People, Denbighshire's Housing Forum, Tenants representatives, the Young People's Partnership and Community Area Partnership Groups.

Comprehensive information has been provided on service-user needs through the *Needs Mapping Exercise*, which forms the basis of the plan. This information is based on the service-user view of their needs at that time.

Consultation meetings have been held through May and June, each meeting focusing on issues specific to each service-user group to ensure that all areas were fully discussed and to make best use of stakeholder expertise. Representatives from a range of groups attended, that facilitated informative discussion.

Specific meetings have been held with Team Managers, Service Managers and Planning Officers to discuss the needs of those groups where there is a lack of needs information available to the Supporting People Team.

Elected Members were invited to one to one meetings to consult on parts of the Plan that fall within the remit of their portfolio and a Scrutiny Seminar was held on the 2nd September 2005. Denbighshire Supporting People Team has shared

information with other Local Authorities through Supporting People Information Network meetings.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

Services commissioned and developed through the Supporting People Programme (helping to meet the needs of vulnerable people in the community with a preventative and early intervention agenda) contribute to the objectives of many policy areas

- Health- contributes to reducing the level of admissions/ readmissions to hospital and reduces demand for expensive care packages.
- Education/ Economic regeneration – builds skills & confidence needed to enter and be successful in education or the job market.
- Community Safety – Supported housing services are part of a holistic approach to break the cycle between homelessness, substance misuse and offending behaviour and therefore promote safer communities.
- Social Inclusion – helps people develop independent living skills and facilitates social engagement
- Homelessness – contributes to reducing homelessness by supporting individuals to move from insecure to stable accommodation. Also enables vulnerable individuals to develop skills to maintain independent living.

8 RECOMMENDATION

To agree the Supporting People Operational Plan for 2006/07 and support the projects identified to meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Appendix 1 (Extract From The “2006/7 Supporting People Operational Plan)

Part One: Introduction & Summary Overview

1.1: General Overview

This represents the fourth Supporting People Operational Plan (SPOP) produced by Denbighshire County Council that considers the housing-related support services required to meet the needs of vulnerable groups residing within the County of Denbighshire for the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007.

The development of this plan has been completed with the knowledge that the Supporting People Operational Plan will no longer be used as a bidding document to the Welsh Assembly for the funding of new services. Rather it is a plan that will start to look at managing existing resources and utilising the review, planning & commissioning mechanisms to ensure that Supporting People funding is targeted effectively to meet the housing-related support needs for residents of Denbighshire. The Supporting People Planning Group in Denbighshire have therefore given a firm commitment to develop a medium term strategy to manage resources

The 11.5% cut in the overall Supporting People Budget for Denbighshire has had a significant impact in that contract values have had to be reduced, and one pipeline project for young people and a second project for people with mental health needs were stopped.

The current planning environment is still extremely dynamic in that a further cut of £3 million pounds has to be managed from the Supporting People budget for Wales in 2006/7. A review of the Supporting People Revenue Grant (SPRG) tariff is also being undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government to bring the SPRG budget back to a state of “equivalence” with the SPRG allocation.

With these two factors in mind, Denbighshire County Council have produced a Supporting People Operational Plan which identifies priorities and gaps in service provision. Without certainty of funding no final agreement on commissioning such services can be given until the Supporting People budget for Denbighshire in 2006/7 has been announced by the WAG in November 2005, and additionally the implications which follow the SPRG tariff review are known.

The Supporting People Planning Group in Denbighshire have therefore agreed that a supplementary SPOP report will be submitted to the WAG by 1st April 2006, to outline any changes which may occur to the priorities identified within this operational plan, as a result of funding changes and reviews which are not apparent at the time of producing the 2006/7 SPOP.

The format of this plan follows the prescribed layout detailed within the guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government.

1.2: An Overview of Establishing the Fourth SPOP.

The vision statement was agreed within the first Supporting People Operational Plan for 2003/4:

“To ensure adequate provision of appropriate, timely, and responsive housing-related support is accessible to all who need help to achieve or sustain independent living in the community, to promote social inclusion and prevent and reduce homelessness in Denbighshire”

As a result of the Supporting People funding cuts in 2005/6 and additional cuts announced for 2006/7, the Supporting People Planning Group have established a consolidation strategy for the 2006/7 SPOP in that legacy services will receive an initial service review with a target date for completion of 1st April 2006. However, the initial service review has a focus on contract values, project specifications, compliance and quality. No long term “Strategic Relevance” decisions can be assigned to legacy projects until a longer term Supporting People Strategy has been established.

Priorities identified within the 2006/7 SPOP have been established as supporting corporate priorities, although the project specifications may need further defining / remodelling to fit with the strategy once fully developed.

This SPOP goes some way towards the development of the Strategy, but more detailed analysis of need and agreement of Supporting People priorities at a corporate level for the medium term still have to be established within the context of known resources.

Additionally, the Supporting People Strategy will need to establish a position in relation to accommodation issues for vulnerable people. Should the strategy focus on floating support and establish a scheme to work with private sector landlords / leasing from the outset, or should more temporary accommodation be commissioned and the issue of longer term accommodation be addressed separately?

The strategic vision and related accommodation and service delivery issues for Supporting People in Denbighshire will therefore be reviewed as part of the strategy development process.

1.3: The Supporting People Planning Group (SPPG)

The Supporting People Planning Group in Denbighshire is in transition. The Corporate Director for Personal Services (Housing & Social Services) now chairs this group.

A consultant has been commissioned and a workshop day went ahead on 18th June 2005 to establish new ‘terms of reference’ for the Supporting People Planning Group, and to consider ways of establishing a more transparent SPPG in response to feedback received from Housing Associations and Voluntary Organisations.

It was agreed that membership should be increased from just the four main representatives of Social Services, the Local Health Board, Housing Services and the Assistant Area Chief Probation and/or Senior Probation Officer to include membership from Community Safety, Housing Strategy, Adults and Children Social Services Commissioning Managers and a representative for SPRG providers to be elected through the Homeless Forum. Draft ‘Terms of Reference’ are attached. Some minor changes still have to be agreed.

The SPPG has held one full day and one half day meeting within the current planning cycle of establishing the 2006/7 SPOP in June and July 2005. The purpose of these meetings has been to analyse data available from the *Needs Mapping Exercise*, consider priorities laid down in the wider Strategies and Plans that influence the Supporting People Framework and to develop Supporting People services in accordance with this analysis, which are contained within this plan.

1.4: Development of the Local Planning and Consultation Process

1.4.1: Consultation

Supporting People in Denbighshire recognise the importance of having access to a wide range of opinions and views to enable the Supporting People Planning Group to carry out its planning process. A number of strategic links remain in place with existing planning groups and forums within the Authority with the aim of integrating Supporting People into other plans and strategies, as well as utilising existing channels for effective consultation in developing the fourth SPOP.

Links have been established with the Mental Health Strategic Planning Group, The Strategic Planning Group for People with a Learning Disability, The Physical Disability and Visual Impairment Planning Group, Denbighshire's Drug and Alcohol Forum, Domestic Abuse Forum and Age Concern Forum of Forums for Older People, Denbighshire's Housing Forum, Tenants representatives, the Young People's Partnership and Community Area Partnership Groups.

The improved contribution to the *Needs Mapping Exercise* has enabled Supporting People to share more comprehensive information on the needs of service-users for SPRG projects. Consultation meetings have been held through May and June, each meeting focusing on issues specific to each service-user group to ensure that all areas were fully discussed and to make best use of stakeholder expertise. Representatives from a range of groups attended, that facilitated informative discussion.

The consultation meetings were organised to achieve the following aims:

- To consult with all stakeholders on the development of the fourth Supporting People Operational Plan
- To establish any further areas of unmet need to feedback to the Supporting People Planning Group.
- To establish further involvement and closer working partnership between the Local Authority, RSL's, Voluntary Sector Providers, Probation Service & Health within the planning process.
- To receive information and feedback on the *Needs Mapping Exercise* and increase the number of agencies currently involved.

The information on current provision and *Needs Mapping Exercise* data, which will form the basis of the plan were presented to each group and the views and opinions of providers and stakeholders were recorded. The information presented and the recorded views and opinions were circulated to relevant planning groups and steering groups. People who were unable to attend meetings were invited to submit views and opinions and information to contribute to the process. The information assisted the Supporting People Planning Group to set strategic direction for each service-user group and they

would like to thank all those that have given their time to contribute to the planning process.

Specific meetings have been held with Team Managers, Service Managers and Planning Officers to discuss the needs of those groups where there is a lack of needs information available to the Supporting People Team. Elected Members were invited to one to one meetings to consult on parts of the Plan that fall within the remit of their portfolio. Denbighshire Supporting People Team has shared information with other Local Authorities through Supporting People Information Network meetings.

1.4.2: Service Users

The need to establish improved consultation mechanisms with service-users is a priority for Supporting People in Denbighshire. Service-users and their representatives have been consulted through the existing planning groups and forums, in addition to the Consultation Meetings.

Comprehensive information has been provided on service-user needs through the *Needs Mapping Exercise*, which forms the basis of the plan. This information is based on the service-user view of their needs at that time.

Service-user feedback has been received through the initial service review process. On-going research into service-user needs will inform future service development & remodelling to ensure the delivery of 'Best Value' and continuous improvement.

1.4.3: Minority Groups within the Community

The needs of minority groups have been discussed at each service-user consultation group. Representatives who work with these vulnerable groups attended the consultation meetings and shared views and opinions on specific difficulties faced by individuals and the lack of representation of minority groups within the *Needs Mapping Exercise*. The needs of minority groups are looked at alongside refugees in Part Two: Needs Assessment (P58)

The Supporting People *Needs Mapping Exercise* does not currently produce information on the needs of lesbian, gay and bi-sexual people. This has been amended this year to include an optional section, which asks the person to identify their 'sexual orientation'. The Supporting People Team will be able to report on the specific needs of this group in the 2007/8 Supporting People Operational Plan.

The Supporting People Team will endeavour to work more closely with Network and Partnership Groups throughout Denbighshire to ensure that the needs of minority groups are identified and addressed. The consultation groups have recognised the need for a multi-agency approach to take this forward.

The effectiveness of planning and consultation processes will be reviewed within consecutive Operational Plans in relation to delivering continuous improvement and Best Value.

1.5: Future Implementation Issues to be addressed

One of the major aims of the Supporting People Programme is to ensure that services are 'joined-up and seamless', and another is to ensure the delivery of quality support

services which are value for money: therefore over the next twelve months a great deal of work will be required to ensure that this happens within Denbighshire. Some of the key tasks facing the Supporting People Team and Planning Group will be: -

- Finalising the new 'Terms of Reference' for the SPPG for the 2007/8 SPOP Strategy development
- Development of a Supporting People project database, to comprehensively hold all project and performance data, to enable consistent and accurate performance information to be reported.
- To complete all Initial Service Reviews of legacy projects by 31st March 2006.
- To establish a project plan and strategy development framework.
- To establish additional interim contracting, monitoring and review processes to manage resources and projects until a longer term strategy is in place.
- To secure SPRG funding for the longer term viability of the Doorstop Project.
- To review 'Eligibility Criteria' to support a medium term strategy
- To implement further WAG guidance on monitoring and evaluation when final guidance is issued from WAG.
- To further review payment systems to improve services to providers.
- To continue to improve the capture and dissemination of 'needs mapping' information in terms of quality and quantity from provider and advice organisations as well as the Probation and Housing Services.
- ICT to deliver the changes to the Needs Mapping Database and work with ICT to overcome problems with reporting mechanisms from the NME database.
- To ensure the new in4tek Social Services database can record unmet need for Supporting People and Community Care services and report this to inform the SPOP planning process with implementation of the Unified Assessment process.
- To work with Sheltered Housing providers to develop mechanisms for needs mapping information
- To decide whether to implement Supporting People charging policy as part of the strategy development process
- Managing the cuts in Supporting People revenue funding in 2006/7 and changes to SPRG tariffs, once this has been announced by the WAG in October/ November 2005.
- Prepare for an inspection of Supporting People services from the WAG/Audit Commission in Wales

- Prepare for the transfer of SPRG services from the WAG to Denbighshire County Council in 2008
- Review performance monitoring systems when the WAG Performance Indicators for SP services are published later this year.
- Review the effectiveness of the Quality Assessment Framework.
- Establish improved consultation mechanisms with service-users.
- Organise a series of Supporting People awareness days for all key stakeholders.
- Map & review referral routes and incorporate these into contracts/ SLA's.
- Review the *Needs Mapping Exercise*, continuously improve the needs mapping form and develop a comprehensive needs mapping strategy.

1.6: Supporting People Achievements & Developments in Denbighshire

Over the last 12 months, the Supporting People team has:-

- Produced a 'Directory of Services' to raise awareness of Supporting People services and provide information on how to access these services.
- Improved the capture and dissemination of 'needs mapping' information in terms of quality and quantity from provider and advice organisations as well as the Probation and Housing Services.
- Established a SPPG 'Position Statement', to clarify eligibility for funding of Supporting People services to inform the review and commissioning processes.
- Implemented proposed changes to the SPPG
- Reported on the Performance Indicators introduced in 2005.
- Established monitoring and management systems for Needs Mapping information.
- Managed 11.5% cuts
- Issued 'Interim contracts' for all Legacy Supporting People Services.
- Delivered on the commitments within the last Supporting People Operational plan:
 - 4 additional properties have been accessed through the SHG for families moving on from the refuges
 - 2 additional units of support have been allocated to the Women's Refuges

- Developed the 'Doorstop Project' for people with substance misuse support needs
- Developed the 'Symud Ymlaen' project, a supported housing project for vulnerable young people
- Remodelled mental health services to create additional support units
- Developed the 'Key Ring' pipeline service as a pilot project in partnership with Social Services, to provide low level support to people with a learning disability in the North of the County.
- Established the 'Social Support' pipeline project within Community Drug & Alcohol Service (CDAS), in partnership with the North East Wales Trust.

1.7: Monitoring the outputs of the Supporting People Operational Plan

Three performance indicators (one Strategic and two core) were introduced in April 2005/6, with additional SP PI's to be introduced in 2006/7.

The handover of full administration of the Supporting People Revenue Grant to all Local Authorities will not now happen until April 2008 at the earliest, although all Local Authorities will be assessed on "preparedness" prior to a handover decision being made, and the criteria for evaluation of Local Authority "preparedness" will also form part of the monitoring arrangements for Supporting People in Denbighshire.

The Supporting People Planning Group will continue to oversee the work of the Supporting People Team to ensure that the Supporting People Operational Plan is being delivered on the ground

Contracting and review processes have been established in addition to interim project monitoring arrangements. Results and outcomes will be reported to the Supporting People Planning Group to inform future planning decisions and to report on the strategic relevance of existing provision and to develop future services in line with 'best practice' models.

The WAG has also established a 'Task & Finish' group to determine additional formal performance indicators (PI's) for Supporting People policy implementation and service delivery. These PI's are due to be announced shortly and are likely to have an implementation date of April 2006.

1.8: Cross-Boundary Issues

North Wales Supporting People Information Network Group

Denbighshire's Supporting People team have been active participants within this North Wales Forum to discuss Supporting People issues. The group meets every 4-6 weeks and is open to any Local Authority employee who has an interest in Supporting People from the counties of Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd and Anglesey. A wide variety of issues have been discussed including those concerning cross-boundary Supporting People projects.

A report (Local Challenges Regional Solutions) into cross-boundary issues was completed in September 2003. It proposed some new ways of solving challenges in

housing strategy and management by working more on a co-ordinated, regional basis – and it outlined some of the obstacles preventing more strategic working on a corporate, regional and multi-agency level.

A partnership has now been formed across the six North Wales Authorities and Probation. This group will work on identified cross-boundary issues which will inform future Supporting People Operational Plans in Denbighshire.

1.9: Limiting Factors Influencing the Development of Supporting People Services in 2006/7

To understand the context of the Supporting People Planning Group's decisions in relation to outlined service development priorities in 2006/7, it is important to understand some of the limiting factors influencing the shape of Supporting People Services in 2006/7:-

- **Needs Information** – There are continuing I.T difficulties and still no means of collating information for Community Care and Older People. A number of meetings have been held between ICT and Supporting People and this has provided some basic information from Care.com. Supporting People will continue close working with ICT to ensure the new system can map supply and needs for community care services necessary for the Supporting People Programme.

- **Suitable, Sustainable Housing Provision** – There is a shortage of social sector accommodation available at reasonable rents for vulnerable people who are not able to purchase their own homes. A survey undertaken by Michael Howard Associates has identified that the incidence of unfitness in the private sector housing sector is 22.9%. Many private sector properties are located in Rhyl and are houses in multiple occupation and these are issues which will be addressed through Denbighshire's Local Housing Strategy, but these do impact on the SP team's ability to develop supported accommodation services.

- **The Social Housing Grant Programme** - This provides limited funding to expand rented accommodation within the Registered Social Landlord sector through purchasing existing stock or new building. The level of funding is therefore a limiting factor in the development of supported accommodation. Investigations will be made into the development of a private sector leasing scheme to provide supported accommodation and sustainable move on accommodation to facilitate move on in Denbighshire

- **Public Opposition to some Supported Housing Schemes.**

Some supported housing projects in Denbighshire have been rejected at the planning stage owing to public opposition, and these factors have had to be taken into consideration when developing the 2006/7 SPOP.

The Housing Needs Assessment survey has identified that future investment should be within special needs housing and within the rented sector. The level of need within Denbighshire has also been assessed as double that in other areas of Wales such as Anglesey.

Not only will more special needs housing be required to meet need, but the demand for support to enable people to achieve and sustain independent living, particularly for the young and elderly groups will also increase.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR P A DOBB, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing

COUNCILLOR M A GERMAN, Lead Member for Children and Young People

DATE: 27th September, 2005

SUBJECT: "Social Work in Wales: a Profession to Value" (the Garthwaite Report)

1 DECISION SOUGHT

For Cabinet

- 1.1 to give a commitment to work immediately towards increasing social worker/Senior Practitioner and linked pay on an interim basis in Denbighshire to a level commensurate with the higher levels currently being paid by Welsh local authorities
- 1.2 to do this in a way which provides incentives to assist the recruitment of newly qualified staff, and the retention of experienced staff and those making additional specialist contributions
- 1.3 to work with other local authorities across North Wales to enable this to be achieved in a synchronized way
- 1.4 to pursue job evaluation for these jobs as a matter of urgency in Denbighshire, using the statements of Roles, Responsibilities, Tasks and Functions contained in the Garthwaite Report as key baselines
- 1.5 to agree, in principle, the use of market supplements for these jobs, if required
- 1.6 to consider how the funding of 1.1 can be reflected in the 2006/07 budget process
- 1.7 to agree collaborative recruitment and retention arrangements with other North Wales authorities as set out in para
- 1.8 to reiterate support for a broad based approach to social work recruitment and retention issues in Denbighshire incorporating attention to staff accommodation, workload, career, training and development opportunities, absence management and management development, as well as pay
- 1.9 to support, in principle, longer-term national work to develop pay structures for social workers which address "pay drift" and aim to deliver permanent pay scales comparable with other parts of the public sector

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- 2.1 "Social Work in Wales: a Profession to Value" (the Garthwaite Report) was published in August 2005. The report reflects the results of substantial work in Wales, sponsored by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS), WLGA, Unison, the British Association of Social Workers (BASW), and the Care Council for Wales to examine the reasons for the social worker recruitment and retention crisis. The report proposes a range of measures to mitigate it.

Implementation in Denbighshire would require a much higher degree of collaboration with neighbouring authorities and would have significant financial implications.

2.2 The Executive Summary and recommendations of the report are set out in Appendix I. Appendix II profiles Denbighshire against against key themes and issues highlighted in the report. The methodology for the report included use of official national data plus survey based data gathering and face to face discussion, specifically

- a survey of employers- numbers and profile of social work practitioners, turnover rates etc
- a survey of social workers and senior social work practitioners- characteristics of workforce, impacts on recruitment and retention
- a survey of people leaving their social work posts- destinations, reasons for leaving etc
- a consultation exercise on the roles of social workers and senior social work practitioners
- focus groups
- document and website research
- invitation to comment

Denbighshire contributed to all the survey and consultation components and to the focus groups.

2.3 Cabinet is already well aware that the recruitment and retention of social workers, particularly, though not only, in Children's Services has caused us significant difficulties in delivering consistent and high quality services to some of Denbighshire's most vulnerable people. Appendix II shows that, as part of its workforce strategy, Denbighshire is already using many of the mechanisms suggested in the Garthwaite Report to improve recruitment and retention. We have deployed a wide range of approaches including traineeships, improved accommodation, investment in management/supervision and admin support, overseas recruitment, pilots of workload management and work-life balance initiatives, plus some minor adjustments to pay and progression, within the constraints of existing pay scales and budgets. These measures, while they have helped, have not solved the recruitment and retention issues faced. The report shows that this is true of other authorities too. Despite the generally conscientious approach taken by individual authorities, difficulties remain and evidence of the sustained effectiveness of many of the recruitment and retention initiatives taken is mixed.

2.4 Taking an overview of attempts to tackle social worker recruitment and retention work across Wales, the report perhaps draws three main conclusions

2.4.1 There is no one killer action which will "solve" the recruitment and retention problem. Dealing with it will require a whole system approach, over a sustained period. A successful strategy will need to encompass routes from when young people still at school consider career options through to the establishment of

rewarding career paths and remuneration packages for confident skilled professionals and those who manage them.

- 2.4.2 A successful strategy will need to provide improved levels of pay in the short-term and, in the longer- term, offer rewards comparable to those available in other parts of the public sector
- 2.4.3 The pressure on local authorities to “solve” their individual difficulties has increased competitive behaviour between authorities and may have worsened the situation. Collaborative approaches must be pursued to gain the most and lasting benefit for the most authorities at the least cost.
- 2.5 In relation to 2.4.1, the main implication for Denbighshire is maintaining a broad based programme of recruitment, retention, training and development initiatives, as set out in Appendix II. These must henceforth be informed by the evidence (albeit limited) of relative effectiveness of different approaches discussed in the report. This work will be enhanced by national work proposed in the report eg the development of a common approach to workload management. The other main implication is the development of increasingly collaborative approaches to social work training. This will include the implementation of already well advanced plans for the establishment across North Wales of a Practice Learning Centre which will facilitate placements for the planned increase in social work students and the increased number of work based placements which are part of the new Social Work Degree.
- 2.6 In relation to 2.4.2, the report recommends an interim salary scale for social workers and for Senior Practitioners pitched at the higher levels paid by Welsh local authorities. This is higher than that currently paid in Denbighshire. The detail of this is set out in Appendix II paras 4.1 to 4.8.
- 2.6.1 Implementing the proposed interim salary scales in Denbighshire would cost approximately £120k per year.
- 2.6.2 The recommendation for an interim pay increase is based on the fact that almost three quarters of authorities in Wales reported having to make salary adjustments to take account of market conditions and the degree of “pay drift” identified in the report (ie the degree to which social work pay had deteriorated in comparison with comparator public sector employee groups including nurses, teachers and the police over the last 5 years).
- 2.6.3 There is no national pay negotiating body for social workers (unlike teachers). Consequently, implementing the pay recommendations of the Garthwaite Report in a co-ordinated way across Wales is a complex matter as it relies on local determination in 22 authorities. However, implementing an interim salary scale in Denbighshire could be achieved via job evaluation, using the statements of role, responsibilities, tasks and functions in the Garthwaite report as key baselines. Market supplements could also be used if necessary. In the spirit of the collaborative agenda, it would be essential for close contact with neighbouring authorities to be maintained so that this overall process were synchronized. North

Wales Directors of Social Services have already indicated their support for such an approach.

2.6.4 The contention of the report is that the interim salary scale does not fully address the issue of “pay drift” suggested in the report. For social work to be a comparable career choice to other parts of the public sector (eg the police, or teaching), further enhancement of pay may eventually be necessary. The report suggests that this issue be pursued via the establishment of a national strategic advisory body.

2.7 Collaboration. Some collaboration on the workforce agenda already takes place across North Wales eg the developments relating to implementation of the new social work degree and the Practice Learning Centre referred to in para 2.5 above. The agenda is more challenging to pursue in recruitment and retention, however, as, however collaborative we want to be, we all desperately (and understandably) want the best staff from a limited pool. North Wales Directors of Social Services propose to establish a task and finish group to consider all the recommendations of the report requiring local authority action. In particular they would remit this group initially to consider

- collaborative approaches to signposting adverts
- collaboration in overseas recruitment initiatives
- development of a collaborative procurement initiative relating to the use of agencies supplying social workers- currently a high cost area for most authorities

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Sections 112 and 113 of the Local Government Act 1972

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

It is not envisaged that collaborative work across North Wales authorities would involve additional costs. In fact, savings could eventually be generated, though it is not possible to cost these yet. To enable the pay of social workers, and those on linked pay grades, to be increased to a level commensurate with higher levels being paid in Wales is estimated to cost £120k per year in Denbighshire, if implemented from April 2006. This figure does not include Educational Social Workers figures though this is a small group of staff in comparison with Social Services. However, the cost implication for Educational Social Workers would have to be assessed.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

Based on the current Assembly 3 year budget and the WLGA's latest advice it is unlikely that there will be additional WAG resources in 2006/7 for Social Workers pay restructuring. The only proposed increase is in response to pressures on Adult Services particularly the growing number of elderly. It will therefore be necessary to carefully review the potential cost of the proposals as part of the budget setting exercise for 2006/7.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The Garthwaite Report itself was based on extensive consultation as described in paras 2.1 and 2.2. Internally, the Head of Personnel has been consulted, for example in terms of how the proposals would link with job evaluation processes and is supportive of the approach outlined. Discussions have taken place at a meeting of North Wales Directors of Social Services, and their views are reflected in the proposals. The Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning is aware of the contents of the report and his comments are reflected in the cost implications section.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The recommendations are fully consistent with the development of collaborative approaches across authorities, which is a key corporate theme. Pursuing the pay issues through the job evaluation process will enable consistency of approach to pay matters generally.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

For Cabinet

- 8.1 to give a commitment to work immediately towards increasing social worker/Senior Practitioner and linked pay on an interim basis in Denbighshire to a level commensurate with the higher levels currently being paid by Welsh local authorities
- 8.2 to do this in a way which provides incentives to assist the recruitment of newly qualified staff, and the retention of experienced staff and those making additional specialist contributions
- 8.3 to work with other local authorities across North Wales to enable this to be achieved in a synchronized way
- 8.4 to pursue job evaluation for these jobs as a matter of urgency in Denbighshire, using the statements of Roles, Responsibilities, Tasks and Functions contained in the Garthwaite Report as key baselines
- 8.5 to agree, in principle, the use of market supplements for these jobs, if required
- 8.6 to consider how the funding of 8.1 can be reflected in the 2006/07 budget process
- 8.7 to agree collaborative recruitment and retention arrangements with other North Wales authorities as set out in para 2.7
- 8.8 to reiterate support for a broad based approach to social work recruitment and retention issues in Denbighshire incorporating attention to staff accommodation, workload, career, training and development opportunities, absence management and management development, as well as pay

8.9 to support, in principle, longer-term national work to develop pay structures for social workers which address “pay drift” and aim to deliver permanent pay scales comparable with other parts of the public sector

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Qualified social workers play a pivotal role in the delivery and commissioning of responses to the needs of society's most vulnerable people. Other than teachers, they are the largest single group of qualified workers employed by local authorities and the numbers needed by authorities are estimated to grow by as much as 11.7% in the next 3 years. We find ourselves in a position where the demand for social workers is in excess of the supply and where this imbalance is likely to remain for some years to come. Very simply, there are too many social worker vacancies (14.8%) in local authorities and the impact on services is being further compounded by the fact that there is also too much movement of social workers. Some of this is between authorities, the 'revolving door' syndrome, and some is away from the profession altogether with turnover rates at 15% on average across Wales. The net effect is damage to the capacity of local authorities to deliver social work services to those who need them. The challenges facing local authorities are clearly in terms of both recruitment and retention.

Use of costly agency staff is inevitably prevalent in the majority of Welsh local authorities. Sickness levels are relatively high and, in Children's Services, appear to be associated with higher turnover rates. There appears to be a relationship between high sickness levels and under capacity in the workforce. The real level of under capacity must be measured as a combination of vacancies, sickness and other, more planned absences. There are particular problems associated with recruiting social workers who are able to deliver services through the Welsh language.

The response by local authorities to the recruitment/retention agenda has been both conscientious and responsible in terms of attempting to fulfil their local accountabilities. It has, however, been primarily based on initiatives associated with improving pay and recruitment incentives. These have resulted in a wide variety of pay and benefits packages between and within local authorities and a lack of equality and equity in terms of remuneration for the role. There is little evidence that these initiatives have taken place within a holistic strategic framework, such as that provided through the work of the Minister's Task and Finish Group on Social Care Workforce Issues which reported in 2001, and there is an acknowledgment that many have either not been properly evaluated or are not considered to have been effective.

There is evidence that many social workers feel undervalued and this expresses itself not only through dissatisfaction with pay but also with working conditions and levels of employer support, such as supervision and good accommodation. ADSS (Cymru) has previously reported to the Pay Commission on a drift in pay between social workers and other related professions such as teachers and nurses. This is likely to be exacerbated by the NHS Agenda for Change and the Teachers Workload Agreement. Moreover, a review by the Welsh Assembly Government of salaries of staff working for CAF/CASS, who perform associated roles to social workers and require a social work qualification, placed pay levels much higher than the top level of salary currently being paid to any local authority social worker. This is typical of the alternative roles available to social workers outside local government.

The last national (U.K.) review of social work pay and conditions was in 1989/90. Since then, several major pieces of social services legislation have been implemented. Workload management has clearly become a problem and good supervision and support are not always

sufficiently evident or effective. This in itself is partly attributable to capacity problems caused by staff shortages. Whilst inadequate pay is not the biggest concern for Wales' social workers it is an important issue for them, especially in terms of relative worth, which needs to be addressed. Effective career pathways are not clearly mapped and there are insufficient links between pay, responsibilities, gaining post qualifying awards and career progression. There is no obvious rationale being universally applied by local authorities to determine appropriate levels of social worker posts nor, therefore, appropriate skill mixes within teams. This needs to be addressed if we are to maximise the professional skills and knowledge of social workers and employ the right number of them and other staff.

Increased scrutiny, joint reviews, inspections and publicly available annual performance evaluations are moving local authorities towards increased target setting often based on process indicators. This is contributing to a shift in the emphasis of the social work role from direct contact with clients. Social workers and their managers are expressing concern about increased levels of bureaucracy in their roles which do not necessarily translate into improved outcomes for service users and carers. In this context it is interesting to note that in the education service a similar issue has been recognised and a School Workload Advisory Panel has been established to offer advice on reducing bureaucratic burdens and to ensure that workload implications have been properly taken into account in both new and existing policies and initiatives. Many managers and social workers are now questioning whether the current situation allows the functions required of social workers to be fulfilled. The increased expectations on local authorities to demonstrate performance have added pressure on social workers in a climate of limited capacity. The net result is one of increased public expectations and an inability to keep pace with demands.

Much has been done in recent years, through the leadership of the Chief Inspector of Social Services and the advent of the Care Council, to raise the profile of the social care workforce agenda. ADSS (Cymru) and local authority Corporate Human Resources Directors have also played a leading role. Useful tools such as the Faces of Care resource pack and SSIW workforce planning guidance are now available to local authorities. Despite these very positive developments, authorities continue to struggle with the workforce information requirements to effectively predict, or respond to, the recruitment and retention challenges. There must be renewed emphasis on the importance of good information as the basis upon which strategic and operational decisions are made.

It is not yet evident that all local authorities are giving Social Services sufficient corporate priority. One of the consequences of this is that local authorities have not achieved the necessary balance between being corporate employers and recognising the need for packages of pay, benefits and working conditions which suit a large, specialist, professional workforce, namely their qualified social workers. Authorities must resist the temptation to apply "one size fits all" solutions. There is pressure on local authorities to achieve efficiencies and it is tempting to target conditions of service to achieve these. This is considered to be a risky strategy when applied to a fragile workforce and care must be taken to ensure that any positive action on improving recruitment and retention is not countermanded by such measures. The outcome of local job evaluation must support the reduction of the recruitment and retention problem, not add to it. The new and very welcome commitments by the WLGA to prioritise Social Services as a key local government service must include attention to the workforce agenda and the particular role played by qualified social workers.

Our research confirms that Wales' social workers still believe that the role they play is essential to society and that they have an intrinsic job satisfaction which is linked to their feeling of worth.

Increased numbers of applicants to undertake social work training confirm that potential recruits are available. This is helped by the increased availability of government funding and sponsored bursaries and a variety of traineeship schemes developed by local authorities. Additional funding, however, is needed to enable an acceleration of the secondments and traineeships available through these schemes. Local authorities are struggling to support and enhance any increase in the numbers of potential recruits to social work courses because of capacity problems. These are adversely affecting their ability to provide successful practice learning opportunities for those in training and this is impacting on the readiness to practise of newly qualified staff. Furthermore, social workers need effective supervision, coaching and mentoring throughout the early years of their career which also presents a challenge for local authorities in terms of capacity. Contributing to the education and training of future social workers must become a central activity for all employers. This includes mainstreaming practice learning into recruitment/retention strategies based on the guidance contained in “Ensuring Consistency in Learning to Practice” (SSIW).

Flexible routes to social work qualification training must be available to enable all individuals in Wales to access training locally. There are particular challenges in ensuring a sufficient supply of social workers capable of delivering services through the medium of Welsh. We know that much has already been done to secure training and qualification opportunities in Welsh both at qualifying and post qualifying level. However, we believe that work needs to be done to extend and enhance those opportunities in all parts of Wales. We believe that the Care Council for Wales is well placed to lead work on securing innovative and flexible solutions to these challenges.

There is also an urgent need to introduce, as part of the new PQ framework, a model of learning and developmental experience which ensures that the first year in employment following qualification enables social workers to develop confidence in their practice. We recognise that local authorities are currently shifting their approach to practice placements away from traditional models of practice teaching. Meanwhile, we are recommending that those who presently undertake the practice teaching function should receive an additional reward. We believe the future success in meeting placement requirements rests with more creative approaches to student learning such as the development of student units and the creation of specific posts of practice assessors. Again, this can only be achieved through collaboration across local authorities and other partner agencies. The Care Council for Wales is well placed to assess progress towards these goals and advise on how they may be achieved.

There are, therefore, a number of positive factors impacting upon recruitment and retention of social workers. These may be considered to be relatively small but they provide a significant base on which to develop improvement strategies. The many pressing challenges currently facing the workforce need to be addressed urgently.

We feel that the current approaches to recruitment and retention, which are based on competition through the use of incentives, need to make a fundamental shift to strategies which more fully reflect the reality of the labour markets from which we in Wales are recruiting. This should aim to provide for much greater collaboration on recruitment between local authorities and more comparable levels of pay for social workers. There must be an acceptance that the current approaches have only had limited success locally and usually for only a limited period of time. Indeed, some initiatives to recruit staff have actually had a negative impact on existing social work staff working within some authorities. They have certainly not worked when viewed

from an all-Wales perspective. We must create a culture whereby there is a feeling that staff are working for Wales Social Services, which reinforces the principle of social care being one sector with one workforce, which was a key principle emerging from the work of the Minister's Task and Finish Group. It is of little consolation for those users and carers not receiving an adequate service because of staff shortages to know that others in different parts of Wales are. This was a view expressed strongly by service users themselves. Moreover, it is of even less comfort for them to know that there is every possibility that the same service deficit will soon apply to them because of the considerable turnover of staff. We firmly believe that the existence of 22 different pay and benefits packages for qualified social workers is difficult to justify and unworkable in the existing labour markets, and must be attended to.

The Welsh Assembly Government's vision for public services in Wales, "Making the Connections", places collaboration as preferable to competition as a strategic base. There is massive scope for collaboration on a number of issues, including recruitment, training and staff development, pay and benefits. This collaboration must apply, of course, not only to local authorities but also to the Welsh Assembly Government. For example, it would be helpful if a commissioning framework for the recruitment of social workers was developed, possibly on a regional basis, which would include consideration of the creation of local authority-led agencies. Good practice must be shared more systematically. The systematic evaluation of what works best and guidance on innovative recruitment methods would be useful contributions to helping authorities respond. Advantage must be taken of the opportunities presented through devolution and the publication of "Making the Connections" by adopting all-Wales approaches.

A universally applicable set of definitions of roles and responsibilities for social workers consulted upon and agreed through the work of this group, which reflects user and carer input and the Care Council's Code of Practice, represents a strong starting point for this greater collaboration. Along with the National Occupational Standards for Social Work, these should guide colleges and others in their thinking about the training needed to become a qualified social worker. They also provide the opportunity to re-launch the profession in Wales and maximise the benefits of registration and the new social work degree. Local authorities and training organisations must work together with SSIW and the Care Council to support the developments in social work training and the review of the PQ framework to prioritise the creation of a model of learning and developmental experience for social workers in their first year in employment. Social workers must also play their part in responding to the strategy we are suggesting by consistently demonstrating practice, conduct and performance at a high professional level.

Addressing pay will be a more difficult task, especially with local job evaluation reaching a conclusion in many local authorities. We believe, however, that something must be done about the inconsistency of pay rates across Wales. Ways must be found of achieving a more appropriate pay position across Wales without offending the requirements of local job evaluation. It is not possible at this stage, nor within our brief, to be explicit about the levels of pay appropriate within any new permanent pay scales, or prescribe precisely the detail of new permanent pay structures. However, it is possible to recommend the factors which should influence structures and suggest how the market could be stabilised in the short term. In this respect, it is recommended that local authorities give a commitment to work immediately towards placing social worker pay at levels commensurate with the higher rates currently available in Wales, and subsequently maintain that consistent approach until the longer term position is agreed. The achievement of this will be challenging in the absence of national pay bargaining but we believe this report will greatly inform the work we would like to see follow its

publication. We understand that the application of appropriate market supplements may enable local job evaluation criteria to be met alongside our desired outcomes. We must also address the inconsistency of benefits packages and in this respect, we are recommending the development of a core suite of benefits at a national level which become the benchmark standard for local authorities.

It is important to remember that we are not a Pay Review Group but the evidence we have gathered would logically lead to an indicative interim remuneration package which included a minimum starting rate of pay equivalent to SCP 30 (£23,265 per annum), a maximum rate of pay equivalent to SCP 38 (£29,004) and progression for those who demonstrate they make an additional contribution to the work of their authorities. This contribution should relate to employer recognition of a social worker's potential and could be specific responsibilities in practice or organisational development. Examples could include providing practice assessment on a regular basis and/or sustained commitment to CPD as demonstrated through completion of PQ awards or modules. The maximum rate of pay for those particular social workers would then be extended to SCP 40 (£30,747).

It goes without saying, therefore, that authorities will need to not only find ways of implementing our suggestions which can be justified in the light of relevant labour market considerations, but also commit to not offering additional incentives in the interim to attract staff. The rationale for an interim adjustment is not only to stabilise the market in the longer term but also to provide a better basis than present for enabling quicker progress on the further work needed to arrive at a new long-term strategy to deal with the pay issue. It will be important that social workers' pay, now and in the future, reflects the strongly held view by the majority of those consulted that differentials based on client groupings are not appropriate. Instead, additional rewards should be associated with achievements such as gaining post qualifying awards or contributing significantly to practice learning.

There must also be proper career pathways for social workers. In this context, the availability of posts of senior social work practitioner is critical. Such posts do not explicitly exist in all Welsh local authorities and, where they do, are not always identifiable as part of a clear career structure. The roles and responsibilities of social work at a senior level and the qualifying criteria for progression to senior social work practitioner positions vary between authorities. These variations have been influenced by the need to meet the demands of increasing expectations and recruitment and retention difficulties. They have often taken staff away from direct practice, and are considered to have contributed to some of the unhelpful movement of social workers. Explicitly defined positions of Senior Social Work Practitioner should be established in all Welsh local authorities and more consistency of methods for appointments to such positions is also required. A set of core duties and responsibilities for senior social work practitioners, arrived at through the consultation processes adopted within our research, should now be applied across all local authorities in Wales. These duties and responsibilities must centre on practice, coaching and mentoring. Where authorities determine that the social work management function needs additional capacity, this should not compromise the role of the senior social work practitioner. Either different posts would need to be created to discharge the managerial functions or other solutions found. Senior social work practitioners should only undertake such functions when absolutely necessary and then on a short term basis, or as part of a career development opportunity which enables them to gain experience of the management role. In short, we should aspire to a position where senior social work practitioners are Wales' most experienced and skilled social workers, who have chosen to continue in practice rather than seek career progression via a management route.

We established that those social workers who became managers often did so without adequate preparation or management training. We are seeking the creation of new approaches to management development which help social workers and others move successfully into management and also help managers support each other better.

It is recommended that interim pay adjustments should also be applied to senior social work practitioners in a similar vein to that recommended for social workers. We believe senior practitioners' pay should be pitched at levels commensurate with the extended rate of pay for social workers but also contain a reward beyond that level for more experienced staff. It follows that progression to senior social work practitioner level should be for those who can demonstrate their ability to fulfil those core responsibilities which we are suggesting. It is not considered that this would be possible for social workers who do not have at least 3 years post qualification experience.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the salaries of a number of posts are related to the social worker scale, most obviously team managers, it is not within our brief to comment on any knock-on pay for those staff. It is clear, however, that there will be a knock-on effect, and that consideration of this should be an urgent task for the subsequent work we are suggesting needs to take place. The urgent action needed is to attend to the recruitment/retention issues affecting social workers and this must be achieved with the minimum amount of complication. However, it is clear that changes in pay differentials with those other staff are not sustainable for any great length of time and it is essential, therefore, that pay issues are considered without delay.

Interim arrangements must be seen as just that – an initiative to end the current individualistic solutions, lay down a better platform for the local determination of new longer-term pay scales, and demonstrate immediately the ability of Welsh local government to collaborate on major issues, thereby meeting its commitment to improving social services in Wales. We are in little doubt that something has to be done very soon about social workers' pay, as part of resolving the recruitment / retention problems we have identified. Directors of Social Services, corporate managers and political leaders in local government, and the Welsh Assembly Government must all commit to finding the necessary resources to achieve this. The WLGA must do everything in its power to press the case for resources. Directors will find it particularly difficult to find the additional funds needed when so many are reporting budget pressures and if they are also being asked to make efficiency savings. The real agenda is the improvement of Wales Social Services, and, therefore, all parties, including WAG, must find ways of generating the funding. We estimate the additional costs of increases in pay along the lines we are suggesting would lead to a total additional cost in the future of around £3.75m per annum for social workers and senior social work practitioners, which amounts to about 5.1% of the current pay bill for those groups. A further £500,000 approximately would be needed to attend to the knock on effect on other posts. These figures do not take account of expected efficiency savings arising from the expected slow down in staff movement, and the greater collaboration which we are promoting.

Attention to pay, however, will only be effective if equal attention is given to those issues currently adversely affecting the wellbeing of social workers as employees, and therefore retention. There are a number of measures which could be taken to support this. Developing national minimum standards of working conditions would be a relevant action point as would the development of a common approach to workload management. At a broader level, we want to encourage the involvement of inspectors and regulators in ensuring that good practice in recruitment and retention is highlighted. It is accepted that some authorities need to improve their responses to the challenges presented by the workforce agenda and, in this case and others, we want regulators and inspectors to focus on solutions that are long-term and about

collaboration. They must be careful in their judgements whether the failure to recruit and retain social workers, and manage their attendance, should be regarded as a cause of under-performance or an example of it. Furthermore, inspectors must support all authorities, especially those facing special measures, not to be tempted to break away from any long-term collaboratively agreed approaches to pay, benefits and working conditions in order to resolve local recruitment/retention difficulties in the short-term. Improved capacity and capability will only be achieved by long-term approaches grounded in a clear service improvement agenda.

We see the role of inspectors and regulators as critical to the achievement of the changes we are suggesting. There is a significant opinion within social services authorities that the inspection and regulatory processes need to change and we are encouraged that there appears to be a commitment amongst the key regulatory and inspection bodies to review the framework in which they operate. We make a number of recommendations on the subject and hope that these are received in a spirit of partnership and not as a denial of the need for authorities to improve their social services and meet their accountabilities to the public.

Fulfilling our recommendations will depend upon those leaders of social care at Welsh ssembly and local government, professional bodies, training and education providers, regulators and inspectors, and employer organisations demonstrating the necessary commitment to take action. Even then, there is a possibility that local circumstances may contrive to create a return to some of the problems which have led to the current unsatisfactory situation. We feel it important, therefore, that a new National Advisory Body be established, of all those key partners who contributed to this work to oversee and advise on the issues we have found relevant in our deliberations. There are no additional costs to the establishment of this body although some funding will be needed if the gathering and analysis of workforce information is to remain, as it must, high on the agenda.

Some of our other recommendations will also need funding, not least, of course, the suggested increase in pay and benefits. Local authority political leaders, corporate managers and Directors of Social Services will need to consider the priority they give to this agenda but ultimately, we believe that WAG will need to ensure that the funding is available to convert our recommendations into action. In this context, it is worth highlighting two points. Firstly, some of our recommendations require no more than a change in attitude by certain key players. Secondly, there are savings which could be made through the implementation of a range of measures and collaborative working which would eliminate the inherent inefficiencies currently evident. The real gain, however, will be found in the improved level of service and the enhanced reputation Welsh local authorities will enjoy as custodians of the social services function.

To sum up, our research demonstrates that there is a great deal of interest in training to be a social worker and that the higher education institutions have the capacity to train more students. However, there is not capacity within local authorities to successfully manage more practice learning opportunities despite positive contributions in terms of guidance and funding from the Welsh Assembly Government on this subject. There is a need to introduce more innovative methods of practice learning and provide additional funding to accelerate traineeships to combat the recruitment/retention difficulties which are preventing the growth in placements. There is an urgent need to address the complex mix of issues affecting recruitment and retention which include unrealistic expectations of staff, a devaluation of the social work role, a poor public image, inadequate support systems and a negative drift of pay and benefits between social work and other professions. Inevitably, local solutions, based on a principle of competition for staff, have been sought to address what is a national issue. These have resulted in the problem being compounded by there now being 22 different responses in Wales. We believe that this

approach must end without delay and be replaced by one based on collaboration amongst 22 Welsh local authorities. We recommend a number of ingredients of a new strategy to achieve the changes necessary. Regulators and inspectors must support the new approaches by re-examining their contribution and by not encouraging local solutions which adversely affect capacity in other authorities. If vulnerable people in Welsh society are to receive the service they deserve from social services authorities through the contribution of social workers, the social work profession must be re-launched on a new platform of common roles and responsibilities and consistently high standards of working conditions, pay, benefits and career opportunities. Social workers must play their part by meeting the standards expected of their new level of professional status through consistently displaying demonstrable professional attitudes, behaviours and performance, and accepting personal accountability for the standard of their own professional practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No.	Recommendation	Lead/Joint Responsibility
<p><u>Roles and Responsibilities</u></p>		
<p>We recommend that:</p>		
1.	The agreed definitions for social workers and senior social work practitioners be accepted and used by all local authorities	LAs
2.	The profession in Wales be re-launched to highlight the agreed roles and responsibilities and other recommendations contained in this report	All
3.	The definitions be used to assist in the identification of the numbers of social workers required by local authorities and the skills mix of staffing complements	Care Council/LAs
4.	Employers and providers of social work education incorporate the agreed roles and responsibilities as a tool in the design, delivery and evaluation of social work degree programmes	LAs / Education providers /Care Council
5.	Regulators and inspectors support local authorities' efforts to ensure that resources are channelled towards front line services by ensuring that the demands on local authorities to provide information and produce plans have an appropriate balance between outcomes and processes	SSIW/Wales Audit Office/Other regulators
<p><u>Recruitment and Retention</u></p>		
<p>We recommend that:</p>		
6.	Local authorities put in place collaborative mechanisms to replace competitive initiatives as a means of ensuring more	WLGA/LAs/ ADSS

Social Work in Wales: A Profession to Value

	effective recruitment and retention of social workers	
7.	Social care leaders commit to new ways of addressing the issues and to respecting the impact of competitive recruitment on each other	All
8.	Local authority leaders and senior managers ensure that Social Services are a key corporate priority and are supported by adequate funding to perform successfully	LAs/WLGA
9.	The WLGA, through its Nine Commitments: - support the principle of the social care sector being one sector with one workforce by actively encouraging further collaboration and a culture of “Wales Social Services” - ensure that the concept of ‘Wales Social Services’ is pursued by gaining the agreement of all Welsh local authorities to be collectively responsible for the successful delivery of social services	WLGA
10.	A national strategic advisory body, made up of relevant parties concerned with the social services workforce agenda, be created to advise local authorities on how to continue to address the issues identified in this report	WLGA/All
11.	Local authorities pool resources and support each other in the recruitment of social workers	LAs
12.	The effectiveness of recruitment methods, including advertising, be the subject of ongoing evaluation. LA’s move towards using signpost advertising and the new advertising services framework contract system developed by the WLGA	LAs/WLGA
13.	A resource pack identifying best practice in recruitment advertising be developed	WLGA/ADSS/ HRD (Wales

Social Work in Wales: A Profession to Value

14.	Local authorities adopt more innovative methods to recruit social workers based on an evaluation of what works best	LAs
15.	A commissioning framework for the recruitment of social workers be developed, possibly on a regional basis, which includes consideration of the creation of local authority-led recruitment agencies	HRD (Wales)/ ADSS
16.	SSIW commission work which leads to better management of the workload of staff and middle managers based on a common approach to workload management	SSIW
17.	Local authorities develop and implement supervision policies which cover case management, clinical case analysis and personal development	LAs
18.	Social workers consistently demonstrate their personal responsibility for fulfilling the requirements of their professional status, including their own continuous professional development, and their obligations under the Care Council for Wales Code of Practice	Social Workers
19.	Good quality workforce information, upon which strategic and operational decisions can be based, continues to be collected, analysed and monitored as a priority function of local authorities. Agreement be reached amongst all parties concerned with the social care workforce about 'what, when and how' information should be collected	LAs All
20.	Regulators and inspectors work with local authorities and WLGA to find ways of achieving a lower level of regulation and inspection which takes account of the overall scrutiny regime within which local authorities operate and the capacity problems identified within this report, whilst still maintaining an appropriate level of open public accountability	SSIW/Wales Audit Office/Other regulators/LAs/ WLGA

Social Work in Wales: A Profession to Value

21.	<p>Regulators and inspectors, when seeking to ensure that a local authority has effectively addressed workforce issues, support long-term solutions based on collaboration and not short-term local solutions which adversely affect performance in other local authorities</p> <p><u>Training and Staff Development</u></p> <p>We recommend that:</p>	SSIW/Wales Audit Office/Other regulators
22.	Care Council for Wales, employers and higher education institutions ensure that flexible routes to social work qualification training are available which enable all individuals in Wales to access training locally	Care Council/ LAs/HEIs
23.	WAG maintain and enhance funding and support to enable an acceleration of secondments / traineeships	WAG
24.	SSIW, local authorities, Care Council for Wales and training organisations work together, as part of the implementation of the new PQ framework to prioritise the introduction of a model for learning and development for social workers in their first year in employment.	All
25.	Local authorities collaborate with each other and other organisations concerned with the delivery of the new degree programmes to develop more creative approaches to practice learning opportunities including the development of student units, based on guidance contained in “Ensuring Consistency”.	LAs/Care Council/ Providers of degree courses
26.	Care Council for Wales develop guidance and best practice on innovative models for practice learning, particularly student units	Care Council
27.	Local authorities develop pathways for career progression that reflect the importance of maintaining competence, CPD and	LAs

Social Work in Wales: A Profession to Value

	post qualifying awards	
28.	Posts of senior social work practitioner, whose core functions must relate primarily to practice and coaching/mentoring be created in all Welsh local authorities	LAs
29.	SSIW and the Care Council for Wales, working with employers, create new approaches to management development which help social workers and others move successfully into management and also help managers support staff better	SSIW/ Care Council
30.	Local authorities review the use of training agreements which restrict staff from moving in favour of a new collaborative approach to training and staff secondments	LAs
31.	Care Council for Wales research the need for a training and development programme for those choosing to re-enter the profession following a break in practice	Care Council
32.	Care Council for Wales lead work to ensure that innovative and flexible arrangements are in place in all parts of Wales at qualifying and post qualifying level to secure a sufficient supply of social workers capable of delivering services through the medium of Welsh	Care Council
	<u>Pay, Benefits and Working Conditions</u>	
	We recommend that:	
33.	The pay of social workers increase on an interim basis to an indicative level commensurate with the higher levels currently paid by Welsh local authorities	All
34.	Work begins immediately, which takes account of this research, to examine how a level of pay can be maintained for social workers which is equitable when viewed from an all-Wales	All

Social Work in Wales: A Profession to Value

	perspective and which reflects an appropriate relationship with related professions and the agreed roles and responsibilities	
35.	Local authorities apply approaches to pay structures which have inbuilt rewards for demonstrable added value such as achieving post qualifying awards and contain no differentials based on client groupings	All
36.	The pay of senior social work practitioners be placed on an interim basis at an indicative level commensurate with the higher indicative range recommended for social workers	All
37.	Local authorities use the roles and responsibilities for social workers outlined in this report to ensure that job evaluation for social workers reflects the full range of duties they carry out	LAs
38.	A core suite of benefits and conditions of service for social workers be developed at a national level as the benchmark standard for local authorities. Further consideration be given to how this standard can be implemented across all authorities	HRD (Wales)/ ADSS
39.	National minimum standards of working conditions be developed, implemented and adhered to by local authorities	HRD (Wales)/ADSS
40.	This report forms the basis for a wider national debate on all those issues contained within it which require further attention	All
41.	“One size fits all” solutions be avoided by local authorities when seeking to address the employment issues facing social workers	LAs

N.B.

(1) Where recommendations apply to ‘all’, this should be interpreted as all those partners involved in the creation of this report and any others interested in the future of social work and social workers.

(2) Where specific recommendations require funding, it is assumed all parties accept responsibility for this including WAG. We would wish to see WAG fund any development work generated by our recommendations.

APPENDIX 2

Report on Denbighshire's current position in relation to key issues in the ADSS report, 'Social Work in Wales, A Profession to Value.'

The purpose of this report is to compare the current situation in Denbighshire with the results of the research carried out by the Association of Directors in Social Services multi agency group on the recruitment and retention of local authority social workers in Wales, and contained in the report 'Social Work in Wales: A Profession to Value.'

The Corporate Director of Personal Services will outline Denbighshire's response to the recommendations in her report to Cabinet for September 28th 2005. The detail behind that report is outlined below.

The ADSS report starts with the summary and recommendations which are based on four key sections that feed into the 41 recommendations.

These are:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Recruitment and Retention
- Training and Staff Development
- Pay, Benefits and Working conditions.

1. Roles and Responsibilities.

- 1.1 Denbighshire does have a standard job description which was based on the core competences of Social Work and a standard job description for Senior Practitioners.
- 1.2 The context of the job varies and in some jobs more detail is added to the main accountabilities to give a clearer description of the role in relation to the specific Service.
- 1.3 However it had been agreed that work on the Social Worker job description was needed to reflect the national occupational standards and reinforce standardisation across Services.
- 1.4 Therefore the proposed roles and responsibilities in the ADSS report could be used in order to move toward a more standard job description. This would need to include the reference to the Code of practice which should then be used in the revised Performance Appraisal process.
- 1.5 Similarly the job description for a Senior Social Work Practitioner should be up dated. The actual role described in the report is not that different to how the Senior Practitioners have been used in Denbighshire.
- 1.6 The main difference is in order to emphasise their practice as opposed to management role, Denbighshire introduced Deputy Team Managers in Children Services. This is not the case in Adult Services, and we need to ensure there is parity in the two services, and we need to be clear what level of supervision and management we expect of this role.
- 1.7 The other development is that the report includes '*undertaking Approved Social Work duties, joint investigation of child abuse, joint investigation of vulnerable adults as appropriate to relevant specialisms*' in the core components. (P 61) Currently we pay

APPENDIX 2

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an extra payment for ASW duties. We could open up progression to the Senior Practitioner role to those qualified ASWs with 5 years experience and those with additional qualifications and duties in joint investigation. Including the duties in this role would give greater career development opportunities for practitioners.

- 1.8 As the report recommends these actions should be done in consultation with neighbouring authorities to standardise the situation in Wales.

2. Recruitment and Retention.

- 2.1 Denbighshire contributed to the both the employers and staff surveys used by the ADSS task group.
- 2.2 We have lower than average numbers of social workers but as we are one of the smallest Authorities this may not be surprising. The number of social workers has risen from 71 in September 2003 to 91 in September 2004.
- 2.3 Comparing the published statistics for 2003/04 based on the returns to the Local Government Data Unit for 30 September 2004, (which includes Team Managers,) Denbighshire has 109, Conwy 122, Flintshire 111, and Wrexham 125.
- 2.4 In 2004/05 8 social workers left Children's Services which equated to 21% of the social work posts. At the time of writing September 2005 there are 2 Team Manager vacancies, 2 Senior Practitioner vacancies and 6 social worker vacancies. There has been some progress with two teams having recruited successfully and being fully staffed but in contrast one team where over half the staff have left within a 6 month period
- 2.5 Denbighshire were one of the 84% of Authorities reporting difficulties in recruiting social workers to Children's Services and were above average in the costs of agency staff however the average was influenced by some authorities reporting very low spending on agency staff. There are still Senior Practitioner posts which remain vacant after 4 months of advertising.
- 2.6 Denbighshire has an internal workforce strategy group which is responsible for overseeing and developing initiatives in relation to recruitment and retention, the table attached outlines the actions taken and the further work planned.
- 2.7 Comparing our actions with table 3/15 in the report we have used 15 of the top 20 incentives. However we have not used a general increase in salary which is highest rated incentive. (table 3/15 and 3/16) Further evidence of these key areas for action is outlined in table 3/21
- 2.8 In the survey of those who left authorities across Wales, the four top reasons for leaving previous posts were cited as management, work conditions, career opportunities, and pay related.
- 2.9 We are looking to address these areas in work on retention with a training needs analysis for Service and Team Managers; continued work on office accommodation and work life balance; and lining career development with reviewing pay scales.

APPENDIX 2

Report on Denbighshire's current position in relation to key issues in the ADSS report, 'Social Work in Wales, A Profession to Value.'

- 2.10 Another high priority for improvement is sickness absence which continues to be high in social work teams and as the report comments compounds the problems in retention and recruitment.

3. Training and Staff Development

- 3.1 The report identifies the twin issues of the interest in social work training and recruiting people to the profession and the development and training of qualified workers.
- 3.2 Denbighshire has a good record in staff achieving qualifications. The and Trainee scheme initially for unqualified staff in social work posts 8years ago and then by open advert internally with a view to moving to recruitment of external trainees who work for Denbighshire for a year prior to taking their degree.
- 3.3 We have had problems in recent years in recruiting Practice Teachers as we had a shortage of experienced staff in Children's Services and restructuring of teams in Adult Services has led to teams focusing on the changes rather than taking students. Work has been done to improve this and the Department has made a major contribution to the development of the new social work degree in North Wales.
- 3.4 However this new development has meant a high demand on the time of the Staff Development Officers and there is now a gap in the training and development offered to existing staff in the development of post qualifying practice skills.
- 3.5 We do not have any specific posts of practice assessors which are recommended in the report and we recognise will be needed to offer sufficient learning opportunities to degree students. This will be a pressure on the budget from 2006/07, but could be a career development opportunity which contributes to retention of staff.
- 3.6 It has also been noted in the report on Adult Services by the SSIW that Denbighshire's own spending in comparison with the Social Care Workforce Development grant has fallen to below the Welsh average.

4. Pay, Benefits and Working Conditions.

- 4.1 The salary scale for Social Workers in Denbighshire runs from SCP (Spinal Column Point) 22 paid until qualification is confirmed by the Exam Board in September when they move to SCP 26, a further move up the scale to 28 is achievable after 6 months and satisfactory progress in social work competence. SCP 31- 34 = Level 3 applicable after 2 years and completion of progression submission or PQ1. Senior Practitioners are paid two further points 35,36, Deputy Team Managers 36-39 Team Managers 39 – 42.
- 4.2 SCP 26 is the average minimum starting salary for social workers in Wales with the average maximum between SCP 36 and 37. Senior Practitioners salaries rose to an average of SCP 38.
- 4.3 The report recommends an interim salary scale for Social Workers across Wales which would start at SCP 30 and rise to 38, with 39 – 40 for Senior Practitioners.
- 4.4 This would have the knock on effect of needing to move Deputy Team Managers to 40 – 42 and Team Managers 42 – 45.

APPENDIX 2

Report on Denbighshire's current position in relation to key issues in the ADSS report, 'Social Work in Wales, A Profession to Value.'

- 4.5 Initial costing of simply moving all staff onto the new salary scale would be an additional cost of £95,898 per annum. However this would disproportionately benefit newly qualified workers who would gain up to £3,000 whereas experienced workers at top of scale would only gain £546. Therefore some adjustment could be made such as moving newly qualified workers up to SCP 28 after 6 months and then 30 after a year's experience and seeking to give them a protected caseload and additional training during the year as will be required after the new degree.
- 4.6 Those at top of Level 3 could be moved 2 points up the scale to 36. The cost of this for those currently in post would be an additional £120,966 annually starting in 2006/07.
- 4.7 Another option would be to reward those who have been qualified 9/10 years by moving them straight to SCP 38 top of the new scale, but the costs of this would be very high.
- 4.8 The advantage of the new scale is that it would get rid of additional payments for those undertaking additional duties such as ASW or Practice Teaching / Assessing or specialising in joint investigation work. In recognition of their work they could start at 36 and progress up to Senior Practitioner level.
- 4.9 Denbighshire has been piloting a range of work life balance options. Wrexham has successfully introduced such schemes to social workers with the assistance of Chwarae Teg. We would benefit from such assistance and the learning from these experiences before finalising our schemes and extending them formally.

The recommendations in the report would now need to be incorporated into the Human Resources Strategy, and form part of the action plan for the regional Social Care Partnership, the Denbighshire Health Social Care and Well Being Workforce Development group and the Internal Workforce Strategy group.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR M.A. German, Lead Member for Children and Young People

DATE: 27 September 2005

SUBJECT: Communities First

1 DECISION SOUGHT

For Cabinet to

- 1.1. Note the changes to the Communities First programme set out below
- 1.2. Agree participation in the temporary governance arrangements for West Rhyl Communities First as set out in paragraph 2.6
- 1.3. Agree to receive a further report when the “projects” to be taken forward in West Rhyl are negotiated, and the governance arrangements for South West Rhyl have been clarified.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- 2.1 Major changes have taken place in the Denbighshire Communities First programme since the last report to Cabinet in November 2004. The changes have arisen from the WAG work programme reported in November 2004 and culminating now.

BACKGROUND

- 2.2 Communities First is the Assembly’s flagship programme to tackle poverty and deprivation in Wales’ most deprived wards. The programme was launched in 2001 and, in Denbighshire, the wards of Rhyl West and Rhyl South West were agreed as “Communities First” wards. Substantial resources have been available, on a bidding basis, to meet needs identified in Community Action Plans developed by credible and correctly constituted Communities First Partnerships. The Communities First programme in Denbighshire has been characterised by dissent and delay to the frustration of all parties.

- 2.3 In November 2004, Cabinet agreed to the following WAG proposals that:

- two Communities First partnerships should be established – one for West Rhyl and one for South West Rhyl.
- a series of workshop sessions be facilitated by WAG with community representatives and resident organisations to explore how the new partnerships could be taken forward
- that an alternative Grant Recipient Body to the local authority be identified due to local tensions.

Since November 2004, WAG has been engaged with this process. Liaison between WAG and the local authority has continued both through the involvement of local members in West and South West Rhyl in the facilitated process and periodic meetings between WAG officials and the Corporate Directors for Environment and Personal Services.

West Rhyl

2.4 In May 2005, the authority received a letter from WAG as follows:-

“As a result of the extensive work programme initiated by the National Assembly Communities First Directorate, we now have a better understanding of the issues that have caused the failure to progress the Communities First Programme in Rhyl and specifically West Rhyl.

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration has concluded that the Communities First Programme in its existing format and structure in West Rhyl is not viable. We must, therefore, inform you that notice is given to end the existing funding with effect from Monday the 15th August 2005.

The Minister wishes to stress, however, that support for West Rhyl is not being withdrawn, but that a different model for delivering assistance is required.

The Minister will appoint a new Grant Recipient Body (GRB) to receive Communities First funding for West Rhyl. The existing Interim Steering Group will be disbanded. For a two year period there will be no standard Communities First Partnership, but the Programme will be progressed around a series of project groups. The new GRB will be allocated finances to employ a Communities First Project Manager. Each project group will have community representation, which will initially be based on the membership of the Interim Steering Group.

We will arrange a meeting with Denbighshire County Council to discuss and agree a project portfolio, which will form the basis of the new structure. This will mirror the Communities First Vision Framework and not be restricted to any one theme.

We will facilitate a range of further meetings between the new GRB and the County Council to discuss joint working protocols and implications to any existing staff”

This followed shortly afterwards by confirmation that the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration had appointed North Wales Police as the new Grant Recipient Body for Communities First (West Rhyl).

2.5 WAG, local authority and police efforts subsequently has focused in 2 areas: -

- discharging responsibilities to existing staff, finalising financial arrangements and dealing with other matters (e.g. use of a unit at Station Buildings, the current base for Communities First staff)
- beginning to identify the means by which theme/project based work in West Rhyl could move forward.

Currently the Police propose to employ a Project Manager to oversee Communities First work on a number of projects – precise nature and terms of reference to be agreed – but linked to the agenda set out in “Rhyl Going Forward”.

2.6 For the time being, rather than establishing a Partnership as originally conceived under Communities First guidance, it is envisaged that the Project Manager will report to a Project Board including representatives of the Police, WAG, the local authority (currently

the Corporate Directors of Environment and Personal Services) and representatives of health organisations. The detailed terms of reference for the Project Board are to be agreed at a meeting on 28th September. Local authority representatives will ensure the terms of reference include clear arrangements for reporting back to local authority members and for ensuring work is taken forward coherently across both West and South West Rhyl.

South West Rhyl

- 2.7 The WAG facilitated process in South West Rhyl led to the establishment of a Steering Committee for a new South West Rhyl Communities First Partnership. Both local elected members have been involved in this to some degree.
- 2.8 The Steering Committee have been through a process to select a new Grant Recipient Body for Communities First and have selected the Cooperative Group (who are also the GRB for Communities First in Pembrokeshire). The local authority did bid to be the GRB for South West Rhyl but were not successful.
- 2.9 The local authority has sought clarity from WAG as to how the local authority's current responsibilities for South West Rhyl Communities First are to transfer to the Cooperative Group. WAG has begun discussions with the new GRB but no detailed proposals are yet forthcoming. It is expected that existing South West Rhyl Communities First staff will transfer to the new GRB.
- 2.10 It is anticipated that the Steering Committee in South West Rhyl will form the nucleus of a new Communities First Partnership for the ward, constructed in accordance with WAG Communities First Guidance (i.e. on the basis of the three thirds principle – one third community representatives, one third representatives of statutory organisations, one third representatives from the business/voluntary sector). No proposals have yet been made as to how the local authority might be represented on the Partnership. It would be expected that local ward members be considered as potential “community sector” representatives with perhaps additional officer representation via the “statutory sector” grouping within the partnership.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

S40 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 in conjunction with powers under S126 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All Communities First activity is currently funded 100% by WAG Communities First grant. WAG have undertaken that any costs arising from the termination of current GRB arrangements will be covered by WAG. There are, therefore, no cost implications for the Authority.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The setting up of the new GRB arrangements and the Assembly undertaking to fund the termination costs of the present arrangements has removed the risk to the Council of grant clawback in the event of project failure.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 6.1 Extensive stakeholder consultation has been undertaken by WAG as part of their facilitation programme in West Rhyl. This has included local ward members.
- 6.2 Local members have also been involved in the stakeholder consultation and in the Steering Committee in South West Rhyl. They are concerned that the Steering Committee has no constitution, however, and are dissatisfied with the patchy level of involvement they feel they have had.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

- 7.1 Communities First is designed to be a cross-cutting programme tackling all aspects of poverty and deprivation, linked to the full range of statutory services. It has not been operating effectively to do this, so alternatives which offer the prospect of progressing the programme constructively are to be welcomed.
- 7.2 It is critical that effective ways are found for the West and South West Rhyl Communities First programmes to be linked, and for both to play an effective part in the Rhyl Going Forward Programme. There is currently a risk of fragmentation with the involvement of new personnel and two new Grant Recipient Bodies.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Note the changes to the Communities First programme set out above
- 8.2 Agree participation in the temporary governance arrangements for West Rhyl Communities First as set out in paragraph 2.6
- 8.3 Agree to receive a further report when the “projects” to be taken forward in West Rhyl are negotiated, and the governance arrangements for South West Rhyl have been clarified.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR M A GERMAN, LEAD MEMBER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

DATE: 27 September 2005

SUBJECT: CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

1 DECISION SOUGHT

Cabinet to agree Children's Services Improvement Priorities for 2005-6.

1. Improve Placement Choice and quality for Children Looked After by increasing the number of Denbighshire Foster Carers and their range of skills.
2. Improve the timeliness, quality and quantity of initial and core assessments to Children in Need.
3. Deliver an effective well used preventative service which reduces the risk of harm to vulnerable children and reduces the number of children who need to be looked after by the council.
4. Continue to improve the quality of care planning and improve the life chances of Children Looked After.
5. Introduce a commissioned approach to the development and delivery of services underpinned by improved contracting arrangements.
6. Improve Staff Retention and Recruitment and make Denbighshire Children's Services a rewarding place to work.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- Denbighshire Children's Services continues to operate in a complex environment with a wide range of new requirements and duties arising from new legislation, new policy initiative from the Welsh Assembly Government and requirements of regulating bodies such as Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales. The scale of the improvement journey required for the service to meet this agenda continues to be considerable although positive progress is being achieved in some areas.
- Aims and objectives for Social Services including Children's Services have been established for 2005/06 in line with corporate objectives, these however require improved clarity and revision.

- Business Planning in Children's Services in 2005/06 has reviewed a plethora of historical action plans and responses to inspection reports. As a result this plan contains over 150 primary actions which in turn will require many hundreds of secondary actions to complete. With this context focus can be lost. Often doing the small things consistently well is what makes the biggest difference to the lives of children and families. This focus needs to be retained within the day to day actions of individual staff and departmental teams.
- Clarity of core priorities for improvement is important for:
 - Service Users to anticipate the phasing of improvement to the quality of services that they receive
 - Staff to retain clarity and unity of purpose
 - Partner Agencies to support the work of Children's Services
 - Elected Members to monitor and scrutinise performance
- Prior to the full inspection of Children's Services by SSIW in March 2005, it is timely to renew and agree the core priorities for the Service.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Children Act 1989

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

This improvement plan will be delivered from existing budgets for Children's Services and within the budget plan to be agreed for 2006/2007.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

Costs in connection with this proposal will need to be contained within the service budget concerned.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Business Plans/Children First Plans developed within stakeholders. Denbighshire LEA, Denbighshire LHB, Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust, and North Wales Police.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

7.1 Corporate aims and objectives 2005/2006:
CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5, CO6, CO10, CO11, CO12.

7.2 Social Services aims and objectives 2005/2006:-

1.10 To continually improve the standard of Child Care Practice and governance with particular reference to:

- 1.10a Children Looked After
- 1.10b Children with Disabilities

- 1.10c Young Carers
- 1.10d Care Leavers
- 1.10e Children in Need

1.11 To improve access to services to include improved referral management in Children and Family Services.

1.12 To drive forward a programme of performance management and improvement within Children's Services.

2.1 To develop a range of Commissioning and Contracting within Children's Services.

2.2 To maximise funding and resources for people who have Social Care needs.

2.3 To continue to develop an effective placement strategy for Fostering and Residential Care Services.

3.1 To develop and implement effective recruitment, retention and workforce planning.

4.2 To improve care planning and management in Children and Family Services.

4.3 To develop participation, advocacy and complaints approaches in conjunction with partners of Children and Family Service Users.

8 RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet to agree Children's Services Improvement Priorities for 2005/2006 as being:

1. Improve Placement Choice and quality for Children Looked After by increasing the number of Denbighshire Foster Carers and their range of skills.
2. Improve the timeliness, quality and quantity of initial and core assessments to Children in Need.
3. Deliver an effective well used preventative service which reduces the risk of harm to vulnerable children and reduces the number of children who need to be looked after by the council.
4. Continue to improve the quality of care planning and improve the life chances of Children Looked After.
5. Introduce a commissioned approach to the development and delivery of services underpinned by improved contracting arrangements.
6. Improve Staff Retention and Recruitment and make Denbighshire Children's Services a rewarding place to work.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

DENBIGHSHIRE CHILDRENS SERVICES 2005/06

CONTEXT:

Denbighshire Children's Services is responsible for the delivery of Personal Social Services to children and their families. Areas of responsibility are defined by underpinning legislation such as the 1989 Children Act. During the current financial year the implementation of two significant pieces of legislation, the Adoption & Children Act 2003 and the Children Act 2004 places significant further duties and responsibilities upon the service.

This framework of legal responsibilities and duties towards vulnerable children and families is highly regulated. The full impact of the Care Standards Act 2000 will be felt later this year when in November 2005 the Adoption Service will be subject to a first inspection by the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW). At the same time there will be a full Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (SSIW) inspection of Children Services which will be completed in early 2006 followed by the third (annual) CSIW inspection of the Fostering Service. Children Services has in September 2005 completed a second audit of services to Children in Need (a follow up to the first Victoria Climbié audit by the Welsh Assembly Government) and an audit of services to Children Looked After. Inspection / review of these audits is also anticipated.

Prior to April 2005 Children Services was operating with a multiplicity of action plans which included:

- Historical Business Plans.
- Denbighshire County Council response to Telling Concerns (Children's Commissioner for Wales action plan).
- Victoria Climbié action plan.
- Children First Plan 2005/06
- Joint Review action plan.
- CSIW action plans for residential and fostering services.

For the financial year 2005/06 all outstanding actions have been encapsulated into one Business Plan. This means however that there are 150 primary actions for completion with more tasks anticipated as part of post inspection action planning.

Within this environment the potential to lose focus on the most important issues is self evident.

All staff in Children Services were consulted in December 2004 on the key priorities for improvement, staff were asked to identify the three main issues they

would like to see change by the end of 2005 and 2007. As might be expected there were many ideas and views, there was however, convergence around key issues.

CHILDRENS SERVICES STAFF CHANGE AGENDA 2005 (Key Points Summary):

1. Improved quality of foster care service including access of disabled children to respite care.
2. Improved access to IT equipment and client records system.
3. Development of additional resources to support families and to respond to those in crisis.
4. Improved working environment by clarifying the roles of teams, improving case transfer arrangements between teams and improving team communication.
5. Valuing staff by continuing to invest in training and delivering workload management.
6. Promoting the stability and continuity of staff (including foster carers).

CHILDRENS SERVICES STAFF CHANGE AGENDA 2007 (Key Points Summary):

1. Full and effective implementation of the replacement to Care.comm (PARIS) and the Integrated Childrens System.
2. Improved office accommodation, including better interview facilities and appropriate facilities for children.
3. Improved quality of services for Children Looked After including access to specialist and therapeutic services.
4. A stable, content and positive workforce receiving adequate remuneration for a job well done.
5. A clean bill of health from regulatory bodies, CSIW and SSIW.

ADDRESSING CHILDRENS SERVICES STAFF AGENDA FOR CHANGE 2005:

The views of staff about the service they wish to develop for Denbighshire children and families is eminently reasonable. Of the six core priorities identified all will be in the process of implementation if not fully completed by December 2005.

1. The foster care service remains subject to an improvement plan and has had a highly successful second inspection. The development of specialist respite foster care services to disabled children is planned and it is anticipated that a new service will be operational by mid 2006.

2. One to one computer access as been reached for all staff in Children Services and the department is now in the process of establishing the detailed specification for the new IT system PARIS.
3. Childrens Services have been restructured and a substantial new preventative service will be available providing an Accommodation, Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse and Vulnerable Families Service with 12 Family Support Workers delivering this work. This is one of the most significant developments for Children Services in recent years. It will improve access to services and also be key in reducing Child Protection Registration and the admission of children into the Council's care. Importantly upstreaming preventative services in the medium term will improve the financial situation in Children Services.
4. The restructuring of the service and the development of new team remits including redeploying existing resources to create a dedicated team for children who are looked after will improve the work flows across the department and improve team morale and communication.
5. The department continues to have a good record in investing in staff training, as staffing levels begin to improve this will mean that it will be easier for staff to access this. A work load management tool is now fully developed and once in regular use across the department it will possible to consider the establishment of protected case loads for staff. Ensuring that staff work within a consistent environment with reasonable expectations placed upon them.
6. A stable and consistent workforce remains a goal of Denbighshire Children Services, (this aim is not dissimilar from any other children's departments). Well reported strategies are in place to deliver this in the medium to long term. A 'Here to Stay Group' has recently been established by the Head of Business Support Service working within Children Services to further develop the current approach to staff retention. In addition the department is currently reviewing options to deliver the ADSS report "Social Work in Wales, A Profession to Value". The Children and Families Senior Management Team is now permanently in post which will significantly increase the ability to take forward the wide ranging improvement agenda and the recruitment to vacant Team Manager posts is shortly to commence.

DEVELOPING THE IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES FOR CHILDRENS SERVICES 2005/06:

Reviewing the Business Plan for Childrens Services, the statutory and core performance indicators, the views of staff and feedback from SSIW and the Welsh Assembly Government. Six core priorities have been identified although clearly there is considerable other work to undertake across many areas. It is important that all staff, partner agencies and appropriate service users are aware of this priorities. A retained focus on these priorities is essential to delivering a safe, quality service to vulnerable children and families in Denbighshire.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES FOR CHILDRENS SERVICES:

1. Improvement placement choice and quality for Children Looked After by increasing the number of Denbighshire foster carers and their range of skills.
2. Improve the timeliness, quantity and quality of initial and core assessments to Children in Need.
3. Deliver an effective, well used, preventative service which reduces the risk of harm to vulnerable children and reduces the number of children who need to be looked after by the Council.
4. Continue to improve the quality of care planning and improve the life chances for Children Looked After.
5. Introduce a commissioned approach to the development and delivery of services underpinned by improved contracting arrangements.
6. Improve staff retention and recruitment and make Denbighshire Children and Family Services a rewarding place to work.

Delivering the Priorities:

The detailed underpinning action to deliver these core improvement priorities is contained within the simplified version of the Children's Services Business Plan, annex 1.

Actions 1 - 4 are monitored by the National Strategic Indicators and core set indicators for Children's Services. Some of which are linked to National Policy Agreements.

Nicola Francis
Head of Children and Family Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Plant a Theuluoedd

1 September 2005

CHILDRENS SERVICES SIMPLIFIED BUSINESS PLAN

2005 – 2008

**Nicola Francis
Head of Children and Family Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Plant a Theuluoedd**

User Impact/Outcome		People can access good quality services				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
11.3 To review and improve the current provision of Out of Hours Services <i>(in conjunction with Children's Services)</i> SSIW (A)	11.3.1 Maintenance of current model whilst research and negotiations continue	Current service maintained	Implement agreed 3 County model for Specialist Out of Hours Team		Neil Ayling /Peter Fowler/<i>Sue Dicks</i>	April 2006
11.4 To increase the take up of Direct Payments <i>(in conjunction with Children's Services)</i>	11.4.1 Direct Payments increased	Agree 3 county model for specialist Out of Hours team 50% increase across all user groups - LD			Yvonne Hughes/Peter Fowler/Helena Thomas/<i>David Hynes</i>	Sept 2005
	11.4.2 Successfully tender for Support Provider	Support Provider identified			Peter Fowler/ Anne Hughes-Jones/<i>Vicky Johnson</i>	July 2005

SSD Objective 3.1		To have a skilled and well trained workforce motivated to achieve high standards				
User Impact/Outcome		Staff with skills and qualifications available to achieve service priorities				
Improvement Actions	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
The number of social worker vacancies throughout the Department to be reduced.	Annual vacancy rate reduced to 5% = 4.5 posts	8% 10 posts	7%	5%	R. Hayes	Report June 2005 April 2006
Social Worker turnover rate to be reduced.	Annual turnover reduced to 10 %	17%	15%	10%	R. Hayes	Report June 2005 April 2006
Social work traineeships to be maintained and bursaries supported to increase recruitment in Children's Services	Recruitment of 2 Trainees every year	8 Total	8 Total	8 Total	R. Hayes	June 2005

Workload Management scheme introduced	Scheme confirmed and extended to all Children's and Adult Services	Extended to all Children's Social Work			R. Hayes	June 2005
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SSD Objective 1.4		To streamline arrangements for assessing needs across agency boundaries				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved access to Services and Referral Management				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
16.1 Review Service Eligibility Criteria (CL)	16.1.1 Eligibility thresholds agreed and implemented	Monitored and reviewed	Monitored and reviewed	Integration into Common Assessment Framework	Sue Dicks/Angela Mattison/Annemarie Brushett	October 2005
16.2 Improve signposting to and take-up of alternative advice and support services for families referred to Children and Family Social Services Department. (CL)	16.2.1 Distribute Family Support Directory on CD Rom to Teams for signposting to appropriate services	8 CD's circulated	Online directory established by Children's Information Bureau	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Peter Lund	May 2005
16.4 Review interface with the Hospital social work service to maintain working standards (CL)	16.4.1. Improved timescales achieved for Initial & Core Assessments	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Angela Mattison/Annemarie Brushett	Dec 2005

SSD Objective 1.4		To streamline arrangements for assessing needs across agency boundaries				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved assessment of need				

Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
17.1 Improve the quality and quantity of Health and Education contributions to assessment of Children in Need (CL)	17.1.1 Health and Education contributions to be evident in all initial and core assessments within timescales	Establish joint arrangements	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Angela Mattison/Annemarie Brushett/Team Managers	On-going
17.2 Improve timeliness and quality of initial and core assessments service response by review of the operation of the Intake and Assessment Duty systems (CL)	17.2.1. Improved timescales achieved for Initial & Core Assessments	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Angela Mattison/Annemarie Brushett	September 2005
17.2 Improve the timeliness and quality of Initial and Core Assessments (CF7.1 CF7.3)	17.2.1 Appointment of additional staffing to strengthen the audit process 17.2.2 implementation of Integrated Children's System	17.2.1 Additional staffing 17.2.2 First records piloted September 2005	17.2.1 Monitor and review 17.2.2 ICS exemplar implementation by September 2006	17.2.1 Monitor and review 17.2.2 Monitor and review	17.2.1 Sue Williams/Peter Lund 17.2.2 Sue Williams/Peter Lund	17.2.1 Oct 2005 17.2.2 Implement-ation by September 2006

	17.2.3 Training plan in place to support the implementation of the Integrated Children's System	17.2.3 Pilot staff trained August 2005	17.2.3 All staff trained by September 2006	17.2.3 Training needs reviewed	17.2.3 Sue Williams/Peter Lund	Training plan reviewed annually
	17.2.4 Care Planning & Performance revised protocols and procedures issued and implemented in Teams	17.2.4 Monitor and review	17.2.4 Monitor and review	17.2.4 Monitor and review	17.2.4 Sue Williams/Peter Lund/David Chamberlayne	October 2005
	17.2.5 Training for revised procedural manual	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Peter Lund/David Chamberlayne	October 2005
17.4 Review file structure and procedures to link with operational processes and PARIS electronic records	17.4.1 Review of file structure and procedures completed and implemented	Scoping exercise by March 06	Links made to ICS PARIS system	Implement Changes	Sue Williams/Sue Dicks/David Hynes	3 year programme

SSD Objective 1.10a		To continually improve the standards of childcare practice and governance				
User Impact/Outcome		Improve services for Children Looked After (10a)				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
18.1 Improve Health outcomes for Children Looked After (CF 2.1)	New Children Looked After practitioner appointed	Children First Targets met	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks	Appointment from October 2005

18.2 Improve Education planning and outcomes for Children Looked After (CF 2.1, CF 2.2)	18.2.1 Develop contributions from Career Service to Pathway Plans. 18.2.2 Maintain level of PEP's completed within 20 days of entering a new school	NAWPI/ Children First targets met	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks	
	18.2.3 Foster Carers provided with a copy 'A Guide to Education for Foster Carers'	Issued to all foster carers of school age children	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss	October 2005
18.4 Strengthen operational links with YOT re-LAC to reduce : • Remands to care • Incidences of ASBOs • Rates of offending (CF2.4)	Reduced rate of offending	Targets agreed with YOT	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes	As per Youth Justice Plan
18.5 Minimise the incidence of Children Looked After suffering significant harm (CF 3.2)	18.5.1 Incidents of significant harm to child looked after. 20.5.2 Implementation of a 'No Bin Bag' Strategy	Maintain current zero incidents 20.5.2 Strategy implement-ed	Monitor and review 20.5.2 Monitor and review	Monitor and review 20.5.2 Monitor and review	Sue Dicks 20.5.2 Sue Dicks	Reviewed annually via Children First 20.5.2 March 2006

	20.5.3 Agreement on revised parameters for Placement & Review Panel to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements for access to accommodation • matching to placements (including <i>support</i>) if accommodation required 	20.5.3 Revised terms of reference agreed; targets set.	20.5.3 Monitor and review	20.5.3 Monitor and review	20.5.3 David Hynes/Sue Dicks Julie Moss	20.5.3 October 2005
18.6 Maintain activity for School Action and School Action Plus twice yearly reviews (CF7.4)	Improve data collection arrangements	Data collection arrangements streamlined	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Ceri Ellis	December 2005

SSD Objectives 1.10a and e		To continually improve the standards of childcare practice and governance				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved Care Planning and management for children looked after (10a) and children in need (10e)				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
19.1 Ensure all Children Looked After have complete and updated LAC documentation, within required timeframe (CL CF 4.3)	18.1.1 Statutory timescales for Children Looked After documents are met	Targets met	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Dicks	March 2006

19.2 Ensure all Children Looked After have statutory review within required timescales. (CF 4.6)	18.2.1 Statutory timescales met	NAWPI/ Children First targets met	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Sue Dicks/David Hynes/Independent Reviewing Officer	On-going
19.3 Reduce incidence of children in need suffering repeated significant harm (CF 3.1)	18.3.1 Examine Re-referrals and referral rates	NAWPI targets met	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Dicks	March 2006
	18.3.2 Child Protection Conferences held within statutory timescales.	NAWPI targets met	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Trehearn	January 2006
19.4 Review Family and Support Service requirements	8.4.1. Family Support Strategy produced	Strategy produced	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/David Hynes/Sue Dicks	December 2005
	8.4.2 Re-commission RR Team and establish new services	Deliver revised Support Services	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/David Hynes/Sue Dicks	October 2005
19.5 Ensure all LAC files have a Case Chronology (CL)	Re-issue guidance to staff on 'significant events'	Guidance re- issued	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Dicks	October 2005
19.6 Maintain statutory minimum visits to Children Looked After (CF4.5, CL)	19.6.1 Improve recording and reporting arrangements for statutory visits	Required timescales met	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks	January 2006
	19.6.2 Identify system recording requirements for PARIS ITT	Requirements identified	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks	March 2006

19.7 Develop and deliver 'Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements	19.7.1 Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements met	Requirements delivered within timescale	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Trehearn	March 2006
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SSD Objective 1.10 c and e		To continually improve the standards of childcare practice and governance				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved services to Young Carers (10c) and Children in Need (10e)				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
20.1 Review range of service provision to Young Carers	Multi-agency Family Support Strategy agreed within Framework Partnership to include provision for Young Carers.	Review Service	Implement outcome of service review	Monitor and review	David Hynes	Revised procedures Dec 2005
20.2 Implement new regulations for Private Fostering	20.2.1 Private fostering policies and procedures developed 20.2.2 Private Fostering public information and communication processes established 20.2.3 Staff trained on new regs and procedures	Develop policies in accordance with regs. Appropriate publicity produced Training delivered	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes	October 2005
20.3 Promote healthy outcomes for Children in Need (CF 1.2; IEPR 7.4)	20.3.1 Multi-agency Family Support Strategy agreed with Framework Partnership, to include promotion of health of children in need.	19.3.1 Family Support Audit produced April 2005	19.3.1 Joint Family Support Strategy in agreed.	19.3.1 Joint strategy implemented	19.3.1 Sue Dicks	19.3.1 Within timescales of Family Support Strategy

	19.3.2 Agreement with Health on mechanisms for promoting health of CiN.	19.3.2 Inter-agency definitions and mechanisms agreed	19.3.2 Base line established	19.3.2 Monitored and reviewed	19.3.2 Sue Dicks	19.3.2 Children First timescales
20.4 Improve Child Protection Services (JR26)	20.4.1 Introduction of Child Assessment Framework 20.4.2 Required timescales for Case Conferences and Reviews met 20.4.3 Case Conferences and Reviews effectively operated and managed within 20.4.4 Statutory visits to Children on the Child Protection register maintained requirements	20.4.1 Co-ordinator appointed Required timescales met Requirements met Required timescales met	20.4.1 Child Assessment Framework implemented Monitored and reviewed Monitored and reviewed Monitored and reviewed	20.4.1 Monitored and reviewed Monitored and reviewed Monitored and reviewed Monitored and reviewed	Nicola Francis Sue Trehearn Sue Trehearn Sue Trehearn	January 2006 On-going
20.5 Ensure effectiveness of Family Group Conferencing to prevent children becoming looked after or to return them home from care (JR14B)	Targets met within provider contract	Contract reviewed quarterly	Contract reviewed quarterly	Contract reviewed quarterly	Sue Dicks/David Hynes/Sue Williams	Annual Contract

20.6 Develop use of Prevention and Review Panel (JR14B)	Develop and establish Terms of Reference for Panel	Terms of reference produced	Monitored and reviewed	Monitored and reviewed	Sue Dicks/David Hynes	October 2005
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SSD Objective 1.10a		To continually improve the standards of childcare practice and governance				
User Impact/Outcome		Improve services for Children Looked After				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
20.1 Promote Corporate Parenting strategy	Ensure new members briefed and information packs circulated	Hold an information session	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis	Autumn 2005
20.2 Improve services for Children Looked After See 21.1, 21.4, 21.7						
20.3 Ensure effective implementation of new Adoption and Children Act See 21.3						

SSD Objective 2.3	To continue to develop an effective placement strategy within fostering, adoption and residential care services
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User Impact/Outcome		Improve services for Children Looked After				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
21.1 Improve placement choice and stability through improved access and matching to placements (JR6b)	21.1.1 Implementation of revised Fostering Service policies and procedures	21.1.1 Policies and procedures completed	21.1.1 Monitor compliance	21.1.1 Monitor compliance	21.1.1 David Hynes/Julie Moss	21.1.1 Procedures completed October 2005
	21.1.2 Implementation of Adoption policies and procedures	21.1.2 Policies and procedures completed	21.1.2 Monitor compliance	21.1.2 Monitor compliance	21.1.2 David Hynes/Julie Moss	21.1.2 Interim Procedures complete Jan 2006
	21.1.3 Implement Foster care recruitment strategy	21.1.3 Strategy implemented	21.1.3 Strategy monitored and reviewed	21.1.3 Strategy monitored and reviewed	21.1.3 David Hynes/Julie Moss	
	21.1.4 Maintain quality in service provision in LA in-house residential care unit	21.1.4 Implement CSIW regs.	21.1.4 Monitor on-going compliance	21.1.4 Monitor on-going compliance	21.1.4 David Hynes/Anne Roberts	21.1.4 December 2005
	21.1.5 Participate contact collaborative with SCIE	21.1.5 Identify options for change/development	21.1.5 Implement agreed changes	21.1.5 Monitor and review	21.1.5 David Hynes/Sue Williams	21.1.5 Option appraisal March 2006

21.3 Review requirements of new Adoption and Children Act (CF 4.2)	21.3.1 Scope new Act requirements and produce implementation/delivery plan	21.3.1 Carry out review	21.3.1 Implement review findings	21.3.1 Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss	21.3.1 March 2006
	21.3.2 Review requirements for Adoption support provision	21.3.2 Carry out review	21.3.2 Implement review findings	21.3.2 Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss	23.3.2 March 2006
	21.3.3 Deliver staff training programme on requirements of new Adoption and Children Act	21.3.3 Specify training needs/develop programme	21.3.3 Implement Training programme	21.3.3 Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss/David Chamberlayne	23.3.3 March 2006
21.4 Deliver new project for short break services	21.4.1 Scope service components and agree contract	21.4.1 Implement new service	21.4.1 Monitor and review	21.4.1 Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Williams/Ian Jones	January 2006
21.4 Maintain a pool of foster care sufficient to provide quality placements to meet local need (CF 4.7)	21.4.1 Implementation of Fostering Recruitment Strategy to increase the number of approved foster carers.	21.4.1 Meet recruitment strategy targets	21.4.1 Meet recruitment strategy targets	21.4.1 Meet recruitment strategy targets	21.4.1 David Hynes/Julie Moss	21.4.1 Continuous recruitment via Recruitment Officer
	21.4.2 Implement new PfS scheme	21.4.2 Implement policies and procedures	21.4.2 Monitor and review	21.4.2 Monitor and review	21.4.2 David Hynes/Julie Moss	21.4.2 April 2005
	21.4.3 Appoint Foster Carer Recruitment Officer	21.4.3 Officer appointed	21.4.3 Monitor and review	21.4.3 Monitor and review	21.4.3 David Hynes/Julie Moss	21.4.3 September 2005

	21.4.4 Launch new image and publicity material for Denbighshire Fostering and Adoption services	21.4.4 Launch event June 2005	21.4.4 Monitor and review	21.4.4 Monitor and review	21.4.4 Sue Williams/Julie Moss/Recruitment Officer	21.4.4 June 2005
21.5 Complete and implement CSIW recommendations to Fostering Services	21.5.1 CSIW actions delivered	21.5.1 Monitored and review	21.5.1 Monitor and review	21.5.1 Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss	1 October 2005
21.6 Support Children's Commissioning Support Resource (CCSR)	21.6.1 Maintain overview via N Wales Commissioning Group, Maintain contribution to database development	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Janet Owen	On-going 05-06
21.7 Implement contracting arrangements for Specialist placement/independent Foster placements	21.7.1 Implement contracts for specialist placements	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Janet Owen	1 July 2005
	21.7.2 Implement contract for IFA's	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Janet Owen	1 January 2006

SSD Objective 1.10d		To continually improve the standards of childcare practice and governance				
User Impact/Outcome		Improve services to Care Leavers				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
22.1 Improve standards to retain contact with CLA over 16 (CF 5.1)	22.1.1 Development of Leaving Care Strategy, to also include Care Leaver support	Establish target	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks	March 2006
	22.1.2 Increase number of completed Pathway Plans	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks	March 2006
	21.1.3 Implement recommendations of CSIW inspection at Bryn y Wal	Implement recommendations	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Anne Roberts	As per CSIW requirements
22.2. Develop approaches to improve Health and Healthy lifestyles for Children Looked After (CF 5.2)	22.2.1 Maintain numbers of young people leaving care on their 16 th birthday, registered with a GP at age 19	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/LAC Nurse	On-going
	22.2.2 Introduce menu planning and food skills initiative in residential service	Implement	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Anne Roberts	June 2005
22. 3. Improve access to Housing. (CF 5.3)	22.3.1 Scope development options for supported lodgings in conjunction with NCH	Complete scoping exercise	Implement actions	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Sue Dicks	December 2005
	22.3.2 Appraise options for Housing/Care Leavers joint allocation panel	Complete option appraisal	Implement actions	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Sue Dicks	January 2006

22.4 Continue to develop access to education and employment post 16 (CF 5.4)	Explore options in conjunction with Objective 1 funding bid	Review and set targets	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/David Hynes/Peter Lund	December 2005
22.5 Establish requirements for Personal advisor Services for Care Leavers (CF 5.5)	Scope requirements	Complete scoping exercise and report	Implement actions	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Sue Williams	October 2005
22.6 Improve participation & advocacy for Care Leavers	Scope requirements and commission additional services via NYAS	Extend NYAS service/contract	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Sue Williams	Agree Sept 05 Implement Dec 2005
22.7 Maintain access to financial support for Care Leavers	Review care leaver budget	Action budget review outcome	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Sue Dicks	October 2005

SSD Objective 1.10b		To continually improve the standards of childcare practice and governance				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved services to Children with Disabilities				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
23.1 Review options for service integration for Children with Disabilities across district and in partnership with Conwy and Denbighshire Trust (CF 6)	23.1.1 Undertake joint scoping review 23.1.2 Review paediatric OT service	Strategic review carried out; action plan produced	Implement/review	Monitor and review	David Hynes	March 2006

23.2 Development of exit strategy for Care Co-ordination joint flexibilities post	23.2 Undertake review and report	Implement/actions to be confirmed	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Williams	December 2005
23.2 Improve access by disabled children to family support services (CF 6.2)	23.2.1 Review options and requirements for a panel format for matching needs to services	Review requirements	Implement	Monitor and review	David Hynes	March 2006
	23.2.2 Establishment of shared-care respite provision with Barnardos/Cyfle.	Scope options	Implement and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes	Implement April 2006
	23.2.4 Extend use and improve access to respite services including use of Tir Na Nog	Carry out Review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes	March 2006
	23.4 Develop improved /communication networks with parents	Carry out Review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes	March 2006

23.3 Improve understanding of range of services for Children with Disabilities and young carers (CF 6.1)	23.1 Improve take-up and use of information from Disability Register	Agree arrangements in conjunction with Children's LOG	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Sue Williams	October 2005
23.4 Improve access to play and leisure (CF 6.3)	Develop partnership agreement with Barnardos/Cyfle.	Develop agreement	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Williams	March 2006
23.5 Develop and agree transition protocols	Explore options in conjunction with Objective 1 funding bid	Review and set targets	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Peter Lund	December 2005
23.6 Review range of family support services available to Children with Disabilities and young carers	Scope/ review family support options, link to family support strategy development	Agree implementation plan	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Williams	December 2005
23.7 Develop protocols for work management between CP cases for Children with Disabilities	Develop work flow and processes	Develop and implement procedures	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Ian Jones/Sue Trehearn	January 2006

SSD Objective 2.1		To develop a range of commissioning and contracting approaches with Children and Family services				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved commissioning and planning in Childrens Services				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
24.1 Improve Placement choice (JR6b)	24.1.1 Implement North Wales Contract for Residential and Fostering Placements	24.1.1 Contracts implement-ed	24.1.1 Monitor and review	24.1.1 Monitor and review	Sue Williams	24.1.1 Residential contract by June 2005 Fostering contract by December 2005
	24.1.2 Maintain standards of LA Residential Services	24.1.2 Meet requirements of CSIW Inspection	24.1.2 Monitor and review	24.1.2 Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Anne Roberts	
24.4 Produce Family Support Strategy for preventative & rehabilitation services JR10.0 CL;CF	24.4.1 Remodel Supporting People services to create new family support initiatives	24.4.1 Develop service models and implement	24.4.1 Monitor and review	24.4.1 Monitor and review	Sue Williams/David Hynes	October 2005
	24.4.2 Improve the strategic role of the Joint Commissioning Panel.	24.4.2 Develop and implement joint protocols and procedures	24.4.2 Monitor and review	24.4.2 Monitor And review	Sue Williams/David Hynes	October 2005

	<p>24.4.3 Review QA strategy and approaches</p> <p>24.4.4 Review options for development of supported lodgings services</p> <p>24.4.5 Review options for delivery of Sessional Support, Project Work, Mentoring and Contact services.</p> <p>24.4.6 Carry out review of operational teams; Intake and Assessment North, Childcare North, Childcare and Leaving Care services.</p>	<p>24.4.3 Undertake review and agree change</p> <p>24.4.4 Carry out review</p> <p>24.4.5 Make options appraisal</p> <p>24.4.6 Carry out review and implement changes</p>	<p>24.4.3 Monitor and review</p> <p>24.4.4 Implement as required</p> <p>24.4.5 Implement as required</p> <p>24.4.6 Monitor and review</p>	<p>24.4.3 Monitor and review</p> <p>24.4.4 Monitor and review</p> <p>24.4.5 Monitor and review</p> <p>24.4.6 Monitor and review</p>	<p>Sue Williams/Peter Lund</p> <p>Sue Williams/Sue Dicks</p> <p>David Hynes</p> <p>Nicola Francis/Sue Dicks/David Hynes/Sue Williams</p>	<p>October 2005</p> <p>December 2005</p> <p>November 2005</p> <p>October 2005</p>
<p>24.5 Improve procurement: to achieve cost effectiveness, including inter agency options JR1 CL8.1 JR15</p>	<p>24.5.1 Create joint arrangements with Adult services for stationery and equipment purchases</p> <p>24.5.2 Deliver Integrated Children's System</p>	<p>24.5.1 Implement</p> <p>24.5.2 Procure new ITT system in conjunction with partners</p>	<p>24.5.1 Monitor and review</p> <p>24.5.2 Complete installation and implementation programme</p>	<p>24.5.1 Monitor and review</p> <p>24.5.2 Monitor and review</p>	<p>24.5.1 Sue Williams/Admin Team Manager</p> <p>24.5.2 Sue Williams/Peter Lund/MIS team</p>	<p>24.5.1 April 2005</p> <p>On-going</p>

		24.5.3 Commence phased programme of ICS implementation	24.5.3 Maintain implementation programme	24.5.3 Monitor and review	24.5.3 Sue Williams/Peter Lund/MIS team	On-going
24.6 Develop Commissioning Strategy	24.6.1 Develop strategy	24.6.1 Develop and agree strategy	24.6.1 Implement	24.6.1 Monitor and review	Sue Williams	March 2006
	24.6.2 Review and revise existing service level agreements	24.6.2 Develop standard contract and agree	24.6.2 Implement phased programme of change	24.6.2 Monitor and review	Sue Williams	March 2006
	24.6.3 Establishing performance monitoring framework for contract monitoring	24.6.3 Develop framework	24.6.3 Implement changes as agreed	24.6.3 Monitor and review	Sue Williams	March 2006

SSD Objective 2.2		To maximise funding and resources for people who have social care needs				
User Impact/Outcome		Improve financial functioning				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
24a.1 Improve Financial planning & monitoring	24a.1 Review and restructure Children and Family Services budgets to establish spend levels, allocated resources and to effectively monitor and report spending.	24a.1 Budget redefined	24a.1 Monitor and review	24a.1 Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Paul senior	July 2005
	24a.2 Introduction of better financial monitoring of Specialist Residential and Independent Foster placements	24a.2 Implement changes	24a.2 Monitor and review	24a.2 Monitor and review	Paul Senior/Penny Moran	July 2005
24a.2 Implement a revised scheme of financial coding	24a.2 Devise new coding structure and implement	24a.2 Coding devised and implemented	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Paul Senior	July 2005
24a.3 Phased devolution of Budgets to Team Managers	24a.3 Implement changes to Team budgets	24a.3 Implement	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Paul Senior	October 2005
24a.4 Improve financial planning & monitoring	24a.4 Produce new reporting formats for Children and Family budget monitoring	24a.4 Implement	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Paul Senior	October 2005

SSD Objective 4.4		To use information and performance management to inform strategic and operational management				
User Impact/Outcome		Increased quality of services through a programme of Performance Management & Improvement				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
25.1 Review of QA models and processes and develop QA plan	25.1 QA Plan produced	Review Commenced	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Peter Lund/Norma Davies	Commence review June 2005 QA plan September 2005
25.2 Establish 3-year QA Plan	Establish performance measures in QA plan	QA Plan produced	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Peter Lund/Norma Davies	December 2005
25.3 Improve Admin & Business processes	Commence Administrative review	Review commenced	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/Linda Jones	On-going
25.4 Establish ACPC Audit Sub-Group & ACPC Core Data Set	Core dataset established via ACPC sub-group	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Sue Trehearn	Commenced May 2005
24.5 Establish core data set for Adoption & fostering	Core dataset established via F&A Panel	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss	Commenced May 2005

25.6 Prepare for External inspections	Work in conjunction with staff and Inspectors to prepare for SSIW and CSIW programme of inspections	CSIW inspection of Adoption services: November 05 SSIW service Fieldwork November 2005; On-site Inspection: February 2006 CSIW inspection of Fostering Services:- March 2006	As advised	As advised	All staff	As Target 05/06
25.7 Continue to implement the Compliance and Accountability Framework in response to the Climbie enquiry.	Supervision and audit regime reviewed and revised as per 25.1 and 25.2	As per 25.1 & 25.2	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Peter Lund/Norma Davies	As 25.1 & 25.2

SSD Objective 3.1		To develop and implement effective recruitment and retention / workforce planning				
User Impact/Outcome		Improvement in recruitment, retention and workforce effectiveness				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
26.1 Implement Children and Family Social Services Department Training and Professional Development Programme (CL)	Production of Departmental Training Plan	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Chamberlayne	SCWD Plan produced annually; Departmental 3-yr plan reviewed annually
26.2 Deliver managerial support programme for Team/Service Managers. (CL)	Devise and implement training programme	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Robbie Hayes	Implement October 2005
26.3 Fully implement Workload Management Programme (JR46b)	Revised workload management tool rolled out from pilot group to all teams	Each team to have bespoke version of tool containing individual workload targets	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Sue Dicks	On-going
26.4 Review role and function of Family Support Workers. (JR46b)	Recommendations for Family Support Service produced	Implement agreed changes	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/David Hynes/Sue Williams	October 2005
26.5 Continue with Children and Family Services Recruitment & Retention strategy. (JR23)	Staff vacancies minimised	Targets as in Recruitment & Retention strategy	Targets as in Recruitment & Retention strategy	Targets as in Recruitment & Retention strategy	CFMT	Staffing figures reviewed monthly

25.6 Monitor frequency and quality of supervision (CL; JR25)	Supervision framework in place within Compliance and Accountability Framework	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Norma Davies	As per timescales set within Supervision framework
25.7 Improve access to PC's for Social Workers and Family Support Workers. (JR19)	Implementation of ICS to be accompanied by sufficient IT hardware	1:1 computer access for Social Workers	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	CFMT	Autumn 2006

SSD Objective 4.3		4.3 To develop participation, advocacy and complaints approaches in conjunction with partners for Children and Family service users				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved User Participation including access to Complaints and Advocacy				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
27.1 Incorporate Children's views in planning and implementation (CF9.1)	Participation Strategy for children and young people in Denbighshire produced in partnership with other agencies.	Participation Strategy produced	Participation strategy implemented	Monitor and review	Sue Williams/C&P Team	Joint with YPP
27.2 Improve User Satisfaction (CF 9.2)	Development of in-house strategy for involving children and young people within Children's Services, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meetings • Mechanisms to receive feed-back on their views • Participation events • Involvement in staff interviewing 	Proposals produced by December 2005	Strategy implemented	Monitor and review	Planning Officer	On-going

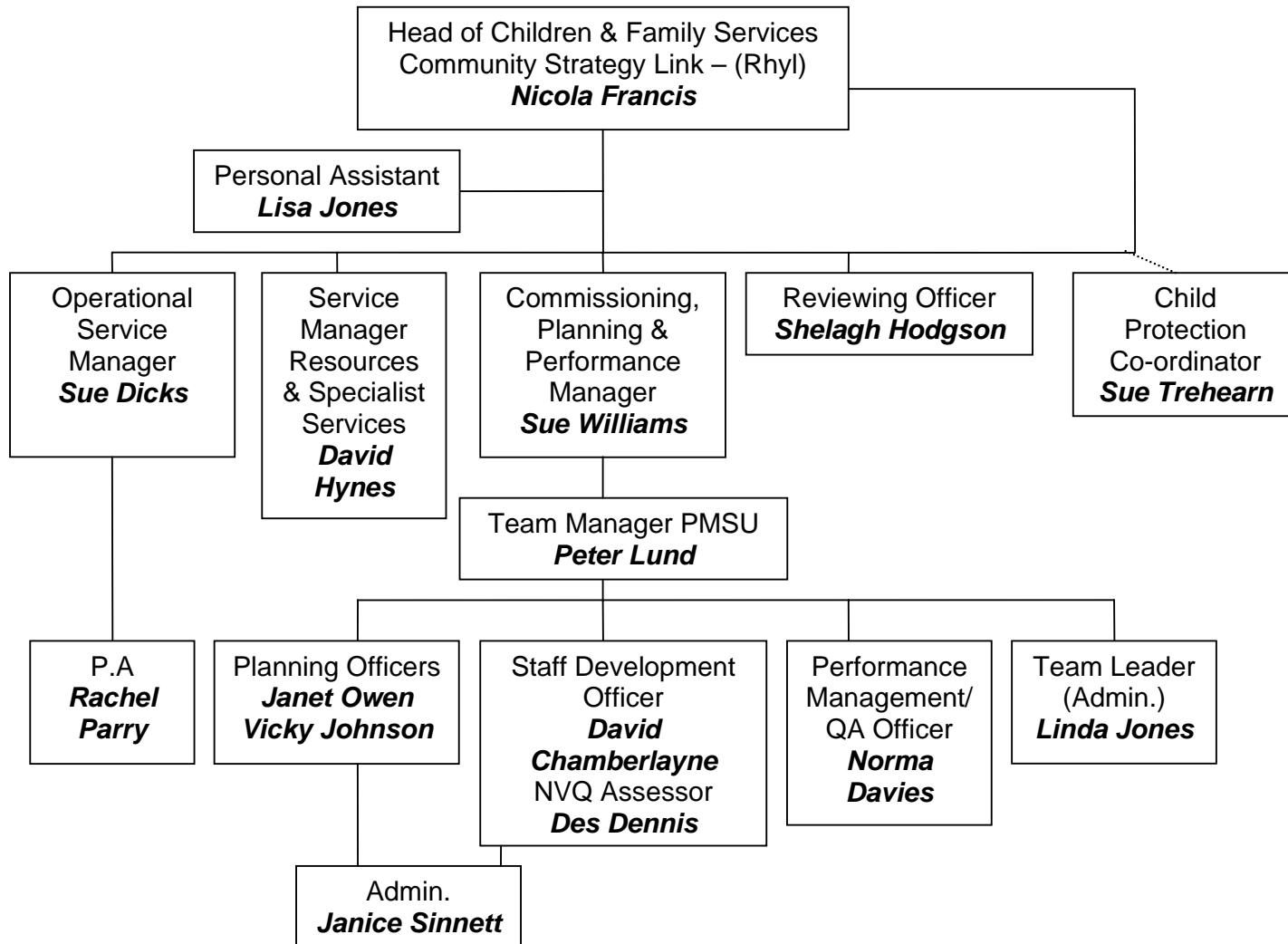
27.3 Improve Advocacy provision (CF10.1)	27.3.2 Continue NYAS contract; extend to include services for Care Leavers.	Implement	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Williams	October 2005
27.4 Improve access to Complaints (CF10.2)	27.4.1 Improve access to complaints for all children looked after.	27.4.1 Improve access between Complaints Officer and Residential services 27.4.2 Develop suitable complaints materials for children	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Clare O'Gorman/Anne Roberts	27.4.1 Jul 2005 27.4.2 March 2006
27.5 All children looked after to have access to an independent visitor when they need one (CF 4.8)	Review and develop options for Personal Advisors for Children Looked After	Develop options for implementation	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks	January 2006

SSD Objective 4.2		To improve care planning and management in Children and Family Services, including improved partnerships in cross-sector planning and provision				
User Impact/outcome		Improved Partnership working				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
28.1 Agree inter-agency protocols for Domestic Abuse (CL)	Inter-agency assessment arrangements implemented	Arrangements agreed and implemented	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/David Hynes/Sue Williams	March 2006

28.2 Agree inter-agency protocols with Housing	Agree protocols for access to Housing for Children Looked After	Agree and implement	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/Sue Williams	
28.3 Agree inter-agency protocols for NSF for Children and Maternity Services	Agreement via Frameworks Partnership	Agree and implement	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis/Sue Williams	March 2006

SSD Objective 1.10		To continually improve the standards of childcare practice and governance				
User Impact/Outcome		Improved quality of services				
Action	Performance Measure/Indicator	Target 05/06	Target 06/07	Target 07/08	Responsibility	Timescale
29.1 Issue revised Childcare Procedures Manual (JR5; CL)	Actual and virtual copies of Childcare Procedures manual completed and circulated	Completed and issued	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Sue Dicks/David Hynes	October 2005
29.3 Revise Fostering Service Procedures (CL)	Revised Fostering Service Procedures issued	Completed and issued	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss	October 2005
29.4 Revise Adoption Service Procedures 2005/06	Revised Adoption Service Procedures issued	Completed and issued	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	David Hynes/Julie Moss	January 2006
29.5 Deliver Corporate Parenting training event for new elected members	Development of Corporate Parenting information arrangements for Officers and Elected Members (see also 29.1)	Information arrangements made	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis	Autumn 2005
29.6 Issue Revised schedules of delegated and financial authority	Revised schedules of delegated authority issued.	Schedules revised and implemented	Monitor and review	Monitor and review	Nicola Francis	December 2005

Children's Services



REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor E Williams, Lead Member for Environment

DATE: 27 September 2005

SUBJECT: Implementation of DCC's Waste Management Strategy

1. Decision Sought

To approve the course of action outlined in Appendix One, in relation to Denbighshire's waste management strategy. In particular, the proposed changes to the Council's waste collection arrangements.

2. Reason for Seeking Decision

- 2.1 The proposed changes are designed to improve recycling rates and thereby reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. The appendix to this report outlines the actions that are being proposed.
- 2.2 The council's waste management strategy was drafted in 2004 and formally adopted earlier this year. It made reference to several different 'options'; and these options now need to be firmed-up. There are large operational and budgetary pressures in this area of service, and there are significant risks to the authority if appropriate decisions are not made in a timely fashion.
- 2.3 The council's refuse collection and recycling services affect virtually every resident of Denbighshire, and they also attract considerable public interest. Given the level of interest, and the natural resistance to change that may be encountered, it is important that the chosen option has the support of members.

3. Power to Make the Decision

- Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, i.e. the promotion or improvement of the environmental for the well-being of the area.
- Also; the Welsh Assembly Government has recommended that all councils should establish Waste Management Strategies. (See "Wise about Waste - the National Waste Strategy for Wales created by WAG in June 2002).

4. Cost Implications

The first stage in the development of the strategy will be to introduce the separate kerbside collection of green waste (via an alternate week refuse collection service). The scheme would be introduced to the majority of households within Denbighshire in three phases (over a three year period). Appendix One includes costings for the recycling / refuse collection regime that is being proposed. The capital cost of wheeled bin provision, together with the required modifications to refuse collection vehicles, would be paid for through a five-year finance lease.

The costings assume that extra budgets will be provided to cover all of the planned (unavoidable) 'landfill tax escalator' costs. The costings also fully take into account the effect of any landfill reduction savings. I.e. the increased costs that have been identified are nett increases, financed from the WAG sustainable waste grant allocation.

The proposal is wholly dependent upon the ongoing availability of grant funding from WAG. The council would not be able to fund the scheme on its own behalf (see next item).

5. Financial Controller statement

The impact of cost increases from changes in legislation and increased tonnages will need to be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting exercise. Any net increase in costs over and above any increases in Assembly support may need to be contained within existing directorate budgets.

6. Consultation Carried Out

6.1 The draft municipal Waste Management Strategy was presented to the Environmental Scrutiny committee on the 2 September 2004, and to Cabinet on 26 October 2004. The public consultation exercise finished on 30 April 2005, and the results of the public consultation exercise were included in the delegated decision report (to the Cabinet Lead Member) dated 30 May 2005.

6.2 Officers have consulted with a wide variety of other councils in order to establish what they consider to be "best practice" (given Denbighshire's current circumstances).

6.3 The proposals outlined in this report were considered by the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 23 June 2005. The Committee expressed its support for what was being proposed, and a working group was established in order to work alongside officers on the ongoing implementation of the strategy.

6.4 The contents of this report were considered by full council on 20 September 2005. Verbal feedback will be given on the outcome of that meeting (due to timescales this report had to be completed before the outcome was known).

7. Implications on Other Policy Areas

The targets relating to waste reduction, and the effect of escalating waste costs, will have consequences for all departments of the council.

8. Recommendations

8.1 To approve the proposed course of action (outlined in Appendix One) in relation to Denbighshire's waste management strategy. In particular, the intention to introduce alternate weekly collections of green waste and residual waste for the majority of households within Denbighshire, on a phased basis.

8.2 To note the mandatory legal requirements that have been placed upon the council, to reduce the tonnages of waste that it sends to landfill, and to recognise the need to address the financial consequences of these requirements in forthcoming budget rounds.

8.3 To note that service delivery methods will be determined largely by operational considerations, and that different approaches will be therefore be appropriate for different areas of the county.

8.4 To agree the need for further information/educational visits for members, i.e. to enable them to examine best practice elsewhere, and to plan the detailed implementation within Denbighshire.

Contact Officers: Steve Parker – Head of Environmental Services 01824 712123
Alan Roberts – Senior Waste Manager (Strategy) 01824 712108

APPENDIX ONE - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF DCC's WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. Why are changes being proposed now ?

- 1.1 The WAG recycling target (excluding rubble) for 2004-05 was 15%. Denbighshire met this target, but only just. With the current recycling regimes the council could fail to achieve the 2006-07 target of 25%. Officers believe that changes need to be introduced now, if Denbighshire is to improve its position and avoid "struggling to keep up" with other councils.
- 1.2 Some of the assumptions made in the original waste management strategy now look increasingly optimistic. In particular; Denbighshire's municipal waste generation continues to outstrip the predicted growth (by a large amount), and the amount of material collected via the council's main recycling contract has been less than anticipated.
- 1.3 The fundamental philosophy behind the original recycling contract was to 'do minimum' until 2009, at which point a major step change was envisaged. However, the government's 'bio-mass diversion' targets (and the associated £200 per tonne fines) were not in existence when the recycling contract was formulated and let. Officers consider that the original strategy now carries a high degree of risk (hence the proposal to bring forward timing of the 'step change' that was always envisaged).
- 1.4 A large number of other councils in England and Wales have had sufficient time to properly evaluate the measures that they have introduced over the past couple of years. Consequently, Denbighshire has the opportunity to learn from best practice elsewhere.
- 1.5 Rising costs, particularly in relation to landfill, have shifted the balance of economics away from our traditional methods of collection and disposal, towards alternative methods of service provision.

2. The main factors driving the need for change are:

- 2.1 The imperative to satisfy the WAG recycling targets, and the need to prepare for the more stringent bio-mass landfill diversion targets (with their associated £200 per tonne penalties for 'failure to divert').
- 2.2 The Landfill tax escalator; which increases the amount of landfill tax payable by £3 per tonne year on year, from this year's level of £18/Tonne up to a final value of £35/Tonne.
- 2.3 Municipal waste growth rates that are well above assumed levels, together with lower than expected recycling rates from the council's blue box scheme.
- 2.4 The absence within Denbighshire of any specific municipal waste treatment or waste disposal facilities. (Denbighshire's residual waste is currently land-filled in other councils' areas).
- 2.5 Public demand for recycling (which is currently not being met in certain areas), together with public demand to move away from 'black sack' refuse collections.
- 2.6 The need to engage with the public and promote some form of 'common ownership' of the waste problem, together with a common understanding of the processes that might be necessary to deal with it.

3. Main features of the proposed 'strategy development'.

- 3.1 The central theme is public awareness. Although there is some public interest in recycling, there is virtually no debate about waste generation, and/or the methods used by the council to dispose of residual waste (i.e. waste that cannot be recycled / reused). The public tend not to see these issues as 'their problem', even though it is their waste. This needs to change. The public must be engaged in a debate about what they want the council to do with their waste.
- 3.2 The immediate priority is to minimise and/or recover, reuse, or recycle as much of the waste as possible, and thereby minimise residual waste tonnages (see item 4).
- 3.3 In the near future it will also be necessary for the council to consider the options for dealing with waste that cannot be reused or recycled. The majority of Denbighshire's residual waste is currently 'exported' to other councils' areas and buried in 'holes in the ground'. This is not sustainable, and is not environmentally sound.
- 3.4 The option of exporting our waste out of the county to cheap landfill sites has now ended, and we therefore need to look afresh at what else can be done with it. This could involve the development of new 'beneficial use' technologies. The council may come to regard its residual waste as a potential asset. There is often public opposition to *any* waste facility (virtually regardless of what that facility does or how it operates), and that is why the 'central theme' of public awareness will be vitally important.
- 3.5 Alternative disposal arrangements will have to be in place when the next landfill contract expires. Large technological advances are being made in this area, and we need to learn from the countries in the world that have the lowest 'landfill proportions'. Due to the large increases in the cost of landfill; technologies that were previously too expensive to consider now appear (relatively) inexpensive and may become more attractive for the council.
- 3.6 The council currently operates six recycling parks (civic amenity sites). The infrastructure at these sites is generally poor, and the layouts are not particularly efficient for recycling. Officers believe that they should be replaced with up to three, higher quality sites. This question is due to be considered by a working group set up by the Environment Scrutiny Committee.

4. Detail of changes being proposed for April 2006 onwards

- 4.1 In selected areas, the council's refuse collection teams will collect the green waste via an alternate-week wheeled bin collection. This is the type of option that has produced the best recycling performances elsewhere, and it is also the option that has the most direct effect upon the bio-mass recycling rates. The council could afford to include around 10,000 households within 'Phase One' of this regime (i.e. two 'bin rounds'). Further extensions could follow in subsequent years, as funding became available through the anticipated annual sustainable waste grant funding (from WAG).
- 4.2 The choice of which areas to include in Phase One has been based entirely on operational considerations. These include; the need to select areas within the existing 'blue box' scheme, the need to select areas with average garden sizes that will produce optimal quantities of green waste, and the need to select bin rounds that lend themselves to efficient reorganisation. Based upon

the initial operational analysis that has been undertaken; Phase One is likely to include areas of Prestatyn and Rhyl, and Phase two is likely to include areas of Ruthin and Denbigh.

- 4.3 Under the proposed regime; residual (non-recyclable) waste would also be collected via an alternate week wheeled bin collection. Households within the affected areas would therefore have two wheeled bins; one for green waste and one for residual (non-recyclable) waste, which would be collected on alternate weeks. The households would also receive an improved blue box recycling service, which would include the collection of plastic bottles and cardboard. The recycling contract would continue to be operated by SITA on behalf of the Council (until the contract runs out in March 2009).
- 4.4 The suggested option offers clear, demonstrable improvement over the baseline position and would come very close to delivering the 40% WAG recycling target when the civic amenity (recycling park) waste is added-in. It is also affordable. In order to be confident of exceeding the 40% target, a weekly blue box collection service would be required. At present officers cannot identify the budgets that would allow this service to be provided, so it has not been suggested. It is important to note that there are no 'fines' for failing to achieve the 40% target. The £200 per tonne fines relate to the government's bio-mass diversion targets (which the suggested option is expected to achieve).
- 4.5 Within the affected areas; the majority of the public are likely to welcome the initiative. However, some of those outside the affected area are likely to espouse negative comments (e.g. "why can't we have this as well").

5. Cost Analysis of various Recycling / Refuse Collection options

- 5.1 Preliminary costings for the suggested recycling / refuse collection regimes are shown on the next page. The financial analyses that have been undertaken were a key element in the selection of the recommended option.
- 5.2 The costings assume that extra budgets will be provided to cover all of the planned (unavoidable) 'landfill tax escalator' costs. The costings also fully take into account the effect of any landfill reduction savings. I.e. the increased costs that have been identified are nett increases. The increases would have to be financed from the WAG grant allocation.
- 5.3 Financial models were prepared for several different recycling / refuse collection regimes. The figures quoted are present day values. The models assume that:
 - Landfill Tax will increase by £3 per tonne per annum (this is definite)
 - Landfill tipping fees will increase by 10% per annum (as in last 3 years)
 - Collection costs will increase by 4% per annum
 - The capital cost of wheeled bin provision, and modifications to refuse vehicles, will be financed via five-year finance leases.

Option	Year	Service Provision details				Annual cost	Likely percentage recycled (2009)
		DCC Refuse collection service		SITA blue box scheme			
		Alternate week collections of garden waste and non-recyclable waste (using wheeled bins)	Weekly, refuse collection (virtually all via black sack)	Fortnightly blue box kerbside collection	Weekly blue box kerbside collection		
Baseline (do minimum)	2006-7	Zero	Remainder (all households)	22,000 households	zero	£3.8m	5.1%
	2007-8	Zero	Remainder (all households)	22,000 households	zero	£4.1m	
	2008-9	Zero	Remainder (all households)	22,000 households	zero	£4.4m	
Proposed Option (fortnightly blue box)	2006-7	10,000 households	Remainder (approx 34,000)	22,000 households	zero	£3.9m	24.2%
	2007-8	20,000 households	Remainder (approx 24,000)	22,000 households	zero	£4.2m	
	2008-9	30,000 households	Remainder (approx 14,000)	30,000 households	zero	£4.7m	
Option 2 (weekly blue box)	2006-7	10,000 households	Remainder (approx 34,000)	12,000 households	10,000 households	£4.1m	32.2%
	2007-8	20,000 households	Remainder (approx 24,000)	2,000 households	20,000 households	£4.8m	
	2008-9	30,000 households	Remainder (approx 14,000)	zero	30,000 households	£5.6m	

Notes:

- Baseline position (do minimum) cannot deliver the WAG recycling targets (it is included for comparison only)
- Recycling percentages from CA sites are not included in the above statistics

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR R W HUGHES, LEADER

DATE: 27 September 2005

SUBJECT: Draft Protocol for Cabinet meetings

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To recommend to Council an amendment to the Cabinet procedural rules at Part 4.4 of the Constitution to incorporate under paragraph 2.3 a protocol (copy attached) on the attendance at Cabinet and Cabinet committee meetings by Councillors who are not Cabinet members.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 Whilst Council has previously rejected a formalised approach to regulating the contribution of members and non members to meetings, the Council's Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group feels that something more is required than just the discretion vested in them under the Constitution.

2.2 They have concluded that the way forward is by means of a protocol. This will be considered by the Corporate Governance Committee and if supported the proposal would go onwards to full Council.

2.3 I was invited to the Chairs and Vice-Chairs meeting and from my own experience in Cabinet was able to understand their desire to strike a balance between engaging those interested enough to turn up at meetings without there being an undue impact on the conduct of the business in hand.

2.4 I have therefore concluded that a similar protocol would be beneficial for the proceedings at Cabinet and since this mirrors the proposals in respect of Scrutiny I am satisfied that no member will be disadvantaged as a result.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Changes to the rules of procedure in Part 4 of the Constitution require the approval of the Council under Article 15.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

None other than that an agreed protocol would enable the business of the Cabinet to be dispatched more expeditiously with the consequent efficient use of everyone's time.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

There are no obvious significant financial implications resulting from this matter.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

N/A – the report proposes a recommendation from the Cabinet to Council.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

No direct impact but the proposal supports a similar proposal arising from the Council's Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

To recommend to Council an amendment to the Cabinet procedural rules at Part 4.4 of the Constitution to incorporate under paragraph 2.3 a protocol on the attendance at Cabinet and Cabinet committee meetings by Councillors who are not Cabinet members.

DRAFT

Draft Protocol on the Attendance at Cabinet and Cabinet Committee Meetings by Councillors who are not Cabinet Members

Rights to attend

- All Councillors have the right to attend Cabinet and Cabinet Committee meetings - therefore there is no restriction to observers attending.

Rights to address meetings

- There should be no automatic right for observers to speak on any issue. The right of someone who is not a Cabinet member to speak is solely at the discretion of the chair of the meeting.
- Accordingly It would be helpful for any Councillor who is not a Cabinet member to inform the Chair, in advance of the meeting, of that Member's wish to address the meeting, together with an explanation of the reasons behind the request.
- Cabinet Members will always be called to speak first on an item. Whilst the Chair has discretion as to who else should be called, it is expected that priority would be given to a request from a Chair of a Scrutiny Committee or the Chair of Corporate Governance Committee to speak on a matter that was of direct concern or interest to that committee.

Questions

- Members who wish to ask formal questions of the Cabinet that are not related to items on the agenda should give at least three working days' notice of the question(s) upon which answers will be required.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Finance & Human Resources

DATE: 27 September 2005

SUBJECT: Revenue Budget 2005/06

1 DECISION SOUGHT

That Members note the budget performance figures for the current financial year as detailed in the attached appendices and consider remedial actions necessary to bring Directorate's projected spending in line with available budgets.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The need to deliver the Council's agreed budget strategy for the current financial year and avoid reducing already inadequate reserves.

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

This report details the latest projections of Service budget year end positions as reported by Directorates, together with information on pressures and savings within the Corporate budgets. The service pressure projections are as at the end of August 2005. Corporate details are as at mid September.

The appendix details potential overspendings totalling £351k (£333k last report). The main areas of change from the last report are;

- i) Within the Lifelong Learning Directorate,
 - a) the position on the delegation of elements of the SEN budget to schools has been clarified.
 - b) a new pressure on the Speech & Language service has been identified.
- ii) The reported position for the Personal Services Directorate is that following a review of projected service demand, the total net position is very close to budget after allowing for increased Supporting People grant and the large underspend carried forward.

- iii) There are two pressures and a saving identified within the Corporate elements of the budget;
 - a) following the recent fires at schools in the north of the County, the Council will have to absorb the impact of the 'insurance excess' on what will be 4 insurance claims. The excess level is £25k per claim, making a total liability of £100k so far.
 - b) the data supplied from the 2001 Census and used in the 2003/4 and 2004/5 WAG Revenue Settlements was flawed. An amending report will be tabled before the Assembly soon and will result in a one off adjustment of nearly £200k to Denbighshire's funding for those years.
 - c) the gross level of increased investment income is estimated to be in the region of £600k. This is because of temporary improvements in cash flow resulting from slippage in the Capital Plan and improved investment opportunities.

Other reported pressure areas within Lifelong Learning, together with Land Charges and Legal services remain at a similar level to the last report.

Other potential but thus far unquantifiable pressures are the impact of the Single Status Pay Review and the appeals against the recent Council Tax revaluations, both of which may exceed the assumptions within the budget.

There are further potential pressures that have not yet been fully quantified and therefore the following issues may still need to be addressed;

1. For Personal Services there is an underlying budget deficit of £540k based on current spending patterns. This is currently masked by the use of the budget underspend brought forward from last financial year.

2 a) Within the Lifelong Learning Directorate work will be undertaken to identify and understand the reasons for the continuing pressure on School & College transport. It is currently difficult to assess the level of funding needed for the future.

2 b) Work is in hand to identify the budget implications resulting from the provision of the new facilities at Ysgol Plas BronDyffryn.

3. While the Environment Directorate does not suffer the same level of demand led pressures it is none the less likely to be under further pressure from Health & Safety requirements.

Once the position on these further potential pressures has been more fully appraised, figures will be included in a future report to Cabinet.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

Work needs to continue to take place to review service budgets and identify savings that will enable total Directorate spending to be contained within budget.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Lead Cabinet Members need to continue to consult with Heads of Service to agree necessary remedial action to prevent overspends in 2005/06.

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

1. That Members note the figures in the appendices and
2. That Members consider remedial actions necessary to bring service projected spend in line with budgets.

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06
POSITION AS AT END AUG 2005**

Directorate	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Variance
	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Previous report £000s
Lifelong Learning (excluding schools delegated)	28,685	-10,312	18,373	29,562	-10,666	18,896	877	-354	523	347
Environment	30,884	10,754	20,130	30,902	10,672	20,230	18	82	100	85
Personal Services	47,604	-16,039	31,565	48,643	-17,079	31,564	1,039	-1,040	-1	-127
County Clerk	2,004	-565	1,439	2,133	-665	1,468	129	-100	29	28
Resources	7,750	-2,355	5,395	7,750	-2,355	5,395	0	0	0	0
Corporate, Miscellaneous & Benefits	26,987	-22,034	4,953	27,087	-22,034	5,053	100	0	100	0
Clawback of Revenue Support Grant				200	0	200	200	0	200	
Total All Services	143,914	-40,551	81,855	146,277	-42,127	82,806	2,363	-1,412	951	333
Capital Financing Charges/Investment Income			10,891			10,291			-600	0
Precepts & Levies			3,975			3,975			0	0
			96,721			97,072			351	333

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 2005/06
LIFELONG LEARNING
POSITION AS AT END AUG 2005**

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Variance
	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Previous report
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Individual School Budgets	<u>50,263</u>	<u>-4,596</u>	<u>45,667</u>	<u>50,263</u>	<u>-4,596</u>	<u>45,667</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
School Funds Held Centrally	15,541	-4,389	11,152	16,288	-4,784	11,504	747	-395	352	192
Non school Funding	1,335	-864	471	1,373	-842	531	38	22	60	44
Leisure Services	7,114	-4,049	3,065	7,183	-4,042	3,141	69	7	76	76
Culture	3,026	-373	2,653	3,049	-373	2,676	23	0	23	23
Countryside	1,057	-596	461	1,057	-584	473	0	12	12	12
Youth	612	-41	571	612	-41	571	0	0	0	0
	28,685	-10,312	18,373	29,562	-10,666	18,896	877	-354	523	347
Total Lifelong Learning	78,948	-14,908	64,040	79,825	-15,262	64,563	877	-354	523	347

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06
LIFELONG LEARNING
POSITION AS AT END AUG 2005

<u>Comments</u>	Current Month	Previous Month
	£000s	£000s
EDUCATION		
Individual School Budgets:		
Individual expenditure on the schools delegated budgets cannot be forecast with any certainty until the latter half of the financial year as the expenditure, although monitored centrally, is under the control of each individual school governing body.	0	0
School Funds Held Centrally:		
School Transport		
There has been a small reduction in the projected variance on school transport that was reported last month. The impact of any changes from the start of the new academic year will be reported in October. Pressures of £50k have been met within year from internal savings.	187	192
SEN		
The delegation of SEN Pupil Support Workers in the Primary sector will be finalised in September based on actual cost. The completion of the delegation process has identified a shortfall of £630k (£629k 2004/5) which will be partially offset by increased income from out County placements £395k leaving a net shortfall of £235k.	235	0
Management actions, vacancy savings and reduced free school meals	-122	0
Speech & Language Therapy - increased demand on service	52	0
Non School Funding		
Student awards		
Savings on administration/software licences	-13	0
College Transport		
Increase in pressure due to the need to issue 2 credit notes in response to Llandrillo College transport, following queries raised by collegwe and administration problems with running the contracts on behalf of colleges (£22k). Further increase in the cost of college transport contracts (£7k).	73	44
TOTAL EDUCATION	412	236
CULTURE & LEISURE		
Leisure		
Vandalism / other premises costs to maintain Frith Beach	40	40
Energy Costs increase & income shortfall	36	36
Culture		
Increase in Libraries' NNDR	23	23
Countryside - reduced CCW grant - net	12	12
TOTAL CULTURE & LEISURE	111	111
TOTAL LIFELONG LEARNING	523	347
Total		

CULTURE & LEISURE EFFICIENCY SAVINGS PROGRESS REPORT

Proposed Efficiency Saving	Target	Progress
Reduce funding to grant aided bodies	26,873	Achieved
Reduction of Library Service & Records M:	8,928	Achievable
Cut Pavilion Theatre Secretary post by 50%	9,534	Achieved
Reduction of furniture/equipment purchase	6,800	Achievable
Increase fees & charges	37,865	Unlikely due to extended Leisure Centre closures
Total	90,000	
Summary		
	36,407	Achieved
	46,593	Achievable
	<u>83,000</u>	
	<u>7,000</u>	Shortfall

Education Efficiency savings	£	
SCHOOLS DELEGATED BUDGET	353,000	To be achieved by individual Primary School Governing Bodies
FREE SCHOOL MEALS REDUCTION	50,000	On target to be achieved
REDUCED MEALS SUBSIDY	38,500	Achieved
SCHOOLS INSURANCE EXCESS	31,500	On target to be achieved
MANAGEMENT & SECRETARIAT	5,120	Achieved
CLIENT SERVICES	7,000	Achieved
ADVISORY	11,700	Achieved
PRIM. ED. - NON DELEGATED	28,780	Achieved
SECONDARY - NON DELEGATED	28,240	Achieved
SPECIAL SCHOOLS - NON DELEG.	9,040	Achieved
STATEMENTING	7,500	Achieved
EDUCATION MISCELLANEOUS	22,620	60% Achieved; 40% On target to be achieved
	593,000	

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE
POSITION AS AT END AUG 2005

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Variance Previous report £000s
	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	
Development Services	8,513	5,108	3,405	8,513	5,108	3,405	0	0	0	0
Transport & Infrastructure	8,163	3,090	5,073	8,163	3,090	5,073	0	0	0	0
Planning & Public Protection - (Note 1&2)	4,107	1,948	2,159	4,077	1,818	2,259	-30	130	100	85
Director & Support	1,173	103	1,070	1,173	103	1,070	0	0	0	0
Environmental Services (Note 3)	8,928	505	8,423	8,976	553	8,423	48	-48	0	0
Total Environment	30,884	10,754	20,130	30,902	10,672	20,230	18	82	100	85

Notes:

1. Land charges - budget pressure of £100k (an unrealistic income budget less savings identified by Environment Directorate.)
2. Increased income on Public Conveniences matched by spend to improve service.

3. Progress with Efficiency Savings put forward as part of the Budget Setting exercise

Details	£'000s	Progress
(i) Projected Directorate Underspend 2004/05	100	Achieved
(ii) Income generation - Decriminalisation	50	On target
(iii) Income generation - Car Parking	100	On target
(iv) Development/Building Control - smarter working	30	On target
(v) Savings from Recruitment/Agency Process	30	On target
(vi) Income generation target - Other Fees & Charges	20	Achievable
(vii) Trading Activity Surplus	50	On target
TOTAL	380	

4. Projected additional costs arising from Health & Safety issues (Cabinet Report 21/06/05):

	Total req'd	Likely spend 2005/6
Legionellosis control	£235k	£200k
Fire Risk Assessments	100k	£50k
	£335k	£250k

It is proposed that funding for the above will be provided from capital receipts.
There will be an ongoing revenue pressure in future years in respect of the items listed above.

In addition it is not yet known how the additional revenue pressure of £70k in respect of extra Health & Safety processes will be funded but it is anticipated that these costs will be absorbed in the Directorate's overall revenue budget.

5. The following actions are being considered in order to provide savings in year to cover the reported potential year end net pressure of £100k.
Currently reviewing operational service provision to identify savings. Possibilities currently being considered include the early termination of grounds maintenance staff, slowdown of highways maintenance programme and the non filling of the Principal Property Manager post.

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06
PERSONAL SERVICES
POSITION AS AT END AUG 2005

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Variance
	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Previous report £000s
Children Services	8,675	-1,540	7,135	9,239	-1,676	7,563	564	-136	428	630
Adult Services	31,724	-9,258	22,466	32,455	-9,529	22,926	731	-271	460	417
Business Support & Development	1,732	0	1,732	1,997	-26	1,971	265	-26	239	73
Supporting People Grant	4,115	-4,129	-14	3,558	-4,136	-578	-557	-7	-564	-663
Underspend Brought Forward 2004/5	0	0	0	0	-540	-540	0	-540	-540	-540
	46,246	-14,927	31,319	47,249	-15,907	31,342	1,003	-980	23	-83
Non HRA Housing	1,358	-1,112	246	1,394	-1,134	260	36	-22	14	-6
Underspend Brought Forward 2004/5	0	0	0	0	-38	-38	0	-38	-38	-38
Total Personal Services	47,604	-16,039	31,565	48,643	-17,079	31,564	1,039	-1,040	-1	-127

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06
PERSONAL SERVICES
POSITION AS AT END AUG 2005

<u>Comments</u>	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Previous report</u>
	<u>£000s</u>	<u>£000s</u>
PERSONAL SERVICES		
CHILDREN'S SERVICES		
Specialist Placement commitments remain the major pressure area with a predicted overspend of just over £1m. A new scheme of financial delegation has improved budgetary control in the department. Measures to contain expenditure in the long term are being developed, including consortium contracting and schemes to recruit and retain foster carers. Additional Supporting People funding (£128k) is now included in the budget thereby reducing the overspend.	428	630
ADULT SERVICES		
Learning Disabilities		
The increase is attributable to additional demand on residential placements (£25k) and community living services (£14k).	307	268
Mental Illness		
The Mental Health Partnership with NHS and Conwy Council commenced on 4 July. A single management structure has been created but budgets have not been pooled. Residential placements continue to be a key pressure. Consultants are currently reviewing care packages aiming to reduce the cost to the Council.	149	148
Older People		
The increased overspend is due to increased costs within the Community Care budgets during the month of August reflecting an increase in clients using the service. The projection has been based on an average of fluctuating expenditure patterns and client numbers over the past 5 months. A further pressure area is still Provider Unit Elderly Residential Homes. Long term strategies involving extra care housing are in place though this will not affect outturn in the short/medium term.	109	77
PADS		
The main overspend is in Community Care North, which is still being offset by the underspend in Community Care South. Forecast spend on Direct Payments has increased by £10k and Drug and Alcohol spend has risen by £9k, based on packages of care agreed for clients. Other pressure areas are Disability Stores (£10k) and Project Work (£11k).	223	192
Performance Management & Commissioning		
This underspend is due to staff vacancies within the administration budgets.	-82	-67
Other Adult Services		
The net underspend reported is budget that is as yet unallocated but will be reallocated within the service to meet pressures during the course of the year. Expenditure on stationery under the new corporate contract has been temporarily included under this section.	-235	-190
Cefndy Enterprises		
The variation is due to an increased sales forecast for the year.	-11	-11
TOTAL ADULT SERVICES	460	417
Business Support & Development		
The projected overspend can be attributed to 4 main areas; revenue costs of the Paris Project (£53k), expenditure on stationery etc for which there is insufficient budget (£65k) and a transfer (£50k) to Adult Services budget and continuing pressure on computer and telephone costs.	239	73
Supporting People		
Within the underspend reported £256k is identified as potential claw back of grant. Whilst this is reported as part of the Directorate position it should not be used to fund overspends. In year SPG savings are due to the remodelling of projects and new projects which will not begin until 2006. The full allocation of SP funding for Children's Services was agreed, reducing the underspend by £128k and £30k has been allocated to cover additional computer software costs.	-564	-663
	-564	-663
2004/05 Underspend brought forward	-540	-540
Total Personal Services	23	-83

Personal Services Efficiency Savings 2005/06 - Progress Report

Children Services	Target	Details	Status	Comments
Transport	£15,000	Delegation of transport budgets to Team Managers with strict ceiling on spend.	Achievable	Scheme of delegation of budgets to Team Managers being introduced including restricted budget for Transport
Staff	£15,000	Slippage and savings on posts	Achievable	
Contract savings	£8,000	Work on reducing costs of external placements	Unlikely	Savings unlikely to happen in 2005/06
Adult Services				
Charging Policy	£100,000	Primarily full year impact of charging policy to People with Learning Disabilities	Still Hopeful	Based on 1 month £80k -£100k extra may be achievable, but some are challenging the charges. Waiver Panel Meeting 13/06/05. Also subject to unpaid invoices/bad debts
Contract Reviews - invest to save	£30,000	Impact of Care Brokers, Contracts Officers reducing high costs of some placements	Achievable	Care Broker now in post. Introduction of fixed rates to Domiciliary Providers planned
Fee increases reduced by .5%	£80,000	Not increasing fees by 1% over inflation. Likely to cause problems in an unstable market.	Still Achievable -	Budgets have been cut. All neighbouring authorities with reservations now pay rates higher than Denbighshire.
Work Opps Income	£10,000	Promoting businesses/dividing Llewelyn Room at Henllan	Uncertain	Partly depends on future County plans for Henllan
Cancer Recharge	£5,000	Contribution from neighbouring Authorities	Achieved	LHB re free nursing care admin.
Staff	£39,000	Reduction in posts	Achieved	Straight budget cut.
Business Support & Development				
House Keeping	£10,000	Working with Procurement to improve efficiencies of purchases and reduce waste.	Achievable	Cash limited stationery budgets being established.
Staff	£5,000		Achievable	Slippage on appointments to posts/staff not at top of scale.
Housing				
Piper Lifeline charges	£10,000	Increase in charges	Achieved	Increases applied to 2005/06 charges
Accommodation Support Officer	£75,000	Savings generated by Support Officer in temporary costs of homelessness.	Achievable	If demand on accommodation remains as at present
Totals	£402,000			

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06
RESOURCES, COUNTY CLERK, CORPORATE & MISCELLANEOUS
POSITION AS AT END AUG 2005

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Variance
	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Previous report £000s
County Clerks	2,004	-565	1,439	2,133	-665	1,468	129	-100	29	29
Resources Directorate										
Finance	3,773	-1,777	1,996	3,773	-1,777	1,996	0	0	0	0
Policy Unit	333	0	333	333	0	333	0	0	0	0
Audit	415	-60	355	415	-60	355	0	0	0	0
I.T	2,141	-349	1,792	2,141	-349	1,792	0	0	0	0
Personnel	1,088	-169	919	1,088	-169	919	0	0	0	0
Total	7,750	-2,355	5,395	7,750	-2,355	5,395	0	0	0	0
Corporate and Miscellaneous	5,697	-764	4,933	5,797	-764	5,033	100	0	100	0
Benefits	21,290	-21,270	20	21,290	-21,270	20	0	0	0	0
Capital Finance Charges/Investment Income	10,891	0	10,891	10,891	-600	10,291	0	-600	-600	
Revenue Support Grant	0	-90,790	(90,790)	0	-90,590	(90,590)	0	200	200	

REPORT TO CABINET

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

DATE: 27 September 2005

SUBJECT: Housing Revenue Account Budget 2005/06

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To note the latest financial forecast position (revenue and capital) 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 August 2005 show a potential net under-spend at year end of £332k (Appendix 1) against the revised budget – this was reported at £321k at the end of July.

Vacancy savings within the Rents (£35k) and Supervision and Management [Special] (£9k) are partially offset by additional agency staff costs (for maternity leave cover) (£24k) within Supervision and Management [General].

Expenditure on Repairs and Maintenance is forecast to be £173k lower than revised estimate. This is due to a general reduction in repairs reporting, reduced work on void properties and minor impact from the major capital works being undertaken this year.

The increase in Debt Charges (£20k) is due to lower than estimated capital receipts for the year ~ which means that less debt will be written off in the year.

The increase in HRA Subsidy payment to WAG (£10k) is due to higher dwelling numbers (as a result of lower RTB sales). Most components of subsidy are calculated on a 'per dwelling' basis.

The budgeted contribution (£50k) towards the Provision for Bad Debts will not be required this year as rent arrears have continued to fall.

Rental income is forecast to be £114k (1.4%) higher than revised estimate. This is due to reduced voids and higher dwelling numbers (RTB sales lower than forecast).

Progress on HRA capital schemes is included as Appendix 2. Work has now began on all schemes. The £600k slippage on major improvements is due to the work starting a few weeks later than originally scheduled – this slippage, however, will be spent within a few weeks in the next financial year. Some final account payments (on works pre 2005/06) are higher than originally estimated and the forecast is now £98k higher than revised estimate. The latest forecasts reported in Appendix 2 are expected to be achieved.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The improvement in 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.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Lead Cabinet members will be required to consult with Heads of Service to monitor the H.R.A. in 2005/06.

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 (revenue and capital) of the Housing Revenue Account (H.R.A.) for the current financial year.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

<u>2004/05</u>		<u>2005/06</u>		
Actual		Revised	Forecast	Variance
£		Budget	Out-turn	to Budget
		£	£	£
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
1,092,024	Supervision & Management - General	1,142,595	1,166,905	24,310
205,881	Supervision & Management - Special	213,009	204,322	-8,687
131,271	Welfare Services	127,445	128,179	734
384,881	Rents	437,328	402,456	-34,872
<u>2,174,227</u>	Repairs and Maintenance	<u>2,662,610</u>	<u>2,489,665</u>	<u>-172,945</u>
3,988,284	Total - Management and Maintenance	4,582,987	4,391,527	-191,460
57,489	Rent Rebates	28,745	28,745	0
1,076,385	Debt Charges	902,596	922,300	19,704
0	C.E.R.A.	326,216	326,216	0
2,584,435	Subsidy	2,681,622	2,691,933	10,311
-169,217	Provision for Bad Debts	50,000	0	-50,000
<u>7,537,376</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>8,572,166</u>	<u>8,360,722</u>	<u>-211,444</u>
<u>INCOME</u>				
8,319,302	Rents (net of voids)	8,378,032	8,492,400	114,368
88,733	Garages	91,088	93,680	2,592
120,921	Interest	141,547	145,408	3,861
<u>8,528,956</u>	Total Income	<u>8,610,667</u>	<u>8,731,488</u>	<u>120,821</u>
Surplus / Deficit (-) for the Year:				
665,364	General Balances	364,717	696,982	332,265
326,216	Earmarked Balances	-326,216	-326,216	0
662,070	Balance as at start of year ~ General	1,327,434	1,327,434	0
0	Balance as at start of year ~ Earmarked	326,216	326,216	0
1,327,434	Balance as at end of year ~ General	1,692,151	2,024,416	332,265
326,216	Balance as at end of year ~ Earmarked	0	0	0

Appendix 2

Housing Revenue Account Capital ~ 2005/06

Project Description	Revised Estimate £	Actual and Committed £	Latest Forecast £	Variance to Estimate £
Housing Repair Work (Pre 2005/06 works)	522,000	611,735	620,000	98,000
Environmental Improvements	347,000	77,675	400,000	53,000
Major Improvements ~ All groups	3,600,000	359,408	3,000,000	-600,000
DFG ~ Council Properties	100,000	54,086	100,000	0
Window Replacements	2,976,000	177,612	2,976,000	0
Central Heating Contract	980,000	264,589	980,000	0
Total	<u>8,525,000</u>	<u>1,545,105</u>	<u>8,076,000</u>	<u>-449,000</u>
Funding:				
Major Repairs Allowance	2,400,000	1,219,105	2,400,000	0
Usable Capital Receipts	2,431,000		2,476,000	45,000
Prudential Borrowing	3,368,000		2,874,000	-494,000
Financed from Revenue (CERA)	326,000	326,000	326,000	0
Total	<u>8,525,000</u>	<u>1,545,105</u>	<u>8,076,000</u>	<u>-449,000</u>

REPORT TO CABINET

FROM: ALAN EVANS, CORPORATE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

DATE: 27th September 2005

SUBJECT: ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2004/05

1 DECISION SOUGHT

Denbighshire County Council's Treasury Policy Statement for 2004/05 states that Cabinet will receive an annual report on the performance of the treasury management function. This report covers the previous expectations of the economic climate, the resultant strategy agreed, actual interest rate performance and the actions undertaken by the Council in response.

In accordance with the Policy, Cabinet is asked to approve this report on treasury activities undertaken in 2004/05, which is attached as an appendix.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

Denbighshire County Council's Treasury Policy Statement for 2004/05 was approved by Council on 26th February 2004. The terms of the Policy Statement require an annual report to be produced before 30th September following the financial year end.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) Regulations 2003 (made under the Local Government Act 2003) contain a regulation (regulation 19) relying on the power in section 15(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2003. It requires local authorities to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2001 which determines the requirement for the Cabinet to receive an annual report on treasury activities for the previous financial year.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

None

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

It is a requirement under the terms of Denbighshire County Council's Treasury Policy Statement for members to be advised of the Treasury activities undertaken in the preceding financial year.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Not applicable

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

None

8 RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is asked to approve the Annual Treasury Report for 2004/05.

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

***ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT
2004/05***

**Alan Evans
Corporate Director - Resources**

CONTENTS

Section	Title
	Introduction and Background
I	Summary Treasury Position
II	Performance Measurement
III	The Strategy for 2004/05
IV	The Economy in 2004/05
V	Borrowing and Investment Rates in 2004/05
VI	Borrowing Outturn for 2004/05
VII	Compliance with Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators
VIII	Investment Outturn for 2004/05

Introduction and Background

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2001 was adopted by this Council in March 2002 and this Council fully complies with its requirements. The primary requirements of the Code are the: -

1. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council's treasury management activities
2. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the Cabinet / Council of an annual strategy report for the year ahead and an annual review report of the previous year.
4. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions.

Treasury management in this context is defined as:

"The management of the local authority's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. "

This annual treasury report covers:

- the Council's summary treasury position;
- performance measurement;
- the strategy for 2004/05;
- the economy in 2004/05;
- the borrowing and investment rates in 2004/05;
- the borrowing outturn for 2004/05;
- compliance with treasury limits and Prudential Indicators;
- the investment outturn for 2004/05;

I. Summary Treasury Position

Borrowing

The Council's general loan debt position changed very little during the year:

- We had external debt at the start of the year of £109.048m and this reduced to £108.847m at 31 March 2005, a net reduction of £0.2m.
- All external debt at 31 March 2005 was held with the Public Works Loan Board (P.W.L.B.) and all loans were on a fixed interest basis.
- Annual interest charges amounted to £7.505m, the average rate being 6.89%, a reduction of 0.2% from last year's 6.91%.

The Council also had obligations to make payments under a deferred purchase agreement originally taken out by the former Rhuddlan Borough Council in respect of the Pavilion Theatre in Rhyl. The final payment was scheduled to be made in 2008/09, but under the flexibilities introduced by the Prudential Borrowing regime under the Local Government Act 2003, full repayment took place in April 2004.

Investments

During the year, the Council's investments were as follows:

- We had an average balance of £28m invested at any one time
- We achieved an average rate of return of 4.68%. This is 0.16% over our benchmark of 4.52% and is equivalent to an additional income of £45k.
- We earned total gross interest of £1,317k.
- We had total year-end investments of £21m comprising

	£m
Reserves	5
Balances	7
Unspent capital resources	8
Other	<u>1</u>
Total	21

A summarised analysis of the portfolio position, including temporary investments is presented at Appendix 1.

II. Performance Measurement

One of the key changes in the revision of the Code in 1996 was the formal introduction of performance measurement relating to investments, debt and capital financing activities. Whilst investment performance criteria have been well developed and universally accepted, debt performance indicators continue to be a more problematic area with the traditional average portfolio rate of interest acting as the main guide (as incorporated in the table in Appendix 1).

III. The Strategy for 2004/05

Denbighshire's treasury strategy for 2004/05 was based on a view of the UK, US and world economic growth rates continuing to strengthen as the recovery from the downturn caused by the Iraq war in the first half of 2003 gathered momentum. In the U.K., base rate had risen from a low of 3.5% to 4.0% by February 2004; this was still a low rate by historic standards that was acting to stimulate the economy. The Monetary Policy Committee was therefore expected to eliminate that stimulus by gradually raising base rate back to more normal levels (near to 5%) during the year.

Similarly, the U.S. Federal Reserve was expected to raise rates from the exceptionally low rate of 1.0% to reduce the major stimulus to the economy but by way of a phased series of gentle increases, as there were still concerns about the recovery being a "jobless recovery".

The Eurozone growth rate was expected to improve, but not substantially, as the dollar was expected to weaken against the Euro and so negatively impact Eurozone exports. The European Central Bank was therefore expected to leave rates unchanged at 2.0% so as to continue to provide some stimulus for the economy in the absence of major inflationary concerns.

Inflation in all three areas was expected to be well contained.

The effect on interest rates for the UK was therefore expected to be as follows:

Shorter-term interest rates

The "average" City view anticipated that the strengthening growth rate in the UK, US and world economies would lead to gentle increases in U.K. base rate from 4.0% to reach about 5.0% by the end of 2004, and then remain there for most of 2005.

Longer-term interest rates

The view on longer-term fixed interest rates was that long term PWLB rates would be fairly stable around the 5.0% level for most of the financial year (equivalent to a long term gilt yield of approximately 4.85%).

The agreed strategy put to Council in February 2004, based on the above forecast, was:

1. Short term variable rates were good value compared to long term rates, and were likely to remain so for potentially at least the next couple of years, so that best value would therefore be achieved by borrowing short term at variable rates in order to minimise borrowing costs in the short term or to make short term savings required in order to meet budgetary constraints;
2. The risks intrinsic in the shorter term variable rates were such, when compared to historically relatively low long term fixed funding, which should have been achievable in 2004/05, that the Council would maintain a stable, longer term portfolio by drawing longer term fixed rate funding at a marginally higher rate than short term rates.

Against this background caution was adopted with the 2004/05 treasury options. The Corporate Director - Resources monitored the interest rate market and adopted a pragmatic approach to any changing circumstances, reporting any decisions to Cabinet at the next available opportunity.

IV. The Economy in 2004/05

Shorter-term interest rates

Base rate rose in 0.25% steps from 4.0% in February 2004 to reach 4.75% in August where it stayed for the rest of the financial year. House prices grew strongly during 2004 and consumer confidence was high which fed through into strong increases in personal borrowing. Early in 2005, the housing market slowed sharply and consumer confidence fell as high oil prices reduced spending power and negatively impacted sentiment. This eased pressure for a further increase to 5.0%.

Longer-term interest rates

The PWLB 25-30 year rate started the year at 4.80% and then hovered around 5.0 – 5.10% in May and June before falling back, and falling sharply in November / December to reach 4.5% towards the end of December 2004. During February and March 2005 the rate rose again to a peak of 4.90% as high oil prices renewed inflation concerns.

V. Borrowing and Investment Rates in 2004/05

12-month bid rates

The 12-month LIBID rate started the year at just under 4.6% but rose sharply in May / June to peak at about 5.4% on the back of an over-reaction by the money markets to strong growth and expectations of major increases in base rate to cool the economy off. The rate subsided to hover around 5.0% during the autumn, but during

January it briefly dipped below 4.8% before rising back up to 5.0 – 5.1% during February and March 2005.

Longer-term interest rates

The PWLB 25-30 year rate started the year at 4.80% and then hovered around 5.0 – 5.10% in May and June on the back of strong economic growth figures in the US and UK which sharply increased gilt yields in the UK and Treasury yields in the US. However, the US then appeared to enter a soft patch which brought the PWLB rate down, falling sharply in November / December to reach 4.5% towards the end of December 2004. During February and March 2005 the PWLB rate rose again to a 2005 peak of 4.90% as high oil prices renewed inflation concerns and strong US growth resumed.

VI. Borrowing Outturn for 2004/05

As comparative performance indicators, average PWLB maturity loan interest rates for 2004/05 were: -

1 year	4.720%
9 - 10 year	4.988%
5 - 30 year	4.818%
1 month GBR variable	4.747%

As highlighted in section 1 above the average debt portfolio rate has moved over the course of the year from 6.91% to 6.89%. The approach during the year was to fund borrowing from surplus cash.

VII. Compliance with Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators

During the financial year the Council operated within the treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Policy Statement and Treasury Management Strategy for 2004/05. The outturn for the Prudential Indicators is shown in Appendix 2.

VIII. Investment Outturn for 2004/05

The Council manages its investments in-house and invests with the institutions listed in the Council's approved lending list. The Council invests for a range of periods from overnight to 364 days, dependent on the Council's cash flows, its interest rate view and the interest rates on offer. The Council took advantage of opportunities to lengthen the term of its investment portfolio by placing various deposits for 364 days in accordance with advice received from the Council's treasury advisers, Sector, as rates peaked at various times during the year.

Detailed below is the result of the investment strategy undertaken by the Council.

	Average Investment Balance	Average Deal Size	Average Term	Average Rate of Return	Benchmark Return *
Internally Managed	£28.2m	£2.5m	32 days	4.68%	4.52%

* The benchmark for internally managed funds is the average 7-day LIBID (London Interbank Bid) rate (uncompounded) sourced from the Financial Times.

No institutions in which investments were made showed any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full during the year.

APPENDIX 2: PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

CAPITAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	2003/04	2004/05	2004/05
	£'000	£'000	£'000
	actual	original	actual outturn
Capital Expenditure			
Non – HRA	19,959	23,533	20,509
HRA	2,090	3,706	2,434
TOTAL	22,049	27,239	22,943
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream			
Non – HRA	7.58%	8.04%	7.99%
HRA	16.28%	13.33%	12.87%
Net borrowing requirement			
brought forward 1 April	0	0	0
carried forward 31 March	0	0	0
in year borrowing requirement	3,438	1,351	3,662
Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 March			
Non – HRA	98,855	104,814	104,085
HRA (applies only to housing authorities)	13,266	9,621	13,003
TOTAL	112,121	114,435	117,088
Annual change in Cap. Financing Requirement			
Non – HRA	5,743	4,690	5,230
HRA	-3,409	-3,720	-263
TOTAL	2,334	970	4,967
Incremental impact of capital investment decisions	£ p	£ p	£ p
Increase in council tax (band D) per annum	0.00	0.86	0.00
Increase in average housing rent per week	0.00	0.00	0.00

TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	2003/04	2004/05	2004/05
	£'000	£'000	£'000
	actual	original	final
Authorised limit for external debt -			
Borrowing	109,047	138,000	116,000
other long term liabilities	980	980	980
TOTAL	110,027	138,980	116,980
Operational boundary for external debt -			
Borrowing	109,047	127,000	111,000
other long term liabilities	980	980	980
TOTAL	110,027	127,980	111,980
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure	0%	35%	35%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days	0	1,000	1,000

Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing during 2004/05 *	Upper limit	lower limit
under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	65%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	20%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

* The table shows the limits set for 2004/05 although in practice no new borrowing was undertaken in 2004/05.

	Loan/ Investment Interest	Debt/ Investments Outstanding 1 Apr 04	Loans/ Investments Raised 2004/05	Loans/ Investments Repaid 2004/05	Debt/ Investments Outstanding 31 Mar 05		Gross Interest 2004/05	Average Rate 2004/05		Average Rate 2003/04
		£ 000s	£ 000s	£ 000s	£ 000s	No.	£ 000s	%		%
Loan Debt:										
P.W.L.B.	Fixed	109,048	0	201	108,847	91	7,505	6.89		6.91
Temporary Loans	Fixed	109,048 0	0	201 0	108,847 0	91	7,505 0	6.89 0.00		6.91 3.50
Total Debt		109,048	0	201	108,847	91	7,505	6.89		6.94
Deferred Purchase	Variable	980	0	980	0	1	3	0.61		4.49
Investments	Fixed	12,500	460,280	451,780	21,000	7	1,317	4.68		3.59

REPORT TO CABINET

Paper by: Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources

DATE: 27 September 2005

SUBJECT: Proposals for staff and organisational development

1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 To agree the proposals of how to continue the development work that has taken place during the last nine months

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 During the last 12 months the Authority has been developing a programme of organisational development. It should be noted that organisational development is not a project or programme, it is an ongoing change in the way that we work.

2.2 The current phase of the work has been carried out largely by *equalta*, supported by Cabinet Members, the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and Heads of Service.

2.3 The programme has been extensive and includes:

- ♦ Awayday for CET with Leader, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Finance and Personnel
- ♦ Meetings with each Head of Service to identify current issues
- ♦ Meetings with 2 focus groups from each directorate
- ♦ Heads of Service have completed Insights report, helping to understand other's perspectives
- ♦ Review of current management training
- ♦ Awayday for CET and MMC
- ♦ Awayday for CET and Cabinet
- ♦ Review of current staff development review process

2.4 This work has been completed, and the main outcomes were

- 1 the need for a new performance appraisal system
- 2 the need for supporting leadership and management training
- 3 changes to the way we work, both for staff and Members

- clarity of roles
- review of MMC
- improved communications
- statement of values
- allocation of corporate responsibilities Members and Directors
- job descriptions for Members

- less meetings / faster decision making
- moving towards a more positive 'can do' attitude

2.5 This work is consistent with the findings of the Corporate Improvement Assessment which also emphasised the need to ensure consistent application of corporate policies.

2.6 Performance Appraisal

2.6.1 The Authority currently has a Staff Development Review [SDR] - the main purpose being to focus on the development needs of staff.

2.6.2 The feedback from the development work is that good performance is not always recognised and poor performance not addressed. This came out consistently from staff focus groups.

2.6.3 The proposal is to move to a performance appraisal system starting in April 2006. The HR team have developed a framework but external assistance will be required to review the framework and implement the system particularly at Director / Head of Service level (where a more extensive approach is planned) across the Authority.

2.7 Leadership and Management Development

2.7.1 The revised Performance Appraisal identifies a series of competencies. It is therefore necessary to have a leadership and management development programme in place to support and be consistent with the appraisal system. External support will be needed to develop this work.

2.7.2 Costs associated with this second phase of the work can be contained within budget, financed by savings carried forward from 2004/05. However there is a concern that the Personnel Department cannot sustain this development without additional resource and this cost implication is covered in section 4.

2.8 The way we work

2.8.1 A large number of actions have been collected under this heading.

2.8.2 Much work has already been undertaken, for example:

- 1 statement on culture and values of the Authority prepared and being consulted upon
- 2 job descriptions for Cabinet Members
- 3 proposals for Member training
- 4 a review of the role of MMC is in hand
- 5 Chief Executive and Leader have clearly allocated corporate responsibilities

2.8.3 One aspect of this work which is considered important and needs finalising is the revision of the Member / Officer protocol.

2.8.4 An action plan is included in Appendix 1 which outlines the key activities for the next 9 months to deliver this second phase of the programme.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 3.1 Sections 111 [Subsidiary Powers] and 112 [Staff] local Government Act 1972.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 As indicated in 2.7.2 above, it is anticipated that costs associated with the use of external consultants can be contained with budget.
- 4.2 The process has identified a concern about the overall capacity of the Personnel Department to deliver the extensive agenda which it currently faces. It is considered that a new post as a senior personnel officer is required. The proposal is that this could be contained within other budgets for 2005/06 and 2006/07 but would require additional funding of £40k per annum from then on.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

- 5.1 Costs as detailed in the report will need to be contained within the funding identified for 2005/6 and 2006/7. The potential impact on 2007/8 will need to be considered as part of the budget setting exercise for that year.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 6.1 The whole programme has been the subject of extensive consultation. The use of Awaydays such as those with MMC and Cabinet have ensured that there has been significant communication on an ongoing basis.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

- 7.1 Organisational development needs to be regarded as a way of working, not simply a project or process. The proposals within this paper are meant to aid the Authority in addressing the way it currently operates to allow more effective delivery of services.

8 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members:

- 8.1 note the main outcomes of the work undertaken to date.
- 8.2 agree in principle the need to develop an authority-wide performance appraisal system and supporting leadership and management development training as outlined in 2.6 and 2.7
- 8.3 support the ongoing work as outlined in 2.8

Action Plan**Appendix 1**

Action	By whom	By when
1 Development of Performance Appraisal for agreement with staff, unions and Council	Linda Atkin	March 2006
2 Reach agreement with external consultants to assist in the implementation of Performance Appraisal and development programmes	Linda Atkin / Alan Evans	October 2005
3 Rewrite Member / Officer protocol	Ian Hearle	November 2005
4 Agree statement on the Aim and Values of the Authority	Ian Miller	Ongoing consultation Approval by January 2006
5 Job Descriptions to be prepared for all Member roles	Ian Hearle	Completed by March 2006
6 Co-ordination of the other activities, collectively referred to as changes to the way we work	Ian Miller	ongoing

REPORT TO CABINET

**CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR E C EDWARDS
LEAD MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES**

DATE: 27th September 2005

**SUBJECT: Civil Contingencies Act 2004 - Formation of a Joint
Emergency Planning Team**

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To agree to develop a joint Emergency Planning Team with Flintshire County Council on the basis of a collaborative approach that will enable the Councils to better meet the new duties placed on it by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- 2.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 is the culmination of many years of lobbying Government, and represents a major change in the approach to civil contingencies and emergency planning.
- 2.2 In line with the Welsh Assembly Government "Making the Connection" agenda being pursued by the WLGA and in light of comments regarding pooled arrangements for emergency planning contained within the letter from Sue Essex AM, Minister for Finance, Local Government and Public Services, on civil contingencies funding for local authorities a joint meeting was held on the 30th August 2005 to determine whether the opportunity for pooled arrangements existed.
- 2.3 Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council were represented at the meeting by the senior officers responsible for their respective emergency planning functions. Attempts were made to engage Conwy County Borough Council in the discussions but no response was forthcoming.
- 2.4 The joint meeting considered what opportunities existed for pooled arrangements and efficiency gains across North Wales and across North East Wales.
- 2.5 The proposal for a single emergency planning unit to be established to cover the 6 North Wales Authorities was not supported. The reasons included the distances and areas to be covered by a small single unit being less efficient and effective due to dilution of service and the repetitive reporting separately to each authority which was seen as over bureaucratic and less effective and efficient. Also it was felt that it would be difficult to maintain an equitable service level balance between six authorities.

- 2.6 The proposal for a single North East Wales Emergency Planning Unit was carefully considered but the Wrexham representative did not see sufficient benefits in this approach and did not support the proposal.
- 2.7 It was agreed that the opportunity to pool resources and form a single Emergency Planning Unit to provide the service for Denbighshire County Council and Flintshire County Council was not only feasible but desirable. Benefits could be identified in the areas of risk assessment, co-operation, information sharing, emergency plan production, Member, Officer and Volunteer training, warning and informing the public, business continuity planning and the promotion of business continuity to the private sector. Also the formation of a joint unit would reduce duplication, improve and simplify training, improve emergency response and mutual aid arrangements.
- 2.8 It is proposed that line management and accountability would be retained jointly by the Corporate Director, Environment in Denbighshire and the Director of Corporate Strategy in Flintshire. The manager of the Emergency Planning Unit would be responsible for producing all management progress reports, policy and operational reviews for both Directors of each authority.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Section 8 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations 2005, Joint Discharge of Functions, permits a Category 1 responder to perform a duty jointly with another responder.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 For a joint Emergency Planning Unit to be formed it will be necessary for each authority to agree to pool their current civil contingencies funding and associated financial allocations for existing emergency planning functions. It will also be necessary for the two authorities to agree where the joint unit should be located, and this will also determine which authority will be responsible for the units financial and support service provisions.
- 4.2 Based on the discussions to date the costs of the proposals can be contained within the existing budget for the service.
- 4.3 Although no financial savings will be gained in the early years of the project, the inherent efficiency to the two Authorities will enable the additional burdens of the Civil Contingencies Act to be met, without the need for additional funding.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

- 5.1 In terms of the Assembly's 'Efficiencies' agenda it is expected that Councils will work in a collaborative way with partners to provide either a better service at the same cost or the same service at a lower cost.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The Flintshire County Emergency Planning Officer, as Emergency Planning Adviser to the WLGA and LGA, has consulted with the WLGA and LGA Officers, colleague Advisers and other local authority emergency planning officers on the scope and content of the Act and Regulations. Meetings have been held between key officers from Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council regarding the proposals contained within this report.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

- 7.1 Failure to implement the Civil Contingencies Act and Regulations would lead to a failure in service delivery, unacceptable audit, and exposure to litigation and reputation damage in the event of a major emergency.
- 7.3 The proposal contained within this paper provides an opportunity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service to both authorities and embraces the current making connections agenda regarding collaborative working, being pursued by the WLGA and the Welsh Assembly Government.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That Members receive and agree to the collaborative proposals, contained within this report, for a Joint Emergency Planning Function between Denbighshire County Council and Flintshire County Council.
- 8.2 That delegated authority is given to the Corporate Director, Environment to appoint Flintshire's County Emergency Planning Officer to take forward the collaborative arrangements.
- 8.3 That delegated authority is given to the Corporate Director, Environment to determine the most appropriate location for this function.
- 8.4 That delegated authority is given to the Corporate Director, Environment to review the joint arrangements at 3 year intervals.

**CABINET
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

REPORT TITLE	REPORT LEAD MEMBER / AUTHOR
OCTOBER 2005	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2005-2006 [including Procurement] <i>Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2005-2006</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
Denbighshire International Strategy	Councillor R W Hughes G Evans
Corporate Quarterly Performance Report	Councillor P J Marfleet J Ogden
Tir Morfa Phase II <i>Approval for commencement of Phase II</i>	Councillor D Owens I Lloyd Roberts
New 3 Year Library Plan	Councillor S Roberts H Griffiths
Welsh Language Scheme Revision <i>Scheme due for revision following guidance issued by Welsh Language Board</i>	Councillor S A Davies C Bennett
Response to Children's Commissioner Review 'Children Don't complain'	Councillor M A German S Ellis
Health Social Care and Wellbeing Annual Report	Councillor P A Dobb S Ellis
NOVEMBER 2005	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2005-2006 [including Procurement] <i>Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2005-2006</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2005-2006</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Customer Service Centre Update	Councillor S A Davies P Wickes
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
Corporate Quarterly Performance Report	Councillor P J Marfleet J Ogden
Managing School Places: Proposals for Consultation	Councillor D Owens G E Brooks
DECEMBER 2005	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2005-2006 [including Procurement] <i>Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry

REPORT TITLE	REPORT LEAD MEMBER / AUTHOR
2005-2006	
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2005-2006</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
Urdd Eisteddfod	Councillor S Roberts
Fees and Charges <i>Domiciliary Care / Nursing Homes</i>	Councillor P A Dobb N Ayling
JANUARY 2006	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2005-2006 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2005-2006	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Revenue Budget 2006-2007 to 2008-2009	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2005-2006</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Three Year Capital Plan 2006-07 Onwards	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk
Corporate Quarterly Performance Report	Councillor P J Marfleet J Ogden
FEBRUARY 2006	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2005-2006 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2005-2006	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2005-2006</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk
MARCH 2006	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2005-2006 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2005-2006	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2005-2006</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk
APRIL 2006	

REPORT TITLE	REPORT LEAD MEMBER / AUTHOR
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2006-2007 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2006-2007	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2006-2007</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk
MAY 2006	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2006-2007 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2006-2007	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2006-2007</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk
JUNE 2006	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2006-2007 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2006-2007	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2006-2007</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Final Revenue Accounts 2005-2006	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk
JULY 2006	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2006-2007 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2006-2007	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2006-2007</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk

REPORT TITLE	REPORT LEAD MEMBER / AUTHOR
AUGUST 2006 ~ NO MEETINGS	
SEPTEMBER 2006 ~ 1ST MEETING	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2006-2007 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2006-2007	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2006-2007</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk
SEPTEMBER 2006 ~ 2ND MEETING	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2006-2007 [including Procurement] Provides an update of the Revenue Budget position for 2005-2006	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Capital Plan <i>Capital 2006-2007</i>	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Annual Treasury Report	Councillor P J Marfleet R Parry
Housing Revenue Account Budget <i>Sets out the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account</i>	Councillor P A Dobb / P Quirk