

CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday 19 February 2008 in Conference Room 1, County Hall, Ruthin.

PRESENT

Councillors P A Dobb, Lead Member for Social Services; E C Edwards, Lead Member for Customer Care and Community Safety; H H Evans, Leader and Lead Member for Education; M A German, Lead Member for Environment; G M Kensler; Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire; P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Modernisation and Improvement; G O Rowlands, Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing; J A Smith, Lead Member for Business Management, Communications & Personnel and J Thompson Hill, Lead Member for Finance.

Observers: Councillors J R Bartley; R E Barton; G C Evans; M M Jones and S Frobisher.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor H H Evans.

ALSO PRESENT

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

APOLOGIES

Corporate Director: Environment.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Councillor H H Evans said relevant questions would be received from non-Executive Members on this occasion only as two reports on the Agenda had been despatched late.

Environment Day 26 March 2008 ~ Councillor E C Edwards said the national day was for tackling environmental crime, and sought Cabinet's formal agreement to support the day. He had been in consultation with colleagues in Environmental Services and partnership organisations and had discussed an opportunity to put Denbighshire at the forefront of tackling environmental crime. It was proposed to put a team in as many Wards / Electoral Divisions of Denbighshire - the teams to be supported by 2 'Regional teams', every 5 or so teams / Wards would have the support of 2 further teams, one enforcement team, and one clean up team, each comprised of two operatives / enforcement officers. Members agreed to support the Environmental Day.

1 URGENT MATTERS

There were no Urgent Items.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 5 February 2008 were submitted.

Item 3 Budget Proposals 2008-2009: Page 4 last paragraph – Councillor G M Kensler said a comparison could not be drawn between Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn and Blessed Edward Jones High School as Hyfrydle Children’s Home was referred to and not Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn.

Page 5 Resolution – Referring to her abstention from the vote, Councillor G M Kensler said she could not vote until she and Councillor H H Evans had met with the Arts Council of Wales the following day.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Leader.

3 MODERNISING EDUCATION ACTION PLAN MONITORING

Councillor H H Evans presented the report seeking Members’ consideration of the work undertaken to monitor the progress of the Modernising Education Agenda and the progress on the Partnership Agreement.

Referring to the Estyn Review of Youth Support Services / Modernising Education, Councillor Evans said this would be monitored in the same way as the Estyn Action Plan and said R1.4 was a high profile issue. St Winifred’s School and Ysgol Dewi Sant would not be available from September 2008 and July 2009 for the provision and support for children / young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Councillor G O Rowlands said improving overall attendance figures across the Authority was progressing well.

In response to a query from Councillor R E Barton regarding the recommendations from the Modernising Education report being incorporated into any monitoring system to ensure progress being measured, Councillor H H Evans said the Modernising Education Board would form a timetable.

The Chief Executive referring to Appendix 2 and said the only information contained therein were exceptions and therefore information on the special schools review would not be included.

The Interim Head of School Improvement informed Members that she had met with all Denbighshire Headteachers and had written a draft Strategy and it was hoped Cabinet would be asked to ratify the completed policy on supporting schools in March 2008 although aspects relating to Health and Safety and Buildings Premises could cause a slight delay owing to the need for consultation.

RESOLVED that Cabinet, having considered the progress to date against tasks, request that the Modernising Education Board reviews progress against those tasks

identified as “Red” or “Amber” in Appendix 2 in advance of the next monthly monitoring report.

4 REVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Councillor M A German presented the report seeking Members’ approval of the adoption of the revised Environmental Policy (appendix I attached to the report). It was important the Authority promoted the Policy.

Councillor P J Marfleet said a firm commitment to the Policy was required and all Members had a duty to ensure its success.

Councillor G M Kensler queried the financial implications and mentioned in particular the enhancement of the natural environment and built heritage. The Corporate Policy Officer / Sustainability Project Co-ordinator said no specific financial costs had been identified and each policy would be looked at on an individual basis. This was the precursor to what was required and the savings involved. He confirmed that an improvement plan would be formulated and this would be updated annually.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommends Council adopt the revised Environmental Policy (attached to the report).

5 DIFFERENTIAL LEVELS FOR PARKING PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES

Councillor M A German presented the report seeking Members’ agreement to the level of differential penalty charges to take effect from 31 March 2008 under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA). He confirmed that monies collected from fines were used to fund Enforcement Officers and fund the Transport Department in various ways, including car park improvements.

RESOLVED that Cabinet sets the level of parking penalty charges at Band 2 – Higher Level PCN £70, Lower Level PCN £50.

6 SOCIAL SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report seeking Cabinet agreement to the proposed increases in fee levels for providers of Nursing and Residential Care, Day Care and Home Care services for the financial year 2008/2009. Agreement was also sought for the proposed changes to the Charging Policy, increasing charges for services and broadening the scope of the Policy to introduce charging for services which were currently free of charge.

Councillor Dobb said the 4.5% increase sought was being dictated by budget pressures. The Review of Day Care Services being undertaken would result in a new contract for the services and providers would be charged an inflation only increase whilst the Review was ongoing. The impact of increases in charges on users would be monitored

and those suffering hardship would be encouraged to take up waivers. Assuming the consultation exercise and legal investigations into mental health charges were satisfactorily concluded, charges could be implemented within 6 months. It was also recommended that Supporting People charges be introduced. Responding to Councillor G M Kensler's query on collaborative working with Education and Procurement, Councillor Dobb said meals provision was separate as residential homes provided meals. The Corporate Director: Social Services had recently carried out a review of meal provision costs and had renegotiated costs with providers. Some collaborative work with Education was carried out in the south of the County.

Councillor J Thompson Hill informed Members that it was a matter of policy that provision should be considered by the Procurement Unit as a matter of course.

The Chief Executive said third party increases of 4.5% and charges to recipients of 4% was achievable.

RESOLVED that the proposed fee levels for services provided in 2008/2009, as detailed in the report, are agreed for implementation from the beginning April 2008. The increases to charges, as detailed in the report, are also agreed for implementation in April 2008. It is further agreed the introduction of charges for services which are currently free of charge are implemented during 2008.

7 MONITORING PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE AUTHORITY'S KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report for Members to note the Corporate Quarterly Performance report: Performance against the Authority's key performance indicators for the third quarter of 2007-2008 – October, November and December 2007 and that Cabinet consider any issue in greater depth as deemed necessary. He referred to the trial Revenues and Benefits performance clinic and said this had produced actions. The department were using their performance indicators as a management tool and in how the service was being delivered.

2.20 p.m. Councillor M M Jones left the meeting at this juncture.

Councillor P J Marfleet said more than 4 indicators were required for the Children and Young People service. He felt that national indicator of data collection on only one day each year for older people could be a meaningless indicator. He stressed the need for accurate figures for food inspections carried out as many new businesses were established and many ceased trading, making food safety a high risk issue.

2.30 p.m. Councillor S Frobisher left the meeting at this juncture.

Councillor Marfleet referred to municipal waste and said the Authority was not currently meeting the Welsh average figures. He suggested municipal waste be considered at a

performance clinic. The % increase in the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued in relation to environmental issues had incorrect symbols.

2.35 p.m. Councillor S Frobisher joined the meeting at this juncture.

Councillor Marfleet stressed the need to ensure absenteeism was closely monitored as the cumulative figure of 8.58 days was very close to the 9 days annual target and was at a higher level than the previous year. Turning to the percentage of staff who had received performance appraisals in the last year, Councillor Marfleet said the appraisals had to be carried out on a regular basis but appreciated the difficulties which some departments faced when many of their staff were not office-based.

2.38 p.m. Councillor S Frobisher left the meeting at this juncture.

Councillor G M Kensler referred to the statement by Estyn that the Authority was good at collecting data but data analysis was not always as good. She felt that information on departmental days lost where one person's sick leave could distort figures should be supported by the reasons. She queried whether there were enough resources in Food Safety to undertake the number of visits required. Councillor Kensler also suggested that much could be learnt from staff exit interviews and said schools should be encouraged to use teaching staff exit interviews.

Referring to the Children and Young People targets, Councillor P A Dobb said these were national targets. Some of the Social Services sickness absences were as a result of an older workforce and viruses amongst staff in the residential homes.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the Quarterly Performance Report and agree to pay particular attention to issues requiring further discussion and/or remedial action, particularly those indicators which are not on target.

8 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET & CAPITAL PLAN REPORT 2007-2008

Councillor G O Rowlands presented the report for Members to note the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the current financial year.

RESOLVED that Members note the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the current financial year.

9 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2008-2009

Councillor G O Rowlands presented the report seeking Members' agreement to adopt the Housing Revenue Account budget [Appendix 1] and Capital Programme [Appendix 3] for 2008/2009. Members were also asked to agree rents for Council dwellings be increased in accordance with the Rent Setting Policy in Section 2.2.7 (average 6%) from Monday 7 April 2008 and that rents for leased properties be fixed in accordance with paragraph 2.4.3 of the report. Members were further asked to agree rents for

Council garages be increased by £0.15 to £5.15 (3%) per week with effect from Monday 7 April 2008 along with increases in heating charges in accordance with section 2.6.3 with effect from Monday 7 April 2008.

Councillor Rowlands drew detailed attention to the major issues. The proposed budget took into account revised Determinations from the Welsh Assembly Government which affected the HRA Subsidy and were influenced by house price inflation, as well as general inflation and the reduced number of Right to Buy sales. The Housing Stock Business Plan had been reviewed and remained viable. The capital programme remained on target to achieve Welsh Housing Quality Standards by 2012 and could be partly funded from balances in 2008/09, reducing the need for Prudential Borrowing. He then detailed the proposed rises in rents for Council dwellings, leased dwellings, and for garages, and in charges for heating on estates with communal boilers.

2.50 p.m. Councillor J A Smith joined the meeting at this juncture.

Councillor P A Dobb expressed concerns regarding the future of leased properties as the Welsh Assembly Government may not wish to continue with the programme. The Head of Housing Services said the Welsh Assembly Government in November 2007 had said the leasing subsidy would be available in 2008-2009 but that it may not be available from 2009 onwards. No confirmation of this had been received.

2.55 p.m. Councillors S Frobisher and M M Jones joined the meeting at this juncture.

Councillor E C Edwards asked for an update on housing maintenance. The Head of Housing Services said the figures for the repairs backlog was being reduced steadily and was currently at 1082, with no outstanding jobs over a year old. The retention of £100k in next year's budget should help reduce the backlog. He also confirmed that the improvement work was substantially completed on garage sites, with 4 sites having been demolished.

In response to Councillor G M Kensler's queries, the Head of Housing Services confirmed that 6% rent increases could be perceived as being high but cited Wrexham County Borough Council as having a higher notional increase. He said the Tenants' Associations were allowed fixed amounts. Councillor Marfleet suggested Council rents were in many instances 50% less than in the private sector.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree:

- [1] *the Housing Revenue Account budget [Appendix 1] and Capital Programme [Appendix 3] for 2008/2009 are adopted;*
- [2] *rents for Council dwellings be increased in accordance with the Rent Setting Policy in Section 2.2.7 of the report (average 6%) from Monday 7 April 2008;*

- [3] rents for leased properties be fixed in accordance with paragraph 2.4.3 of the report;
- [4] rents for Council garages be increased by £0.15 to £5.15 (3%) per week with effect from Monday 7 April 2008, and
- [5] heating charges be increased in accordance with section 2.6.3 of the report with effect from Monday 7 April 2008.

10 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN 2007-2008 AND SUMMARY CAPITAL PLAN 2007-2008 TO 2009-2010

Councillor J Thompson Hill presented the report for Members to note the budget performance figures for the 2007/2008 financial year as detailed in Appendix 1 and note the summary capital plan performance for 2007/2008 financial year as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3. Members were also asked to note the initial position on the vacancy control procedure recently introduced.

The forecast overall underspend was £475k, excluding the schools' delegated budgets. Lifelong Learning were forecasting an overspend of £563k, a reduction of £99k from the previous month whilst the Social Services and Housing Directorate position had improved by £309k from the previous month. The freeze on filling vacant posts should contribute approximately £80k per month and had been factored into the latest figures.

RESOLVED that Members note the budget performance figures for 2007/2008 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and note the summary capital plan performance figures for the 2007-2008 financial year as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report. Members also note the progress to date in connection with the vacancy control procedure.

11 BUDGET SETTING 2008-2009 – USE OF ONE OFF ADDITIONAL LABGI GRANT

Councillor J Thompson Hill presented the report seeking Members' consideration of the spend to save proposals for the use of the additional Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Grant (LABGI) recently announced by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and recommend accordingly to full Council. The proposals had been split into three main areas:

- a) initiate a commercial review of the potential for more cost effective service delivery within the trading services of the Council with particular reference to the Cultural, Heritage & Leisure portfolios. Also to provide for any resulting costs from restructuring services - £100k;
- b) continue with the currently funded development posts in Rhyl and Prestatyn and a new post in Denbigh to deliver further external funding for schemes - £98k, and

- c) strengthen the Council's capacity within the Procurement and Business Process Reengineering functions to deliver savings - £50k.

The development post in Denbigh was a new post whilst those already funded in Rhyl and Prestatyn were extended for a further year. It was important to strengthen capacity within Procurement / Business Process to ensure efficiencies in future years.

Councillor G M Kensler felt the new funding could confuse some members of the public, and asked whether the LABGI funding would mean that libraries for example would now not have to have their opening hours reduced. Councillor J Thompson Hill said the items in the report were not linked to what had already been agreed in the budget. This was to deal with future capacity, future efficiencies and to deliver funding. The proposals for cuts in Library Services would remain. The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources agreed the purpose of the additional funding was to deliver future efficiencies. The Chief Executive said the £100k allocated for a commercial review of a cost effective service delivery was to ensure businesses could be put on a more stable footing whilst at the same time reducing the Council's financial responsibility.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree the proposed spend to save use of the additional one off LABGI grant funds as detailed in the report and recommend accordingly to full Council.

At this juncture (3.25 pm.) the meeting adjourned for 10 minutes to allow Members to participate in refreshments.

12 ROUTINE REPORTING ON PERSONNEL

Councillor J A Smith presented the report for Members to note the information on the staff headcount.

Members briefly discussed the rolling average and cumulative figures. The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources said the rolling average figures covered 12 months whilst the cumulative figures were from a defined point in the year.

RESOLVED that Members note the information in the report.

13 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor J A Smith presented the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

14 URGENT ITEMS

There were no Urgent Items.

PART II

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 paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

15 ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTH WALES JOINT PROCUREMENT CONTRACTING UNIT

Councillor J Thompson Hill presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to participate in the establishment and implementation of a collaborative North Wales Joint Procurement Contracting Unit. Collaborative working was encouraged by the Assembly and its Making the Connections agenda.

Whilst supporting the establishment of a Joint Procurement Contracting Unit, Councillor P A Dobb reminded colleagues that the purchase of care provision was different from the provision of most other goods and services and needed to be tailored. Councillor J Thompson Hill said producing framework agreements would involve a technical person from the relevant service along with the Procurement Officer, where required. The Head of Strategic Policy confirmed that social care had been removed from the initial year's work programme but would be included in later years. A shadow management board would be formed with the Financial Controller as a member of the board whilst the Strategic Procurement Manager would be part of the operational board, working with service specialists and reporting to the shadow management board.

Responding to Councillor G O Rowlands' comment, Councillor J Thompson Hill confirmed that smaller and medium sized businesses would be given opportunities to prepare for framework agreement opportunities. Councillor G M Kensler agreed and said when the Procurement Unit was first established it was always likely that local smaller suppliers and contractors would find it hard to compete on price.

Councillor P J Marfleet discussed the Recovery of Expenditure table which did not specify whether all 6 Authorities would use the scheme to the same degree or pro rata in relation to the population. He asked whether the North Wales Regional Waste Plan would be included. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed the Plan was not included as it was too specialised.

Councillor E C Edwards stressed the importance of using the Procurement Contracting Unit and the whole Authority should buy into it, he felt each Department should be instructed to use the Unit once established as a matter of course. He said the Emergency Services buying power should also be included. He congratulated the Strategic Procurement Manager on his work. The Financial Controller confirmed that in future goods would be ordered electronically from an electronic catalogue, the goods in

the catalogue would be the cheapest available to the Unit and the Authority would be able to monitor use by services. Councillor P J Marfleet agreed with Councillor E C Edwards that the Authority must instruct staff to use the Unit once established and suggested a procurement policy was required. The Financial Controller said this would be a requirement. It was agreed a regular report would be provided for Cabinet.

RESOLVED that Cabinet gives their approval for DCC to participate in the establishment and implementation of a collaborative North Wales Joint Procurement Contracting Unit for an initial 3 year period subject to satisfactory periodical performance management reviews.

16 AWARD OF NORTH WALES PUBLIC SECTOR PROCUREMENT OF HIGHWAY LIGHTING EQUIPMENT

Councillor M A German presented the joint report seeking Cabinet approval of the use of the Highways Lighting Engineer and Strategic Procurement Framework Agreement. The agreement covered the provision of Highways Lighting equipment, and was developed by Denbighshire CC officers on behalf of several different North Wales Authorities (Denbighshire, Conwy, Flintshire, Wrexham, and Gwynedd). The framework was a 'call-off' contract, i.e. with more than one service provider. The Council would not be committed to a wider partnership, and would not have any liability for any other Councils' actions.

RESOLVED that Cabinet authorise the Street Lighting Engineer to use the recently developed "Highways Lighting Engineer and Strategic Procurement Framework Agreement".

17 JOINT PROCUREMENT OF WASTE TREATMENT SERVICE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NORTH WALES WASTE PARTNERSHIP

Councillor M A German presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to enter into joint procurement arrangements for the treatment and disposal of the Council's waste.

Councillor P J Marfleet expressed his support for the arrangements and said it was important to ensure planning and costs etc were all in place at an early stage and to ensure a memorandum of understanding was signed. Councillor G M Kensler said pressure should be brought to bear by the Government on companies and supermarkets for example, to reduce packaging on goods.

The Head of Environmental Services said the policy was being driven by sustainability which said Authorities should recycle 70% of their waste. The Chief Executive said a figure of 70% recycling was unlikely to be achieved and said concern was being expressed by all on the low level of 30% of energy from waste.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approval is given to enter into a formal partnership under the auspices of the North Wales Waste Partnership, in order to jointly procure waste treatment and/or waste disposal facilities from 2010 onwards. Cabinet also note the mandatory legal requirements that have been placed upon the Council in relation to the

tonnages of waste that it can send to landfill, and to recognise the need to address the financial consequences of these requirements in forthcoming budget rounds.

18 CAPITAL PLAN 2007-2008 TO 2010-2011

Councillor J Thompson Hill presented the report for Members to note the latest position on the 2007/08 element of the Capital Plan together with the figures for 2008/09 as agreed by full Council on 12 February 2008.

The Community Learning Centres were progressing well and the Scala project was on course with the General Manager post being advertised. There was a potential delay of 14 weeks on the Ruthin Craft Centre, however this should not delay the opening in the summer 2008. The scheme is also on budget. Phase 2 Ysgol Tir Morfa had been completed and handed over to the school.

Councillor P A Dobb expressed concern regarding the anticipated 14 week delay in completion of the Ruthin Craft Centre and asked whether there would be any financial ramifications resulting from the delay. She also referred to actual and committed expenditure in the Members' Priority Fund. Councillor G M Kensler confirmed there were no financial ramifications arising from the delay in the Ruthin Craft Centre whilst Councillor J Thompson Hill said the delay arose as a result of a variation request by the contractor. It was agreed more detailed information be provided on the Ruthin Craft Centre in the next report to Cabinet.

Councillor E C Edwards discussed the Authority's asset management and said it was important that sales were pursued as a matter of urgency. He said the sale of surplus assets was an important source of capital resources for the Authority and at some point in the future, the Welsh Assembly Government would take Local Authority Asset Management Plans into account when deciding settlements. He asked that the issue be discussed at the first opportunity on an informal basis with Cabinet Members. Councillor G O Rowlands said the delay in selling one property was as the result of conveyancing difficulties.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the latest position on the 2007/08 element of the Capital Plan, together with the figures for 2008/09 agreed by full Council on 12 February 2008.

19 HYFRYDLE CHILDREN'S HOME, DENBIGH - 52 WEEK RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

Councillor H H Evans presented the report seeking Members consideration of the 52 week provision at Hyfrydle Children's Home, Denbigh. Councillor Evans went on to say that further, more detailed information was required, along with the financial implications before any decisions were taken. He suggested further options should be considered. However, a decision on the facility had to be made during the term of the current Council.

RESOLVED that Members agree the establishment of a multi-disciplinary group of officers including Education, Social Services, Finance and Project Management and Health, along with a representative of the Hyfrydle Children's Home Governing Body to develop a financially viable option for making the best use of the provision for vulnerable children, young people or adults with complex or/and multiple special needs.

The meeting concluded at 5.15 p.m.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR H H EVANS
Leader and Lead Member for Education

DATE: 18th March 2008

SUBJECT: MODERNISING EDUCATION ACTION PLAN MONITORING

1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the work undertaken to monitor the progress of the Modernising Education Agenda.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 The Council submitted the Action Plan and associated work plans to Estyn on the 20th December 2007. The Action Plan clearly demonstrated the commitment of the Authority to ensuring the plan will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed in due course.

2.2 The Modernising Education Board is responsible for overseeing the effective implementation of the Action Plan and accordingly has approved a robust performance management approach to ensure that the Board receives an overview of the progress against agreed actions and is able to review the level of risk associated with all recommendations within the report.

2.3 Appendix 1 to the report provides a summary of the 19 work plans developed to respond to the main recommendations within the Estyn Inspection report. Work Plans have been developed to respond to each of the 18 bullet points within Estyn’s three overall recommendations plus two additional work plans have been developed to address key areas not formally considered within the recommendations but considered important to the overall successful implementation of the improvement agenda. The appendix via the colour coding allows a clear understanding from a single sheet of the status of progress.

	Progress	Risk Status
Red	Slippage against over 15% of the agreed dates within the work plan	Considered high risk in terms of impact of likely time delays, insufficient money to deliver the task or receiving negative media coverage
Amber	Slippage reported against less than 15% of the agreed dates within the work plan	Considered medium risk in terms of impact of likely time delays, insufficient money to deliver the task or receiving negative media coverage
Green	All tasks are either ongoing or have been completed against agreed dates	Considered low risk in terms of impact of likely time delays, insufficient money to deliver the task or receiving negative media coverage

2.4 In total there are over 400 individual actions within the work plans as submitted to Estyn to be progressed by the Authority. Clearly there is a need to ensure that

any reporting mechanism ensures that Members attention is drawn to areas causing or likely to lead to concerns to ensure that corrective action can be instigated.

- 2.5 To complement the performance management arrangements the Business Change Manager has commenced her role to support the embedding of new processes and practices into mainstream working. In particular an important element of this role is to review the impact of those activities reported as green. This role has been developed in respect of providing a focus for the work of Scrutiny with challenge occurring on completed tasks to ensure that Task Leaders can demonstrate progress in the context of the key questions of what outcomes have the activities achieved and what difference has it made.

Current Progress

- 2.6 Appendix 1 to the report provides a summary of current overall progress including an assessment of tasks completed as of the 29th February 2008. Within the current plan there were 131 actions scheduled to be completed by that date and progress is summarised as follows:-

Actions completed	93
Actions not completed	38

- 2.7 The Modernising Education Board considered a progress report at its meeting on the 5th March. The Board agreed to amend a number of dates of actions in view of changing circumstances. Details of the amendments to the action plan agreed by the Modernising Education Board at this meeting are contained in Appendix 2.

2.8 Estyn Review of Youth Support Services / Modernising Education Report

- 2.9 There is a need to ensure that the monitoring requirements arising from the Estyn review of Youth Support Services from 2006 and the recommendations from the Cambridge report "Modernising Education" can be incorporated within the performance management system developed to address the main Estyn Action Plan. The Young People's Partnership were to consider a revised action plan at a special meeting on the 13th March. The revised format mirrors the approach taken for the Estyn Education Action Plan and should assist in providing a clear focus to ensure that progress is monitored. A separate report on the agenda details the work required in respect to the Modernising Education report.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

The Council was required under a duty to prepare an Action Plan under Section 39 of the Education Act 1997.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

Many of the actions can be delivered by redirecting existing resources to focus more clearly on the schools which need support most and by challenging all schools to use funding effectively to raise standards. Detailed costings were

identified in the work plans and these considerations were taken into account in the budget setting process for 2008/09.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The Council has agreed a package of additional resources of £700k as an initial response to the Estyn report. Further bids for additional funding, in addition to the allocation for inflationary impact, of £1.25m have been recommended by Cabinet and were agreed by full Council on 12 February 2008 as part of the overall budget proposals for 2008/09.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 6.1 The Modernising Education Board at its meeting on the 5 March considered the latest position as reflected in Appendix 1 and 2. The Board were again mindful of the number of activities where revised completion dates were sought and have requested Task Leaders to review all future completion dates for activities, particular those which are central to the main commitments from the action plan to ensure completion dates are realistic. It was also agreed to revise the monitoring arrangements to ensure that evidence and outcomes from completed activities are clearly recorded.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS:

7.1 THE VISION

The Council has already agreed to amend its priorities to focus on School and Educational Improvement as a priority.

8 ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsibility	Deadline
To explore and address the reasons for any delays in implementing agreed actions	Modernising Education Board	Fortnightly meetings
To review and report to Cabinet upon the overall progress against the Action Plan as at the end of March 2008 to Cabinet	Modernising Education Board	22nd April 2008

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members consider the progress to date against tasks and request that the Modernising Education Board reviews progress against those tasks identified as "Red" or "Amber" in Appendix 2 in advance of the next monthly monitoring report.

Appendix 1

Action Plan in response to Estyn Inspection Report 2007 - Position as at 29th February

Recommendation 1	Progress	Risk	Recommendation 2	Progress	Risk	Recommendation 3	Progress	Risk
Address the issue of poor performance in schools by:			Improve the leadership and management of education at all levels of the authority by:			Improve the use of resources		
R1.1 - Identifying the reasons why the overall attainment of pupils, particularly at key stage 4, is low and what needs to be done to improve it	AMBER	GREEN	R2.1 Identifying clearly and addressing systematically, through robust planning and monitoring, the key strategic priorities needed to improve performance at all levels	GREEN	GREEN	R 3.1 - Linking funding priorities within the education budget more closely into strategic and operational planning processes	GREEN	AMBER
R1.2 - Developing, in partnership with schools, a coherent and specific school improvement strategy sharply focused on the priorities needed to raise performance	AMBER	GREEN	R2.2 - Creating clearer links between operational, service and corporate priorities	GREEN	GREEN	R3.2 - Prioritising resources according to the needs of children, young people and schools	GREEN	AMBER
R1.2a) - Produce a Council five year Prevention & Inclusion Strategy	GREEN	GREEN	R2.3 - Consulting and communicating effectively with schools, parents, pupils and other key partners	GREEN	GREEN	R3.3 - Evaluating the impact of the use of resources	GREEN	AMBER
R1.3 - Improving overall attendance figures across the authority	GREEN	AMBER	R2.4 - Influencing schools to work in constructive partnership with officers and elected members on agreed improvement strategies to raise performance	GREEN	GREEN	R3.4 - Completing the work on funding formulae for secondary and special schools and the delegation of resources for SEN and behaviour support	GREEN	AMBER
R1.4 - Reducing permanent and fixed term exclusions	AMBER	RED	R2.5 - Improving relationships and communication between parts of social and education services to successfully implement the Children Act 2004	GREEN	GREEN	R3.5 - Working openly with schools to improve their understanding of funding decisions and processes	GREEN	AMBER
R1.5 - Improving the amount of provision and support for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	GREEN	RED	R2.5a) - Develop and implement Community Focused Schools and Integrated Support Strategy to deliver holistic support to children, young people and families within their community	AMBER	GREEN			
R1.6 - Rigorously monitoring and challenging the performance of schools through the effective use of data	GREEN	AMBER	R2.6 - Using the scrutiny function to establish clear accountability and challenge robustly officers, members and services who are accountable for raising standards and improving the quality of provision	GREEN	GREEN			
R1.7 Determining schools' entitlement to support from the Council according to need, and communicating this clearly to schools	AMBER	GREEN						

Appendix 2 - Exception Reporting - As at 29th February 2008

Issues to note - Amendments as considered by Modernising Education Board 5th March

Key Activity	Activity Leader	Workplan completion date	Revised completion date	Achieved completion date	Reason for delay	RAG Status	Action taken by MEB
R1.1 - Identifying the reasons why the overall attainment of pupils, particularly at key stage 4, is low and what needs to be done to improve it - Task Leader Catherine Simpson - Interim Head of School Improvement							
Revise Job Descriptions for School Improvement Officers.	Head of School Improvement	01/01/08	13/02/08		3 of 4 completed but by next monitoring board all will be done	AMBER	Review progress made on activity
Develop an on line School Visits system for all Officers in School Improvement and Partnerships and Inclusion	ICT Advisor	01/01/08	01/02/08		Up and running but P&I not yet trained due to illness. New date for P&I training next week 3rd March	AMBER	Review progress made on activity
R1.2 - Developing, in partnership with schools, a coherent and specific school improvement strategy sharply focused on the priorities needed to raise performance - Task Leader - Catherine Simpson - Interim Head of School Improvement							
Support Programme for Schools identified from schools causing concern assessment	Senior Primary SIO	31/12/2007		31/12/07	This will be better established once agreed School Development Strategy is in place.	AMBER	Note progress made and remain as amber awaiting confirmation of outcomes

Key Activity	Activity Leader	Workplan completion date	Revised completion date	Achieved completion date	Reason for delay	RAG Status	Action taken by MEB
Monthly meetings established between officers from the School Improvement Service and Partnerships and Inclusion Service to co-ordinate input to targeted schools. These will link with the quarterly meetings of heads of Services with Social Services and Children's Services	Heads of Service – School Improvement & Partnership & Inclusion	From December 2007	Ongoing	from Dec 2007 -on going	Meeting established between 3 teams within LL but not with Social Services. Friday 22nd February, the 3 LL heads of Service met and invited the Head of Children's Services but this needs more work at a strategic level.	AMBER	Note progress made and remain as amber awaiting confirmation of outcomes
Deploy resources to more effectively meet the needs of learners in identified schools, particularly with regard to teaching and learning	Attached school improvement	Ongoing from January 2008	Ongoing		On going but will be more transparent after ratification of School Development Strategy	AMBER	
R1.7 Determining schools' entitlement to support from the Council according to need, and communicating this clearly to schools - Task Leader - Catherine Simpson / Sylvia Jones - Interim Head of School Improvement / Head of Partnership and Inclusion							
School Improvement team, Partnership & Inclusion meet monthly to co-ordinate action to support schools	Head of School Improvement and Head of Partnership & Inclusion	From December 2007		Yes - ongoing from December 2007	Good progress being made with joint meetings established. Two meetings taken place to date whilst Heads of Service continue to meet on a regular basis. No real impact yet on schools, but pending ratification of the School Development Strategy and the cluster / school support teams arrangements, a greater impact will be evident	AMBER	Note progress made and remain as amber awaiting confirmation of outcomes with schools

Key Activity	Activity Leader	Workplan completion date	Revised completion date	Achieved completion date	Reason for delay	RAG Status	Action taken by MEB
R2.5a) - Develop and implement Community Focused Schools and Integrated Support Strategy to deliver holistic support to children, young people and families within their community - Task Leader - Lisa Leece - Children and Young People's Partnership Manager							
Consultation with wider stakeholders including school council, youth council, parents, voluntary sector, parents and voluntary sector	Education Partnerships Officer & Children's Services Business Manager	29/02/2008			06.03.08 heads conference, single plan priorities consultation feeding into the strategy development, Following the event there will be a need to produce an analysis of further work required to be undertaken	AMBER	Note progress made and await completion

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR H H EVANS
Leader and Lead Member for Education

DATE: 18th March 2008

**SUBJECT: MODERNISING EDUCATION – RESPONSE TO
CAMBRIDGE EDUCATION REPORT**

1 DECISIONS SOUGHT

- 1.1 Members to receive the Cambridge Modernising Education Report contained in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 To receive the report setting out the process for developing and implementing an action plan, in consultation with stakeholders, for the remaining recommendations contained in the Cambridge Modernising Education report, see Appendix 4.
- 1.3 Cabinet to nominate an elected member or members to join the Modernising Education working group.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 Background

The Cabinet agreed in July 2005 to commence the Modernising Education Programme for Denbighshire and in November 2005 agreed to appoint consultants to undertake this work. Cambridge Education were subsequently appointed to undertake a review of the Education provision within Denbighshire.

The project brief stated that “Education is a high-profile service and key to the future for the county. However, there are many factors which have a bearing on the way education can and should evolve over the coming years. The most significant of these is the role of schools in their communities and Denbighshire County Council is strongly committed to ensuring that communities are closely engaged in any development planning which might affect them.”

Their findings were published in September 2007, Appendix 1, after extensive public consultation. Following the publication of the report further consultation on the findings was undertaken and the final report was received in December 2007. Cambridge Education’s final report is attached in Appendix 2.

- 2.2 Considerable and methodical research into the education service was carried out and was informed using the following set of agreed principles and priorities:

- Putting learners first
- Community focus
- High standards and expectations
- Recognising and overcoming barriers

- Partnership and inclusion
- Wise use of ICT and e-learning
- Wise use of money

- 2.3 This is the first opportunity Members have had to formally review the Cambridge report due to the publication of the Estyn Inspection report in September 2007. The priority was to ensure a robust action plan was in place to address the Estyn recommendations. As a consequence it was accepted that the work in reviewing the findings of the Cambridge Education report would be delayed pending the initial implementation of the Estyn Action Plan.
- 2.4 The Cambridge Modernising Education report proposes ten recommendations, six of which are contained in work plans developed to address similar issues raised in the Estyn report. These recommendations are attached in Appendix 3.
- 2.5 The authority now needs to address the remaining four areas contained in the Cambridge report, these are summarised in Appendix 4.

3 RESPONSE TO CAMBRIDGE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 On 17th October, 2007, the Council agreed the following:-

“This Statement of Intent is a commitment from Denbighshire County Council to work in partnership with schools and key stakeholders to achieve significantly better outcomes for children and young people. Our aspiration is for all of our schools to offer a first class education service. We accept that this requires radical change.

Underpinning this commitment is the understanding that the provision of first class education can best be accomplished through a partnership in which the Council, its services and schools support and respect each other’s contribution and work together to meet key priorities. The Statement operates within a context of shared responsibilities across the full range of local government services, but focuses specifically on improved learning and well-being for children and young people.

The Council will rigorously implement the Estyn post inspection Action Plan and work in partnership with schools to monitor, challenge and support improved educational attainment”.

- 3.2 Since this statement, the Council has developed a strategy for improving education in Denbighshire. The central aim of this strategy is to improve pupil attainment in all key stages so that attainment is within the “top 10” performing authorities in Wales.
- 3.3 Since the publication of the Estyn Action Plan, Denbighshire has made considerable progress in improving education. The improvements can be described under the following broad headings:

An effective partnership with schools

The effectiveness of the partnership with schools is at the heart of Denbighshire's improvement strategy. The key developments since the submission of the action plan include the following:

- A School Standards Monitoring Group to monitor standards in schools;
- Improved communication and consultation with schools through the establishment of the chairs of governors' and headteachers' forums;
- Workshops with all headteachers to discuss and agree clustering of schools on a 'regional' basis;
- A draft 'School Development Strategy', including target setting and effective use of performance data, developed in close collaboration with schools;
- Identification of immediate action, including 15 schools with the strongest potential to move up a quartile and extra resources for all secondary schools targeted at moving predicted 'D' grades to 'C' grades;
- Participation of headteachers and young people on key appointments, e.g., the Head of School Improvement;
- A comprehensive Partnership Agreement is being developed, in consultation with schools, for Cabinet's approval in April 2008;
- An agreed approach to allocating the additional funding growth to schools.

A robust performance management framework

The central criticism within the Estyn report was Denbighshire's '*...poor track record in managing change and making improvements in education*'. Effective performance management arrangements are vital if Denbighshire is to implement and sustain change. The key developments since the submission of the action plan include the following:

- Effective reporting of progress against the action plan, using a 'Red', 'Amber' and 'Green' status against every activity;
- A new 'Education DMT', which meets weekly to follow through on areas of concern;
- Agreed role for the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee;
- Agreed to integrate the monitoring of the Estyn action plan, the Cambridge action plan and the Young People's Partnership's action plan through the Modernising Education Board;
- Agreed to revise service business plans to reflect the new priorities.

Improved funding for education

As an immediate response to the Estyn report, the Council had agreed to allocate £700k to be targeted at raising standards. Members have now completed their budget setting process for 2008/09 and have agreed a number of decisions which confirm Education as their top priority. These include the following:

- An extra £750k for education, over and above the £700k already agreed;
- Fully funding £300k increase in transport costs, and providing £1.9m for pay and pension costs and inflation costs;

- Not requiring schools to achieve a target efficiency savings, although there is an expectation that efficiencies will be found, either through improved procurement or/and reorganisation of some small schools;
- Any efficiency savings during 2008/09 will be reinvested in schools;
- The decision taken by members will ensure that Denbighshire's education service is funded above the SSA;
- An extra £50k allocated in the current year to provide extra support to schools at Key Stage 4.

Building capacity in key support services

The Council has responded to the need to develop capacity in key support areas by successfully recruiting (or in the process of recruiting) a number of important officers. These include the following:

- Head of Policy and Performance to lead on the development of the performance management system to deliver the Modernising Education Programme;
- A Programme Manager to manage the reporting and monitoring of the action plan;
- A Change Manager to provide support and challenge to task leaders for the Estyn action plan;
- Head of School Improvement and school improvement officers;
- Eight behaviour support officers to provide schools and pupils with support for improving behaviour and attendance and reducing exclusions.

Reviewing the structure of the Lifelong Learning Directorate

The current structure of the Lifelong Learning directorate is not sufficiently focused on educational standards and its wide and disparate range of services can distract officers from the central task of improving education. To address this, the Chief Executive is consulting on proposals:

- To relocate Tourism, Heritage, Culture and Countryside Services from Lifelong Learning to Environment Services, with effect from no later than 1 May 2008;
- To further strengthen the Directorate's performance and planning functions, especially in relation to the implementation of Cambridge Education Ltd's recommendations;
- To ensure that the Directorate focuses on educational standards and effective coordination of support services for schools;
- To ensure that the changes to the Lifelong Learning structure help to facilitate, rather than complicate, further reorganisation of services in response to the Children Act 2004 (Children's Right to Action).

- 3.4 The first Estyn monitoring visit took place between 26 and 27 February 2008. The inspectors described the two days as a "positive experience". They said that the action plan was good and that it will enable the improvements to be delivered. They encouraged the Council to continue with the urgency that it has so far demonstrated.

3.5 The Council has now established the necessary foundations for improving the education service and it is now timely to begin to address the recommendations of the Cambridge Education report in a way that compliments the Estyn action plan and the strategy for raising standards.

3.6 This is strongly supported by Cambridge Education. Together, the Council's response to the Estyn inspection report and the Cambridge report should herald the way forward for education in the County. It is for this reason that the Estyn action plan has been heavily influenced by Cambridge. In fact six out of the ten Cambridge recommendations are addressed by the Estyn action plan.

3.7 Establish a working group

A corporate group, made up of officers from planning, project management, finance, human resources, asset management and education has been set up to collate and review data to compliment the work progressed in the production of the Area Profiles by Cambridge Education. Additional members of staff will be called upon as this work progresses and the need arises. It is crucial to have Member involvement at an early stage and Cabinet is requested to consider who the appropriate member or members should be. In the first instance this group will report to the Modernising Education Board. This Board will be key in driving the programme forward.

3.8 The working group will propose an objective method for determining a strategic rationalisation programme. All options will be considered including federating, amalgamating, where necessary removing surplus places or expanding schools, with the key objective to improve education standards across the authority. New forms of investment will be pursued as a means of renewing the stock, particularly in the secondary sector.

3.9 The working group will be responsible for developing an action plan which will detail the consultation process and timescale. As the consultation and communication of this project is key to the overall success a dedicated member of staff, at the appropriate level needs to be recruited. The project management and asset management roles also need to be considered and sufficient capacity identified to ensure success.

3.10 Developing proposals

The key issue is to maintain and develop high quality educational provision in a cost-effective manner. The review itself needs to be undertaken using objective and transparent criteria. A number of factors contributing towards the viability and sustainability of schools will be considered. These proposals will be developed by July 2008.

3.11 Develop an action plan

A fully developed action plan will be presented to Council and Cabinet following consultation with key stakeholders by October 2008. Seminars will be arranged for the new council and schools and feedback received will inform the action plan. Significant use will be made of the recently formed clusters to work with Head

Teachers to develop the plan. Meetings will take place with established groups to engage as wide a view as possible with our stakeholders. Examples of best practice will be investigated and considerable and methodical research will be carried out.

- 3.12 The Authority will begin implementation from November 2008 providing sufficient resource is identified. The project will be at a significant risk if this is not agreed and in place.

4 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Section 111 Local Government Act 1972
Section 14 Education Act 1996

5 COST IMPLICATIONS

All existing work plans have been costed, however, the timescales will have to be reviewed in light of the budget settlement. All new work plans developed will be costed and existing resources redirected to priority areas.

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

Additional resources have been provided in both the current and next financial years for the initial response in the work plans to date. Any further costs next year will need to be contained within the service budget, in line with the statement by Estyn that existing resources need to be better used. The development of the capital plan for 2009/10 and later years will need to take account of any potential works resulting from the out working of the response to the Cambridge recommendations.

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The recommendations from the Cambridge Education "Modernising Education" report were subject to consultation following the publication of the report in September 2007. The response to the consultation exercise was collated by Cambridge Education and is included for member's consideration as Appendix 2. The recommendations were also discussed by elected members at Council on the 18th September following the publication of the report. The report was also presented to Denbighshire Headteachers at their conference on the 4th October 2007.

8 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS:

8.1 THE VISION

"We will invest in our schools in order to sustain high standards of educational attainment to meet the needs of pupils, the wider community and the economy"

8.2 OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The progression of the Modernising Education action plan will have a significant impact on many existing education policies including the Single Education Plan, 14-19 Learning Pathways, the development of Community Focused Schools and will require significant reviews of many existing policies including those relating to admissions, home to school transport and small schools. The progression of the action plan will also have an impact on wider policy areas including the approach to asset management arrangements within Denbighshire.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members to receive the Cambridge Modernising Education Report contained in Appendix 1.
- 9.2 To receive the report setting out the process for developing and implementing an action plan, in consultation with stakeholders, for the remaining recommendations contained in the Cambridge Modernising Education report, see Appendix 4.
- 9.3 Cabinet to nominate an elected member or members to join the Modernising Education working group.



Cambridge
Education

**Cyngor Sir Ddinbych
Denbighshire County Council**

**Moderneiddio Addysg
Modernising Education**

Report Prepared by
Cambridge Education
September 2007

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DENBIGHSHIRE – MODERNISING EDUCATION

Learning Country – Learning County.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. Standards of education in Denbighshire are the focus of this report. Simply, they are not high enough. The task of raising them will be long and difficult and though we have seen some examples of good practice there will have to be a concerted effort across the county and in all branches of the education service.
2. Education is the way in which our society improves the life chances of the children and young people whom we serve. As our natural resources decline, we will become increasingly dependent on the “knowledge economy” and, by extension, on our education system.
3. Every part of the education service has to be focused on school improvement if Denbighshire is not to be left behind the rest of Wales and the UK. Indeed, we recommend the attention of the County Council and the whole community needs to be focused on raising standards of education. As we will demonstrate that might begin in some unexpected areas, but this is not something that can be undertaken lightly or by parts of the Council or by schools alone.

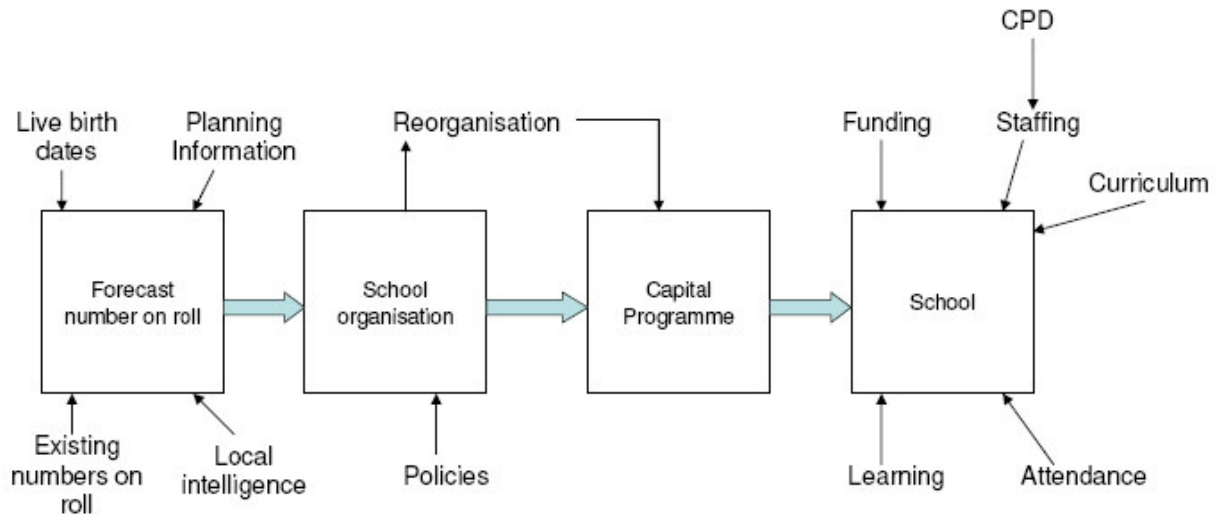
2. PURPOSE & PRINCIPLES

1. The County Council's Vision for Denbighshire states that: "Denbighshire in 2025 will be the ideal place to visit, live, work, conduct business and pursue a wide range of activities." The project brief puts it succinctly:
2. "Education is a high-profile service and key to the future vision for the county. However, there are many factors which have a bearing on the way education can and should evolve over the coming years. The most significant of these is the role of schools in their communities and Denbighshire County Council is strongly committed to ensuring that communities are closely engaged in any development planning which might affect them. Facilitating this engagement is a key feature of the Modernising Education programme."
3. This report sets out findings from a number of pieces of work we have carried out for Denbighshire, all of which have helped the authority move forward with its Modernising agenda; we put forward some propositions and proposals for change. These are for consultation with the education community in Denbighshire at this stage. We seek the views of the school community in Denbighshire and those with an interest in education and learning in the county before reporting to elected members of the County Council later in the autumn term.

Principles

4. In our view, Modernising Education needs to be informed by a set of principles and priorities. These need not pull in different directions or be mutually exclusive; rather they should guide what we all do. In this review, we put forward a set of principles and priorities and consulted on them. These were agreed as:
 - Putting Learners First
 - Community Focus
 - High Standards and Expectations
 - Recognising and Overcoming Barriers
 - Partnership and Inclusion
 - Use of ICT and E-learning
 - Wise Use of Money
5. We have conducted considerable and methodical research into Denbighshire's education service and what needs to be done, seeking views about the vision for education in the county; the perceived strengths and weaknesses; the need for change and opportunities for change.

6. We are aware of the expectations of the education community, particularly following the Managing School Places report in 2005. We have visited every school and met many stakeholders and community groups through meetings and interviews; we have sought the public's views and students' views of education in Denbighshire. Our remit is wider than the supply of school places, though school organisation is an intrinsic part of the overall picture. We can show this diagrammatically:



7. The work we have carried out has placed the issue of school standards above any other for the education community to address.
8. Overall, respondents welcomed the County Council's attempt to re-think its education provision through Modernising Education. The County vision sits within the national vision set out in Learning Country. It is an opportunity to review the present and the past but, more importantly, to consider how education in Denbighshire has to change for the future. Children in Denbighshire schools may still be working in 50 years' time. How best to educate them, other young people and adults needs to be addressed.
9. Changes which must be recognised and actioned in Denbighshire include the need for young people to emerge from the school system with high standards in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology. They also must have a broader education to give them greater opportunities to participate in changing work and social experiences. There are increasing expectations of staying on in full time education and training and into further or higher education. Employment is changing too, with new skills required, early retirement, more than one career and career change and a demand for greater 'people' skills, including team working, in addition to traditional technical skills. Higher expectations also contrast with the challenges presented by some incoming populations, in attitudes towards learning in some sectors of the population and the low level of qualifications among the adult population in parts of the

county. The challenges and their associated impact on education need to be addressed.

10. The cultural and linguistic context of the county is a key issue and a key driver of educational provision. Up to a third of the population is Welsh speaking and the pursuit of education through the medium of Welsh is a central issue in any consideration of provision in the county. It is equally important to recognise that two thirds of the population is non-Welsh speaking. The authority must ensure equity, equality of opportunity and value for money for all sectors of the population.
11. Education is valued by most people we spoke to. However, there is a strong sense that it is not given sufficient emphasis or priority, particularly in local authority decision making. The retirement age population has increased over the past decade, and many respondents were of the view that their interests dominated the affairs of the county and that education might not therefore have the profile and priority that it deserves. Also, while great value is placed on celebrating and participating in Welsh cultural activities the same emphasis is not given to these activities in formal learning.
12. There are issues about the identity of Denbighshire and the consequent effects on the authority's ability to provide community and educational vision and leadership for its diverse communities. There is a lack of coherence and identity. Too many sectors of the community are pursuing individual agendas. It has greater challenges in providing community leadership than some other unitary authorities that have a more coherent sense of community identity. These are key issues for the Council as the local education authority and the kind of community leadership it needs to provide.
13. There is a demand for new ideas, new blood, and a willingness to change the education system in Denbighshire. There is recognition of the serious challenges facing those who are responsible for education. These include raising standards which are well below what they should be, the demands on young learners and the desire to overcome the barriers to learning experienced by sections of the adult population.
14. While many headteachers identified 'money' as a key issue (and one that we seek to address in this review), they are well aware that performance in schools needs to be improved in Denbighshire and that significant improvements cannot be achieved by schools on their own. Raising standards is the single most critical issue facing the education service. Transforming teaching and learning is central to bringing about improvement. The recent publication by Estyn (March 2007), 'Transforming Schools: a discussion paper', effectively sets out and describes the changes that need to be made. The paper states quite clearly that:

'there are major challenges in making schools fit for purpose in every sense'. Tinkering with an educational model that is a product of the 19th century will not be enough to meet these challenges. Schools have to be transformed so that they can be more innovative and better able to respond to the demands of the 21st century.'

15. New ways of learning need to be explored. Far greater store is now placed on how people learn as opposed to how they are taught and there is every justification in that change in philosophy. ICT plays a significant role in education and is one that will only grow. The best of Denbighshire teaching and learning recognises that young people learn in different styles and that boys often prefer different styles from girls. There should be greater sharing and celebration of the good practice that undoubtedly exists in Denbighshire schools. The relationship between Denbighshire schools and their local communities should be built on as it already is a strength in many areas of the county.
16. Young people are not getting the skills and qualifications they need to ensure their economic and social well being. It is essential this is addressed. We recognise the emphasis the Council has placed on education in recent years but this must be pursued with renewed vigour to raise standards further and gain greater value for money – in short, to begin a transformation of teaching and learning. The Council must also enlist the support of the whole community if it is indeed to modernise the education service and to improve standards of education.
17. To bring about this transformation the LEA (local education authority) and its schools must first become a modern local authority. This work has begun but there is a long way to go. There are a number of aspects where Denbighshire needs to improve – in terms of support and challenge to schools and schools' self-management and autonomy. Schools need greater empowerment, but with appropriate transition and with DCC monitoring, challenging, supporting and intervening in schools. Denbighshire and Denbighshire schools have not fully embraced 'local management' which is the key principle of a modern education system. Yet, at the same time there are examples of local, cluster management of services that are forward thinking, efficient and effective and which ought to be replicated in other areas of service and across the county.
18. There needs to be consideration of new ways of working by schools individually and collectively to help create the conditions for more effective teaching and learning and thus contribute towards the raising of standards. This is not simply a matter of increasing the resources for education but getting greater value from existing funding.

Recommendations/ issues for consultation:

- **That the authority and its community should raise its game and move education to the top of the community agenda if it is to realise its vision.**
- **This is not simply a matter of increasing the resources for education but getting greater value.**
- **That the focus of the school community in Denbighshire should be the raising of standards**
- **That there should be a re-thinking of the ways in which we teach and learn in Denbighshire**

3. PROVISION OF SCHOOL PLACES.

Introduction

1. The road to school improvement starts, perhaps oddly, with the prediction of numbers on roll. That is because the County Council needs to provide enough places for all the young people it is required to educate, but also needs to ensure a good match between the number of young people and school places in order to secure good value for money.
2. The prediction of numbers on roll is both a science and an art. It is a science inasmuch as there must be good models on which to collect and project pupil numbers and there must be good systems in place with schools, planners and health authorities to gather data. But considerable judgement needs to be applied to those raw data in order to provide meaningful forecasts. Those judgements need to be applied to emigration and immigration of pupils, the number of pupils to be generated from particular housing developments and the impact of parental preference.

Demand

3. The local authority has to ensure that there are sufficient places in good schools which meet the needs of the communities. In Denbighshire there is a reasonable match between the supply and take up of places across the authority as a whole, though there are some schools where the level of surplus needs to be addressed and, in others, where there is some overcrowding and temporary accommodation is in use. For the future, the authority faces a dilemma. If present population trends continue, the authority will need to tackle an increasing level of surplus. If, however, the higher level growth in population in the county anticipated in preparatory work for the Local Development Plan materialises over the planning period, then the scale of the problem facing the authority's education planners is reduced. The higher level of growth is a policy led forecast that reflects decisions to be taken by the County Council as the planning authority on the level and scale of new housing development in the county. If higher growth does *not* materialise, then a steady decline in the school based population is expected, reflecting a continuation of in-migration of more elderly residents, with a school age population falling from just under 20,000 to around 18,000 with, as the plan puts it, "obvious implications in terms of school provision" – of 2,000 fewer pupils and students.
4. There is a perception that small schools are a particular issue in Denbighshire: that the Council has significantly more than other authorities in Wales. The use of an all Wales comparison forms a highly dubious basis for such a claim. A comparison with

Denbighshire's 'family' of similar local authorities¹ shows that the authority does not have a disproportionately large number of small schools. 25% of Denbighshire's primary schools have fewer than 50 pupils. The average among the family authorities is 25.6%; and 23.1% of the County's schools fall in the 50 to 90 category, against a family average of 28%.

5. Nor does the county have a disproportionate number of pupils taught in small schools: 5.6% of Denbighshire's primary pupils are taught in schools of up to 50 pupils compared with a family average of 7.5%; and 10% of its primary pupils are taught in schools of between 50 and 90 compared with a family average of 12.5%.
6. But Denbighshire certainly does have a highly unusual reliance on very large schools, which tend to serve the most deprived areas of the county. The five other authorities in Denbighshire's family group have a joint total of 4 schools with 400 plus pupils (giving an average of less than 1). Denbighshire has 5. The difference is even more pronounced if we break this figure down to focus on schools of more than 500. Denbighshire has 2. The other authorities have only 1 between them. In educational terms the preference is for two-form entry primary schools i.e. 420 on roll.
7. This may put the numbers issue into perspective, but there is an issue of equity, given the difference in the level of funding per pupil between large and small schools and in relation to overall levels of funding in Denbighshire (discussed later). So, in the course of this review, many representations were made concerning the disparity between large and small schools: that small schools were protected by a funding regime that supported a minimum of two teachers, irrespective of school size, while some school representatives in the south pointed to the additional funds going into the coastal belt in addition to core funding.
8. A model of local community schools is complicated by cross boundary flows, particularly in the east of the county, and growing parental preference for Welsh medium education. Despite catering for a minority, Welsh medium education is a major driver in Denbighshire education. There are strengths in that but there are also consequences.
9. We note the fairly high density of small schools in Denbighshire and ease of access (small schools that are not necessarily remote). The authority plots pupil addresses for each school. This shows that some parents are willing for their children to travel some distance to secure a place at the school of their choice, in some areas driving past a local primary school to another school that is preferred by them. This is most evident in

¹ The group of authorities that have most in common with Denbighshire – Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Conwy, Gwynedd and Anglesey.

what is clearly a growing demand for Welsh medium education at both primary and secondary levels. Often this comes from higher achieving pupils whose parents are conscious of the perceived greater value that at least bi-lingualism bestows. The authority has also created Welsh medium units in primary schools, which may develop into schools in their own right, in some cases occupying the same building with a physical as well as symbolic division between the two. There may be consequences then for some English medium schools in terms of numbers and the balance of their intake. Welsh medium schools appear not to have an upper admission limit that is always adhered to. Admissions criteria include the policy that “The Authority will allow children whose parents wish them to receive their education through the medium of Welsh to do so”. A consequence of this is a relatively high level of transport cost, given the distribution of Welsh medium secondary education across the county.

10. This is one of a number of dilemmas in Denbighshire – should the authority permit a more market-led approach of responding to parental preference and encourage popular schools to grow, or should it promote local community schools that serve an identifiable area? In the secondary sector, the effects of both selection and the growth of Welsh medium education can be seen to have an impact on the intake of some Welsh second language schools. Indeed, representations have been made to us over the equity of provision between Welsh and English medium schools and the differences in social origins of their intake.
11. That is a strategic decision that the authority needs to take or address, in partnership with its schools. At the very least, having the debate about what kind of pattern of provision is needed would be a step forward.

Admissions

12. At a practical day to day level, ‘admissions’ needs to be addressed. Admissions policy and practice are not always well understood in the county and appear to us, and many people who made representations to us, to be poorly delivered. It is seen to be ‘controlled’ rather than administered. Schools cite examples of proposed admissions, particularly early years, being ‘called in’ by authority staff and re-allocated. LEA staff themselves give examples of primary schools, not just Welsh medium schools, exceeding their standard number – the theoretical limit on the numbers to be admitted each year. The consequences are demands for additional classrooms and higher than might be expected transport costs, both of which are borne by the authority. We have seen bids for additional places from schools that are supported in writing by individual school improvement staff.

13. Part of the problem is that, within the LEA, there is not a clearly defined function with responsibility for planning places policy and admissions policy (as distinct from admissions administration). Seemingly ad hoc decisions are taken to develop new Welsh medium provision. One policy consequence that has arisen is the decision to seek to remove 'temporary' accommodation or mobile classrooms by 2010, though this is not confined to Welsh medium schools. It is unlikely that that will be achieved unless admissions are better managed and the authority is clear on what it will allow in terms of responding to expressed demands. A planned approach to assess and respond to the increasing numbers of parents and pupils seeking Welsh medium education in particular will be more productive.

School size and surplus places

14. The Audit Commission's definition of a small primary school is one that has 90 pupils or fewer. WAG cite the figure of 100. There are 26 schools in Denbighshire of 90 pupils or less. The authority's current policy is to review schools with fewer than 30 pupils, of which there are currently 7. National guidance would suggest the need to raise the threshold and keep all primary schools of 90 pupils or fewer under review. Denbighshire's current Small Schools Policy is to fund every school to a minimum of 2.1 teachers, thus giving small schools a guaranteed level of funding that is not subject to the number of pupils.
15. Any authority must keep the level of surplus places under review. Surplus places represent a poor use of resources. Some surplus is desirable to allow schools to cope with changes in demand, but high levels of surplus are unproductive. The new method of calculating school capacity and hence deriving a level of surplus places has been referred to. This has recently been applied in Denbighshire and other Welsh authorities. It should be seen as a better method of calculation than the previous method as it gives a more accurate assessment of spaces that are actually usable as teaching spaces. These capacities are quoted in the table below.
16. For some years, WAG guidance has pointed to the need to address significant or excessive numbers of surplus places. 'Significant surplus' is defined as 25% or more of a school's capacity *and* at least 30 unfilled places. So, while there are 18 schools in Denbighshire with 25% or more surplus places, only half of these (9 schools) have 25% or more surplus *and* 30 or more surplus places. We think that criterion should be reviewed.
17. One suggestion we would make is that, at minimum and as part of a primary school policy, all schools are reviewed when they fall below 50 pupils for 3 years in succession.

18. We further recommend that prompts for school organisation reviews should include criteria regarding standards, costs, community and surplus places , so:
19. Standards – where there are persistent scores at each of the key stages that are significantly below what might be expected for a school of that type.
20. Costs - where base costs per pupil are 50% or more above the sector average, allowing for exceptional circumstances.
21. Community – where community and extended use of the school is below what might be expected.
22. Surplus – where schools have a surplus number of places of 25% or more of the total.
23. Nationally, there is a presumption in favour of retaining rural schools (WAG). Generally, rationalisation proposals reflect the need to maintain and improve standards, to cater for parental preference and to provide access to reasonably local schools. There is a need to consider the challenges faced by rural schools, the transport implications of closure and the effect overall on the community: “the case for closure must be robust and must be in the best interests of educational provision in the area”. Again, in a county like Denbighshire where particular value is placed on the recognised role of schools in the community, their contribution to village life is recognised. But for the small school, there is a need to consider new ways of working particularly if they are to address the challenges of the present and the future. That is a positive change, not one driven by a mechanistic place planning exercise, which is only one component.
24. These capacities are quoted in the table below. These have been calculated using the improved measure of capacity which is now accepted as the most appropriate benchmark. We would advise that, in line with the criteria proposed, all schools exceeding 25% are reviewed.

January 2007

Name of School	Capacity/ Standard Numbers		total	Roll at Jan 07	Surplus capacity	%
	permanent					
Bodfari C P	60		60	19	41	68.33%
Bryn Clwyd, Llandyrnog C P	79		79	26	53	67.09%
Pentrecelyn C P	91		91	30	61	67.03%
Glyndyfrdwy C P	57		57	19	38	66.67%
Cyffylliog C P	54		54	20	34	62.96%
Rhewl C P	81		81	38	43	53.09%

Clocaenog C P	41	41	21	20	48.78%
Prion Pant Pastynog V P	56	56	31	25	44.64%
Llandrillo C P	70	70	39	31	44.29%
Ruthin, Borthyn Controlled	140	140	81	59	42.14%
Carrog C P	67	67	40	27	40.30%
Betws Gwerfil Goch C P	62	62	39	23	37.10%
Bryneglwys V P & Llandegla V P	60	60	38	22	36.67%
Tremeirchion V P Controlled	67	67	47	20	29.85%
Denbigh, Ysgol Gwaenynog	90	90	64	26	28.89%
Llanarmon Yn Ial & Llanferres CP	130	130	95	35	26.92%
Llantysillio V P	41	41	30	11	26.83%
Cynwyd C P	71	71	52	19	26.76%
Henllan C P	65	65	50	15	23.08%
Llanbedr D C	77	77	61	16	20.78%
Corwen C P	112	112	91	21	18.75%
Rhyl, Ysgol Mair R C	409	409	335	74	18.09%
Dyserth Hiraddug C P	233	233	191	42	18.03%
St Asaph Ysgol Esgob Morgan	133	133	111	22	16.54%
Denbigh, Ysgol Twm o'r Nant	253	253	216	37	14.62%
Denbigh, Ysgol Y Parc	129	129	112	17	13.18%
Meliden C P	139	139	123	16	11.51%
Ruthin, Ysgol Pen Barras	248	248	220	28	11.29%
Llanfair D C controlled	83	83	74	9	10.84%
Prestatyn Bodnant Infants	255	255	235	20	7.84%
Rhyl, Christchurch	372	372	352	20	5.38%
Rhyl, Emmanuel	440	440	421	19	4.32%
Rhyl, Llewelyn C P	586	586	562	24	4.10%
Rhyl, Ysgol Dewi Sant	426	426	409	17	3.99%
Ruthin, Rhos Street	191	191	186	5	2.62%
Prestatyn Ysgol Y Lllys	239	239	236	3	1.26%
St Asaph Infants Controlled	93	93	92	1	1.08%
Bodelwyddan C P	102	102	102	0	0.00%
Llangollen C P Bryn Collen	147	147	147	0	0.00%
Llanrhaeadr C P Bro Cinmeirch	50	50	50	0	0.00%
Denbigh, Ysgol Frongoch	223	223	225	-2	-0.90%
Gellifor C P	84	84	86	-2	-2.38%
Denbigh, Ysgol Heulfre	93	93	98	-5	-5.38%
Rhuddlan y Castell C P	183	183	193	-10	-5.46%
Rhyl, Ysgol Bryn Hedydd	370	370	402	-32	-8.65%
Prestatyn Bodnant Juniors	320	320	356	-36	-11.25%
Ysgol Gymraeg y Gwernant	70	70	81	-11	-15.71%
Prestatyn Penmorfa	459	459	538	-79	-17.21%
Cefn Meiriadog C P	63	63	75	-12	-19.05%
Denbigh, St Brigids	102	102	132	-30	-29.41%
Trefnant V P Controlled	47	47	68	-21	-44.68%
Gwyddelwern C P	29	29	56	-27	-93.10%
Totals	8142	8142	7415	727	8.93%

New models

25. We referred earlier to the challenges facing small schools. Small schools need to be challenged on the offer and experience of learners in those schools. Schools should also be challenged if provision of education is only because of the premium price being paid. Schools should also be challenged if there is a consistently high level of surplus places and if there are surpluses in schools nearby. There is also the very heavy workload on teachers in small schools – their ability to provide coverage of the entire curriculum, leadership and administration, monitoring and coordination. Once such schools belong to cluster or similar arrangement, these issues are more easily addressed. For small village schools then, there has to be another model – a different rationale for being there to justify their high cost; it is not just about the quality of schooling. New rural schools of a more optimal size increase opportunities for children and improve outcomes and are suggested as a way forward. This may be preferable to simply closing schools and allowing pupils to transfer elsewhere. At minimum, as Estyn suggest, small schools of the future will need to collaborate - to achieve greater efficiencies, share expertise and resources and improve opportunities for specialist teaching, provide a wider range of learning opportunities and extra-curricular activities and secure wider social benefits for pupils from isolated rural areas.

26. There are already examples of federated schools in Denbighshire. These are one of the possible models for the future in the county. Other successful examples in Wales (with which our team have been involved) include area schools – smaller schools coming together to combine resources through amalgamation onto a single site or federations of schools or looser shared arrangements. All are characterised by combining and/or sharing of resources, management and potentially governance as well as expertise, seeking to increasing educational opportunities for the children, with both formal learning and extracurricular opportunities. They may still retain a local presence in the villages they serve, with further opportunities for new ways of learning through the use of ICT. Typically, such schools can have 130-150 pupils on roll. Such schools, either current or modernised, need to be community schools too, as many are now. Provision of education can also be around secondary schools that can provide 3-18 learning environments, becoming true centres for lifelong learning. The growth of technology means some secondary students could spend part of their time working on-line at a rural school closer to home.

27. There is recognition that the smallest of schools can only be justified if they provide something more than just statutory age education in their areas, as genuine community schools or extended schools providing for instance before and after care, additional educational opportunities for children and adults, sport and leisure and through possible joint working with other agencies. A number of schools in Denbighshire are

- already demonstrating this, but the authority needs to develop a policy that states this more clearly and provides a 'job description' or specification for what schools need to do. This is for all schools in the county.
28. There are four pairs of infant and junior schools in the county. There are strong arguments to create all through primary schools. These include greater continuity, reducing the number of transitions for children, their greater cost effectiveness as well as increased capacity as institutions and the greater opportunities for staff in primary schools to teach more than one key stage. An optimal school increases opportunities for children and improves outcomes in the primary sector.
29. With larger schools, we comment on each in the area profiles we have produced for the authority on some of the issues and challenges those schools face, particularly in some of the socially deprived areas they serve. While a 2 form entry primary school may be the 'ideal' model to adopt, it is recognised that it is neither feasible nor desirable to seek to remove places unless absolutely necessary. We also note the generally greater financial difficulties faced by one form entry (30 pupils) schools, that are not protected as small schools and do not have the greater economy of scale of the 3-4 form of entry primary schools. We do however recommend to the authority that they take a more planned approach to school size reduction with existing schools in Prestatyn in particular as the new school – designed to meet the increased demand for school places through increases in population locally- comes into being.
30. We recommend the development of a new primary school policy covering:
- the community element and extended schools,
 - and, especially in view of the small schools issue, to develop DCC strategy on small schools (that takes account of school funding and educational viability);
 - a view on Infants and Junior schools;
 - the characteristics of successful federation;
 - a view on the principle of extended schools and on the number of forms of entry;
 - one that says that all schools are reviewed when they fall below 50 pupils for 3 years in succession; as well as where there concerns about standards, costs, community links and surplus;
 - exploiting local opportunities for, at minimum, collaboration;
 - further, when a school has a headteacher vacancy there should be a review to see whether a joint arrangement can be made.
31. Balance needs to be struck between the quality of teaching and learning, the cost of provision and the schools' relationship with its local community. Judgements should be led by education criteria, but financial criteria have to be involved as well since they are inextricably involved with education considerations.

Secondary & special schools

32. Denbighshire has 5 English medium, 1 Welsh medium and 2 bilingual secondary schools that are maintained by the local authority. 2 are classed as small secondary schools (fewer than 700 pupils). These are Blessed Edward Jones RC Voluntary Aided School and St Brigid's, an all-through and also residential at secondary age school, a Trust school that is partly selective, and that is also girls only at 11-16. The other secondary schools are comprehensive and co-educational. While there are clearly local exceptions, the authority policy is to create breadth and choice of curricular provision by supporting schools of between 6 and 8 form entry.
33. The 5 high schools have capacities ranging from 820 to over 1400 permanent places. The authority is currently discounting places in temporary or mobile classrooms. The majority of secondary schools are at or in excess of capacity and the latest review by the authority shows a deficit of 780 permanent places in the secondary sector. Three schools have surplus places; Rhyl High with 8%; Ruthin Brynhyfryd with 9% and Blessed Edward Jones with 18% surplus out of their permanent places. Whilst the effects of the reduction in the number of births will work their way through the sector, the latest projections show a fairly strong long term demand for places in the sector overall. Clearly there are local variations depending on parental preference, new housing and local population change.
34. The issues faced include the authority's need to remove what is often substandard temporary accommodation (in all sectors) by 2010 to increase fitness for purpose on school sites in line with WAG aspirations. There is a current funding commitment of £250,000 a year to go some way to achieving this, based on WAG funding.
35. For secondary schools, the authority recognises the need to increase permanent places and that in most cases the High Schools are in need of substantial remodelling on grounds of suitability – i.e. to contribute towards making them fit for purpose – and feasibility studies are being commissioned. Key issues in the secondary sector include the need for greater collaboration and the development or addition of vocational education in that light and raising expectation for student achievement. There are issues too about levels of performance and standards achieved that are addressed later in this report.
36. There are two special schools; Tir Morfa in Rhyl, now in its second phase for completion in 2008 as a replacement school for MLD provision aged 3-19; and Ysgol Plas Bron Dyffryn in Denbigh. This school is for pupils aged 3-19 with communication related disorders: KS1&2 attached to existing Ty'n Fron building; KS3 & 4 in new

building attached to Denbigh High and residential and educational provision on the old hospital site in Denbigh. This is very much a regional facility and helps to explain Denbighshire's relatively high proportion of pupils with statements who are educated in special schools. That said, Denbighshire has relatively few special needs units in mainstream schools, a reflection of the investment in Tir Morfa in particular.

37. There is a need to remodel secondary provision in Rhyl to ensure that young people have access to high quality learning pathways through to age 19 and beyond. Education in the most challenging areas of the county has to be given priority and be transformed to raise standards. Re-modelling both high schools to provide more modern accommodation and re-organising post-16 education in the town are ways forward. Post 16 provision is discussed below. We have provided an analysis of six areas of the county (area profiles) for the local authority, looking at the schools in each area and giving guidance to the authority on the issues in each area, with reference to the principles that have been adopted for this review.
38. Schools often lie at the heart of the communities which they serve, especially in rural areas. We have found many examples of schools across the county strengthening their links with their communities and developing before and after school activities to meet the child-care needs of parents and some adult learning. There is also a wide range of informal adult education activities in schools which is to be commended. There is scope for greater multi agency use of school premises and the development of a whole range of community provision including youth services.

Post-16

39. Beyond the upper statutory age limit of 16 there are good strategic plans linked to the regeneration strategy and the county's skills needs. But there is a need to improve joint working between post 16 providers. The challenge is to make the plans a consistent reality across the county. In particular, the Rhyl area has less access to high quality post 16 provision at present than some other parts of the county. We recommend the development of new arrangements between the High Schools and Llandrillo College and other providers.
40. To realise the County's vision for the future, 14-19 education and Lifelong Learning are crucial. The work of Dolen Dysg Dinbigh, through its Executive Group and Lifelong Learning Subgroup has made a significant contribution to understanding the skills needs of the county and its Strategic Plan forms a good basis for further development. There is a good range of partners in the provision of Adult Community Education mainly through Coleg Llandrillo in the north of the county and Coleg Llysfasi in the south. Yale delivers adult learning courses in Llangollen and Corwen, while Coleg

Harlech and the WEA also provide adult learning and community development. However, there is scope for improvement in joint planning by providers, to prevent duplication of offer, particularly of that traditionally provided in sixth forms.

41. Because there is much good work already in place or developing, we have not duplicated it but, at the request of the County Council, have focused on 14-19 provision in the north of the county though there are some wider lessons to be learnt.
42. This is a critical moment in the development of 14-19 provision in the area, with a national policy which strongly favours cross institutional approaches to broadening choice. The Denbighshire 14-19 learning pathways development plan sets the following targets for improvement in the 14-19 phase:
 - Wider range of sustainable A, AS and other accredited courses for post 16 learners within the county
 - Wider range of Learning Pathways through and expanded options menu
 - Increased participation in post 16 learning
 - Increased staying on rates at 16 due to increase in vocational and prevocational programmes
 - Increased movement of learners between partners due to increased progression routes
 - Development of e-learning and Virtual Learning Environments opportunities
 - Common timetabling across clusters to maximise shared provision opportunities
 - Joint development of teaching and learning materials
43. The policy gives particular priority to creating a more effective balance between academic and vocational post 16 learning routes, against a concern that most schools have only provided limited vocational opportunities for 14-19 year olds. 14-19 year olds in Rhyl are entitled to expect a range of local choice which reflects this national ambition. Maximising this range requires the college and secondary schools to collaborate on curriculum provision for all 14-19 year olds. A/AS level provision is an important part of this but the effectiveness and the cost efficiency of its delivery needs to be seen against the indicators described below.
44. The learning pathways objectives are still general and developmental. There are currently some good initiatives, but strategy is at an early stage. Achievement at 16 is the key imperative for schools and the basis for any consideration of the best arrangements post-16. In this respect the two Rhyl schools have room for improvement: achievement at Rhyl High School in 2006 was 29.7% 5 A*-C, average points score of 29.6; the figures for Blessed Edward Jones were 17.2% and 25.5 respectively. They compare with Denbighshire averages of 50.8% and 39.8 (which, as we show elsewhere, are below the average for comparable authorities).

45. We have reported on post 16 provision along the coast elsewhere for the authority. There, it is argued, Rhyl High School and Blessed Edward Jones need to throw all their development attention into improving results at 16. To meet best the needs of learners in Rhyl, a college solution is recommended as the way forward for post-16 for the town. Llandrillo College has a high reputation in the locality, a broad range of choice, excellent facilities and the potential of its new site to house a 16-19 sixth form centre which would cater for the 120 students on current estimates, together with some growth which might be anticipated from three sources:
46. current college students who travel to the main site from the Rhyl area ; retrieval of students who currently travel to other schools and colleges for post-16 courses, and an increase in participation resulting from improved achievement at 16.

Welsh Education scheme

47. We support the DCC commitment to a Welsh language scheme and the nurturing of Welsh culture is commendable; without that commitment they could expire. However, the present scheme seems unnecessarily complex and does not provide equal access to the learning of Welsh for all pupils. The ambition in Iaith Pawb, the Assembly's strategy on Welsh language, is for Wales to become a bilingual country. If Denbighshire's long-term goal is that each child/student should become bilingual, consideration will have to be given as to how to get there. The present range of school categories does not seem to be part of any strategic plan. It is costly, encourages division and, educationally, does not universally achieve the desired aim of bilingualism, in that there are 'Welsh' schools with poorer Welsh language results than so-called 'English' schools, and vice-versa. Attainment is, after all, down to leadership and management and teaching skills in a high-quality learning environment.
48. Consequently we recommend that there should be more bilingual schools and that the present four categories of schools should in due course be simplified. Current arrangements are leading to a divided education system within the county and are also unwittingly threatening the viability of some village schools.
49. WAG initiated consultation on definitions of schools according to linguistic provision in 2006. The aim is to seek agreement on common methodology of definition. It was hoped to reach decision in 2006, so that LEAs could use from September 2007 onwards and would also to be used for statistical returns from 2008. Views were sought on 2 options:
- Descriptive definitions
 - Definitions based on numeric analysis.

50. Five categories were proposed for Primary schools, with a distinction between Key Stages within the categories where appropriate. (It is admitted that one category possibly does not exist). Four categories were proposed for secondary schools, with bilingual category comprising 4-sub groups. As at June 2007, no declaration on progress or achievement on the issue of school categorisation had been made by WAG/WLB.

51. However, subject to the outcome of WAG consultation, we would suggest;

Primary

Simplify school categorisation in primary education to:

- Welsh Medium Primary Schools (designated, natural and Welsh units) i.e. A & B
- Dual Stream Primary Schools (Bilingual) i.e. C.
- Predominantly English medium i.e. D.

Secondary

Adopt 4 categories;

- Welsh Medium (Glan Clwyd)
- Bilingual (Brynhyfryd & Dinas Bran)
- Predominantly English with significant use of Welsh (Denbigh High).
- Predominantly English medium (Rhyl, Prestatyn, Blessed Edward Jones, St Brigid `s)

52. We would then suggest that the authority re-evaluate and cost, development of bilingual provision at secondary level. This may involve adaptation to the LMS formula and is discussed below. It might then concentrate future developments on Bilingual approach:

Secondary - Denbigh High School.

Primary - Programme of change of C category schools to B.

53. We would also question the inequality of Welsh medium education provision for SEN students and would suggest the need to review and re-assess, especially first language provision.

54. In summary, the LEA needs to make some strategic decisions about its long-term goals for Welsh language and culture in all areas of education, including the youth service.

55. Bilingualism would mean that all pupils would receive at least half their teaching through the medium of Welsh (rather than having two language streams in a school with a small number of pupils crossing between the two). Bilingualism may be best

achieved by a number of steps over time, rather than a major upheaval now. As indicated above, the first of these steps should be to remove the artificial difference between 'Natural Welsh' and 'Welsh medium'; and "dual medium" and 'English medium' schools by the designation of each school at primary or secondary level as the local community school.

56. The second stage of the strategy would be to name the date on which all schools would be designated as 'bilingual' and provide a timetable with their curriculum and methodology to be adjusted to ensure that during the year all Key Stage priority subjects were taught in both Welsh and English, especially after Key Stage 1. We would welcome views on how this might be done. In consultation meetings, some people thought that that making a start at primary school level was logical. Bilingualism presents a major challenge for the workforce and one that might be best addressed over time. Considerable training and support would be needed and research on bilingualism would need to be studied. The implementation programme may take quite a long term.

Recommendations/ issues for consultation:

- **That clear policies need to be agreed and implemented on:**
 - **admissions (nursery, primary and secondary)**
 - **criteria for successful schools**
 - **school organisation, and criteria for review.**

- **Proposals for change that may involve**
 - **The re-provision of post 16 in Rhyl in a sixth form centre based in the college**
 - **The creation of all through primary schools to replace infant and junior schools and address issues of transition**
 - **That the establishment of further federations and area schools be pursued as means of dealing with surplus capacity and curriculum offer within small primary schools in Denbighshire.**

- **In the long term, all schools in Denbighshire should seek to become bilingual with a gradual reduction in categories.**

4. FUNDING.

REVENUE FUNDING

1. In many schools we visited, headteachers and governors identified 'funding' of schools (the amount of money available to them and the method of allocation) as a major concern. There were frequent references to the level of funding of schools in Denbighshire overall, between schools in different parts of the county, in comparison with other authorities in Wales and with nearby English authorities. In many cases, the level of funding was identified as an obstacle to improving performance, making change and progress - modernisation in short.
2. The levels of primary and secondary funding are indeed below the norm when compared with other authorities and can be regarded as inadequate. There is some evidence indicating that the relatively low level of funding in Denbighshire may be partially responsible for overall performance at both primary and secondary level.
3. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) produced a report on education budgets in Denbighshire for the authority. The analysis in this section of our report is intended to complement PwC's by providing an educational perspective on schools' funding in the broader context of Denbighshire's modernisation agenda. Figures refer to 2006/07, the most recent year for which comparative data was available for this analysis.

The Level of Primary Funding

4. Only three authorities in Wales spent less per primary pupil in 2006/07 yet PwC concluded that "relatively speaking, the primary sector in Denbighshire as a whole receives a level of funding comparable to primary sectors in other authorities". PwC arrive at this view chiefly by adjusting figures on spending across local authorities to take account of the relative need to spend. This is done by reference to the national formula. The assessment of need in that formula is derived largely from historic expenditure. The use of such expenditure as a basis for defining relative need has been widely questioned, most obviously because it inevitably perpetuates long standing disparities in funding among local authorities².

² See for example The Welsh Assembly's Committee on School Funding report *School Funding arrangements in Wales (2006)* which recommended that the Assembly "immediately set in train a review of the local government distribution formula so that the education element is based on current and future costs of providing education services rather than historic costs". The Minister for Education has commissioned such a review.

5. The accuracy of the national formula as a means of benchmarking Denbighshire's funding is also brought into doubt by the way in which it treats other members of the 'family' of similar authorities. It would be reasonable to expect the national formula to weight Denbighshire's need to spend at a similar level to the other authorities in its family³. It does not. The national formula grants every one of the authorities in the family a higher needs rating than Denbighshire.
6. The different treatment of the other members of Denbighshire's 'family' does not simply bring into question the accuracy of the national formula's assessment of need, it provides a means of circumventing it. Since the family of authorities have, by definition, similar levels of need, comparative analyses need not contain an adjustment to take account of significant variations in need.
7. In 2006/07, primary funding in Denbighshire (delegated plus central) was £3891 per pupil. Across Wales as a whole it was £4091. Among Denbighshire's family authorities it was £4264. These figures imply that the primary quantum would need to increase by approximately £1.6m to bring funding per pupil into line with the all Wales average and by almost £3m to raise it to the average among Denbighshire's family.
8. The difference in funding between Denbighshire and other authorities reflects a combination of two things: differences in funds allocated by the Assembly's formula and differences in the amounts that individual authorities choose to spend on education. If we focus purely on differences attributable to the national formula, Denbighshire's 2006/07 Primary Indicator Based Assessment within that formula was £3,051 per pupil against an average Primary IBA for the other authorities in Denbighshire's family of £3,316 per pupil. This implies that the County's primary quantum would need to increase by just under £2.2m to bring it into line with the average funding among family authorities attributable to the national formula.
9. Our second alternative framework for assessing the adequacy of current funds largely by-passes the complexities of and debates about comparative methodologies by focusing instead on three observations:
 - Performance in Denbighshire at the end of the primary phase is relatively poor;
 - Funding is relatively low;
 - There may be some correlation between level of funding and level of performance⁴.

³ Conwy, Anglesey, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Gwynedd.

⁴ Statistical analyses produced by the Council's Data Team showing the relationship between spending per pupil and attainment for Denbighshire and its family authorities.

The Level of Secondary Funding

10. PwC conclude that the level of secondary funding is relatively low. We concur, though we consider that their estimate of the discrepancy may be low, principally because PwC again uses the national formula as part of the assessment method. As outlined in our discussion of primary funding, we believe that alternative frameworks can and should be used to assess adequacy.
11. In 2006/07 secondary funding per pupil in Denbighshire is £4461. The average for Wales as a whole is £4732. On this basis, secondary funding would need to increase by around £2m to bring Denbighshire's spending in line with the all Wales average.
12. The discrepancy with family spending is even more marked. Denbighshire's spending would need to rise by over £3m to bring it into line with the family average of £4872 per pupil.
13. As with primary funding, these differences reflect a combination of national allocations and locally determined funding. If we again focus purely on national funds, the total level of secondary funding in Denbighshire would need to increase by approximately £1.2m to bring it up to the average Secondary IBA among the other authorities in Denbighshire's family group.
14. We understand that the Council has begun to increase secondary schools' funding in a phased manner over the next few years.

The allocation of funds to schools

15. The broad balance of funding across primary and secondary schools is similar to that in other authorities. Contrary to some local opinion, Denbighshire does not have a disproportionate number of small primary schools, nor does it spend a disproportionate amount on those it has. That said, because funding per pupil is inevitably significantly higher in very small schools, the authority must have a clear and strong case for maintaining them.
16. The table below summarises the average funding of pupils at small and large primary schools in Denbighshire and compares it with schools of similar size across Wales as a whole⁵.

⁵ The figures readily available to us within the limits of this exercise come from the PwC study and relate only to the sizes of schools shown.

AVERAGE FUNDING PER PUPIL AT SCHOOLS OF VARIOUS SIZE

	Fewer than 50 Pupils £ per pupil	50 to 90 Pupils £ per pupil	More than 400 Pupils £ per pupil
Denbighshire	£5843 ⁶	£4462	£3493
Wales	£5889	£4646	£3599
Difference	-£46 (0.8%)	-£184 (4%)	-£106 (2.9%)

17. The table shows that the distribution of funds in Denbighshire differs from the norm across Wales as a whole with regard to schools in the named categories. It is not possible to determine whether the County Council is distributing funding fairly between smaller and larger schools without undertaking a comprehensive needs-led investigation into the relative needs and costs of such schools. While Denbighshire's smaller schools are no more costly than equivalent schools in other authorities, the very smallest fare relatively well. There is no evidence to suggest that they are over-funded in absolute terms, but there may be a case, on grounds of equity, for redistributing some funds from schools with fewer than 50 pupils to larger schools.
18. From a funding perspective, the small schools issue is not simply about comparisons with other authorities: because such schools are not as economic (in terms of costs per pupil) as large schools, any authority must be able to justify their continuing existence, regardless of how many it has or what they cost relative to schools elsewhere. This becomes particularly important where, as in Denbighshire, funding across the sector as a whole is relatively low. In such a situation it is imperative that scarce funds are used efficiently. Economies of scale mean that larger schools are able to deploy resources more cost effectively. The authority therefore needs a positive and cogent case for continuing to fund any small school – particularly the very smallest.
19. The distribution of funds in the secondary sector is highly unusual. We would normally expect an inverse correlation between school size and funding per pupil: as size increase funding per pupil drops. While we would not expect the secondary funding/size gradient to be as steep as the primary, what is striking about Denbighshire is that there is no marked variation between funding per pupil in small and large schools. In fact, the two smallest actually receive less funding per pupil than several larger schools.

⁶ Central plus delegated funding.

20. There may be extenuating reasons relating to differing circumstances and needs (varying level of social deprivation and SEN for example), but, as PwC suggest, this highly unusual pattern suggests the need for detailed investigation.
21. Blessed Edward Jones RC and St Brigid's (secondary) each have fewer than 500 pupils. If they were funded at the national average for schools with up to 500 pupils, the budgets of both schools would increase substantially.
22. St Brigid's relatively low funding position is offset to some extent by its unusual circumstances⁷ and its position improves markedly when variations in special needs/social deprivation are taken into account. The situation at Blessed Edward Jones would seem more straightforward and starker. A history of under-funding may not be the only factor contributing to the school's current situation but it would be highly surprising if it were not a contributor. The current position is untenable. The Authority has a simple choice: improve funding or re-organise the school.

The LMS scheme

23. Elements of the system of schools funding are inherited from the predecessor county council and are poorly understood and difficult to justify. In any consideration of a reform of schools' funding within Denbighshire, part of a modernisation agenda, a comprehensive review of the funding formula should be conducted with a 'needs-led' analysis informing the distribution of funds. As part of that review the following aspects of the formula require consideration:
 - *AEN/SEN/Social deprivation funding* – issues regarding the use of reading tests in primary, 'matrix' funding in secondary, and the delegation of certain funds on the basis of actual costs;
 - *Thresholds* - The use of thresholds – sudden changes in funding – should be avoided unless there is an obvious comparable change in costs;

⁷ Shared primary and secondary provision; fee-paying boarding for some pupils; some sharing of management, administrative and other costs.

- *Exceptional circumstances* - The principle underlying formula funding is (or should be) that all schools receive the same funding unless a case can be made (on the basis of variable needs/costs) for funding them differently. Some of the funding differences in Denbighshire appear anomalous;
- *Pupil-led funding* The authority may be able to count a greater proportion of resources as pupil-led, thus *increasing* scope to employ non-pupil approaches to the distribution of funds;
- *Welsh language funding* There are issues surrounding the amount of language related funding in the formula and the manner in which it is distributed to different categories of schools; this should *in* be addressed in particular, in the light of our recommendations on Welsh medium education;
- *Consistency in the application of allocation mechanisms* As a general rule the same methods should be used across all schools to distribute funds for any particular activity unless there are *clear* reasons for doing otherwise. At present there are various examples where different methods are deployed in different sectors with no clear justification for them
- *Pupil turbulence/turnover*. There may be a case for recognising pupil turnover costs in a *discrete* element of the formula;
- *Presentation and communication of the funding formula* Many schools state that they do not *understand the* formula.

Since this analysis was produced, we have been commissioned by the authority to work with headteachers and officers to review the schools' mainstream funding formula with a view to its reform and modernisation. We would also suggest that a similar exercise be carried out for special schools funding.

CAPITAL FUNDING

24. Realising the vision set out by the County Council to transform education will require major revenue and capital investment. It is regrettable that there seems not to be a nationally funded development programme, which would transform the secondary school estate in particular and teaching and learning over the next 15 years on the scale that is needed. Capital streams in DCC are both limited and traditional, though the amounts have increased quite recently with use being made of prudential borrowing.

25. Spending on schools has been given greater priority by the authority in recent years but this has focused on maintenance rather than enabling more flexible teaching and learning styles, through investment in ICT in the classroom or for creating more flexible teaching areas. It has also been centrally controlled. It is technically focussed rather than educationally focused. Basic deficiencies in the fabric and services of schools have to be addressed, but there are opportunities for more creative use of money within schools that are being missed. Meeting basic need for additional school places has been met in a number of cases.
26. Spend should reflect schools' development planning priorities arising from effective self-evaluation. The development of new capital funding streams is recommended, including the consideration of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) type of funding arrangements, which might be able to assist with the development of multi-agency area schools with community and family provision. We can give exemplars of new schools that transform teaching and learning.
27. We suggest there should be a wide ranging debate about the nature of teaching and learning over the next 50 years and how that will impinge upon CPD, school design and many other aspects of education in Denbighshire.
28. The current Service Asset Management Plan (Jan 2007 update) provides a prioritised list of schemes for consideration as part of the council's capital bidding process and as a guide for current spending and critically the need to spend in Denbighshire schools. It is acknowledged that there are areas in the county where there may be a demand for new places in the light of population change. Priorities in the primary sector are what can be seen as meeting basic need for new places in Prestatyn, Rhyl and Ruthin now and into the future. Spending priorities in the secondary sector are to try to meet assessed deficiencies in condition (albeit on 7 year old condition data) and capacity. It is an attempt to address the current peaks in pupil and student numbers in the secondary sector and also, reflecting local and a national target, of removing temporary accommodation or mobile classrooms. There are some schemes – current and proposed- to support teaching and learning directly: the remodelling of secondary school laboratories is an example. Also, the significant expenditure on special school provision in both special schools is a key feature of Denbighshire's capital programme, Ysgol Plas Bron Dyffryn in particular as a regional centre of excellence.
29. But there are many other areas where there is a need to improve conditions for teaching and learning. A review of Estyn reports on Denbighshire's high schools shows a number of examples of poor accommodation being raised as important factors in constraining the quality of teaching and learning, with also several references to health and safety issues. Poor facilities for PE, for instance, are connected to low standards.

Some reports imply a perception of the LEA as being difficult to work with and being unable to bring about improvements in these areas.

30. In other parts of the UK, secondary schooling in particular is being transformed through large scale programmes of rebuilding and renewal. This includes large scale PFI (Private Finance Initiative) schemes in Scottish authorities, the £45bn 15 year BSF (Building Schools for the Future) programme in England and the Academies programme in England. Priority has been given to schools facing challenging circumstances and where physical conditions are poor and where accommodation is unsuitable. It is easy to imagine both Rhyl secondary schools being part of such programmes. This is not only about providing new buildings. It is also (in theory at least) about transforming learning too.
31. The overall capital funding strategy is manifested in the Assembly Government 2002 commitment to have schools 'fit for purpose' by 2010. This was modified in 2006 to say that this should be on the basis of targets agreed with each local authority. It is hard to see how this can be achieved, in Denbighshire at least, without significant increases in capital funding – from conventional or new sources – including a radical programme of rationalisation and disposal of the parts of the existing stock.

Recommendations/ issues for consultation:

- **That the funding regime for schools in Denbighshire is outdated, and is in need of reform with more transparent accountability right across the education service for a shared vision and equitable funding linked to priorities.**
- **That new forms of investment in the school stock be pursued, including Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes as a means of renewing the stock of schools, particularly in the secondary sector**

5. STANDARDS AND ATTAINMENT

The Need for Change

32. Raising standards has not been identified as one of the Council's main priorities. It is, however, the single most critical issue facing the education service; other issues are simply a means to this end.
33. The analysis of the most recent performance of Denbighshire's pupils (2006) based on examinations, tests and teachers' assessment results demonstrates an urgent need to give the highest priority to raising standards as there is evidence of significant underachievement.
34. Inevitably, results vary from school to school and across and within different areas. Trends over the last few years are inconsistent save to demonstrate that there is no overall significant trend upwards. At GCSE there has been a downward trend,
35. It is to the authority's credit that changes have begun to be made over the last year. These have enabled education officers to begin to focus on the analysis of data and use it to challenge schools to bring about improvement. Members too have begun to have better access to data and its interpretation. This is all part of an ongoing and developmental process which will need a change in culture before it is fully embedded. (There may be some signs of improvement with the 2007 GCSE results and indeed the numbers of entries).
36. The table below gives a basic analysis of the 2006 performance. The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) is the average of the three core subjects, English, mathematics and science. Comparison is between Denbighshire and All Welsh Authorities (AWA) which is useful but the comparison with a 'family' group (FG) of six socially and economically similar authorities, which includes Denbighshire is more telling. Denbighshire's performance is worryingly low, particularly when compared to similar authorities.

Key Stage 1

English	0.9% below the All Wales Average (AWA) 12/22 when measured with All Welsh Authorities (AWA) 3/6 when measured against the Family Group (FG) Girls outperformed boys by 9.3%
Welsh	1.3% below AWA 3/6 in the FG

Boys outperformed girls by 0.9%

Maths 3.2% **below** AWA
21/22 WA
6/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 4.1%

Science 0.7% **below** AWA
15/22 WA
4/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 1.7%

CSI 1.1% **below** AWA
14/22 WA
4/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 7.3%

Key Stage 2

English 2.1% **below** AWA
17/22 WA
6/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 8.8%

Welsh 9.6% **above** AWA
2/22 WA
1/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 0.2%

Maths 0.5% **above** AWA
10/22 WA
4/6 in the FG
Boys outperforming girls by 3.3%

Science 1.6% **below** AWA
17/22 WA
4/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 6.9%

CSI 2.9% **below** AWA
17/22 WA

6/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 6.9%

37. The analysis for secondary age schooling is as follows:

Key Stage 3

English 0.8% **above** AWA
10/22 WA
5/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 19.6%

Welsh 0.8% **below** AWA
2/5 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 4.9%

Maths 0.3% **above** AWA
11/22 WA
5/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 4.9%

Science 0.1% **above** AWA
13/22 WA
4/6 in the FG
Girls outperformed boys by 3.4%

CSI 0.5% **above** AWA
10/22 in Wales
5/6 in the FG
Girls outperforming boys by 12.7%

38. Performance at the end of Key Stage 4 is a cause for concern:

GCSE results

5 A* - C Achieved by 48.5% of students
Below the Wales average of 53.8%
18/22 WA
6/6 in the FG
Performance in 2002 was 52%
Girls outperformed boys by 13%

Boys = 42% (19/22; 6/6)

Girls = 55% (16/22; 5/6)

5 A* - G Achieved by 84.1% of students
Below the Wales average of 86%
15/22 WA
5/6 in the FG
Performance in 2002 was 87%
Girls outperformed boys by 8%
Boys = 80% (19/22; 6/6)
Girls = 88% (13/22; 4/6)

39. In 2006, eight percent of Denbighshire students were not entered for GCSE which is 2% higher than any authority in Wales and 3% higher than any authority in the family group. When disaggregated by gender:
- 10% boys were not entered – this is 2% higher than all Wales and 5% higher than the Family Group
 - 6% girls were not entered – this is 1% higher than all Wales and the Family Group

A Level

2+ A-C Achieved by 65.1% of students
Below the Wales average of 68.1%

2+ A-E Achieved by 91.5% of students
Below the Wales average of 93.9%

40. The average points score for 2 or more A levels is 19 overall, with girls outperforming boys. This is 14 out of 22 when compared with all Wales and the lowest (6/6) in the Family Group.
41. There are two significant trends impacting on standards:
- Poor attendance – in 2005/06 Denbighshire was 18 out of 22 All Wales Authorities in secondary school attendance. Absence was 10.6%.
 - Boys' underachievement – girls are outperforming boys at all key stages. However, the fact remains that girls are also performing below what might be expected.

Correlation between attendance and performance

42. We show there is a correlation between attendance and performance. The table ranks Denbighshire's eight secondary schools (High Schools) in relation to attendance and performance at GCSE.

Highest attendance	Highest 5 A* - C	Highest 5 A* - G
1st	2nd	2nd
2nd	1st	1st
3rd	4th	5th
4th	5th	=3rd
5th	3rd	=3rd
6th	6th	6th
7th	8th	7th
8th	7th	8th

43. The authority has identified a cause for concern in relation to attendance in almost half its primary schools. There are clear links to performance. This is a significant problem in the Rhyl area. Several primary schools in the Prestatyn and Denbigh areas also have lower than average attendance.
44. School Improvement Officers carry out a useful 'risk assessment' for all primary schools which is helping them to target those in most need of support. The analysis takes in a range of benchmarking and performance data in addition to inspection evidence, self evaluation and development planning, management and finance.
45. The authority has justifiable concerns that some recent Estyn inspection reports are over generous in their judgements and are leading some schools into false complacency. This is having a detrimental effect on attempts to raise standards.
46. Schools themselves identified (through surveys carried out in 2005 and 2006 and this review) that improvement is needed with regard to:
- Support for raising attainment at KS3 and KS4
 - Implementation of strategic plans for school improvement
 - The extent to which schools influence local authority policies and procedures
 - The leadership provided by elected members
 - Arrangements for disseminating good practice
 - Professional development of the workforce
 - Support for ICT; numeracy; gifted and talented.

47. Officers have identified some of the barriers to progress as:
- The pace of improvements given the limitations of curriculum support
 - The continuous challenge of raising the profile of children and young people with additional learning needs
 - The lack of a coordinated approach to integrated services development
 - The need to increase the number of children and young people using technology to aid their learning
 - Formal and informal learning have not been identified by the County Council as a major priority; this is seen as having a negative impact on social inclusion and the well-being of learners.
48. The modernisation of education in Denbighshire must have the raising of standards at the heart of all decision-making. Given the current underachievement of young people and the impact this will have on future prosperity and the chances of the authority realising its vision, taking no action is not an option.

What needs to be done?

49. Estyn's recent discussion paper ('Transforming schools: a discussion paper', Estyn March 2007), is a useful starting point. They say:
50. "If the learning needs of pupils are to be met, then changes must be based on ideas of what schools should be like at best. Consulting more with pupils about their needs and enabling pupils to participate more in decision-making are vital aspects of transforming education".
51. This recommendation also appears in a high number of Estyn inspection reports on individual Denbighshire schools. A number of ways forward are suggested by Estyn. For example, "to improve learning and teaching, schools of the future will need to build on good practice in:
- The way that pupils are challenged to develop their understanding through exciting creative and practical tasks that allow them to work out things for themselves;
 - Providing learners with opportunities to work together purposefully in teams, inside or outside the classroom and use a wide range of skills;
 - How teachers explain the learning process to pupils and use assessment processes with a much stronger emphasis on assessment for learning;
 - The range of teaching methods used that creates different opportunities for pupils to understand and use information, including visual materials and ICT; and
 - The use of the full range of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning and teaching styles".

52. Schools of the future will need to improve pupils' skills by improving continuity between key stages, focusing on skills as part of a whole school approach, developing pupils' thinking and learning skills and making them central, emphasising analytical skills and giving more help to those with poor basic skills or who are at risk of not making progress. There is a particular need nationally, and, as we have found, locally, to address underachievement, disaffection and the underperformance of boys.
53. There is also a need to transform buildings and facilities and make greater use of new technologies, while re-thinking traditional approaches to staffing leadership and management arrangements. The importance of promoting positive values in young people is stressed.

What needs to be done to address poor performance in Denbighshire schools, particularly at Key Stage 4?

54. Looking at Estyn reports on the eight high schools in the county, all reports refer to the need to raise standards in areas where shortcomings have been identified. The need to improve key skills is identified in both Rhyl schools whilst the gap in performance between boys and girls is highlighted at the two top performing schools. Key issues relating to science, music and PE appear twice; other subjects identified as in need of improvement are maths and Welsh. Geography and ICT are mentioned at the highest performing school. Attendance is raised as a key issue in both Rhyl schools and is inevitably linked to underachievement. The behaviour of pupils does not appear as a key issue in any report.
55. Without doubt, one of the key messages emerging from the reports is the variation in the quality of teaching and learning within the individual schools. Almost without exception, good practice exists but there is considerable inconsistency. Management issues relating to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are linked, as is the need to develop middle managers (and in some cases senior managers). Another recurrent feature is related to the quality of assessment and target setting. There appears to be a lack of involvement of pupils in their own learning. It is suggested that older pupils are given more roles and responsibilities within the school to aid their own personal development.
56. Leadership and management issues are characterised by the need to develop better quality self evaluation procedures. Middle managers appear not to have fully grasped their role in contributing to whole school development and ensuring their departments implement policy consistently. There is much to be done to convince the teaching force

of this need to change and empower them through high quality professional training and mentoring.

57. Key issues in the primary sector in Denbighshire (again drawn from Estyn reports over the past three years and our own profiles) are:
- 57.1. The need to improve standards. Information Technology is mentioned frequently.
- 57.2. Improve the quality of teaching and extend teaching strategies through
- more opportunities for independent learning
 - more and better use of ICT across the curriculum;
 - by continuously challenging pupils;
 - ensuring continuity and progression.
- 57.3. To improve self evaluation such that monitoring systems and self-evaluation should concentrate on pupils' attainment, standards and the quality of teaching.
- 57.4. To develop the monitoring and evaluation role of the governing body
- 57.5. To improve monitoring and evaluation by looking at the work of curriculum coordinators and by ensuring there are systems for monitoring lessons.
- 57.6. To improve the quality of assessment and reporting and pupils' ability to assess their own work.
58. Other issues relate to accommodation, health and safety and issues of compliance.
59. We suggest that a detailed analysis is used as the basis for a new school improvement strategy which must be developed in partnership with schools.

Recommendations/ issues for consultation:

- **The authority and its schools should re-focus its educational priorities towards standards in schools. That will require a rigorous focus, targeting resources and managing data intelligently.**
- **There should be a debate with schools about the need to change styles of teaching and learning in the county that are more appropriate for the 21st century, recognising the need to share the good practice that does exist in the county There needs to be a wide-ranging debate about learning which will reform the vision for education and, in turn, shape professional development, school design and many other issues in the education service.**
- **A greater sense of community ownership needs to be developed through empowering schools and their communities to assist in thinking of areas and clusters, multi-agency working, early years' provision and inclusion.**

- **To begin with, there should be an audit of the use of ICT in the classroom and development of a funding package that would help to address deficiencies.**

6. MODERNISING THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

School improvement and central support working together

1. There is substantial evidence of out-dated and uncoordinated operations within the County Council itself. Modernising education requires also the modernisation of the County Council both at the corporate and service directorate levels. That relates to the key role it has to play in working with schools and setting out a vision of educational aspiration and attainment. The schools will improve more quickly and consistently if they are autonomous through genuine delegation while having access to high quality professional support services that are secured rather than provided by the local authority itself. The authority has a key role in brokering rather than simply providing these services. An effective school improvement service is crucial, making better use of the data which are already collected. Local authority services and functions should all contribute towards the raising of standards in schools.
2. Denbighshire needs to modernise in terms of the set of relationships that exist between the Council as the Local Education Authority and the schools it maintains. The way of working between the LEA (the council and its directorates and its elected members) need to move towards one that is based on partnership and mutual trust.
3. Where the authority has sought change, it has not always engaged with schools in that process. Examples include the last attempt to address surplus places in schools; the approach to and engagement with schools over resource decisions and the annual budget allocation and engaging with schools to agree a school improvement strategy. It is more likely that schools will sign up to plans and policies if they are involved in their development and have greater sense that the authority understands their needs.
4. We would suggest that, as the authority moves forward in the light of this report and the Estyn inspection report towards modernisation, it set up a strategic planning group made up of the Director, his senior team and representatives from all school sectors and possibly other 'stakeholder' interests to focus on:
 - Strategic planning
 - School improvement
 - Resource allocation and budget making
 - Policy development
 - Oversight and approval of other working groups (e.g. funding reviews)
5. We also suggest that the authority look at current arrangements for governors in the county. Support to individual governing bodies is, from reports to us, well regarded – though some governors were concerned that, following the demise of 'link officers',

there was reduced LEA involvement with governing bodies. We would suggest that a county-wide governors' forum would be a better way forward, recognising the increasing responsibilities that governors have under delegation.

6. Delegation needs to be taken further and completed (though schools often said they would be unwilling to take on more unless there were absolute guarantees that the appropriate level of funding would follow). But there are examples of good practice with local management of services by groups of schools that both work well and are in the spirit of modern self managing schools. Rhyl schools for instance manage what has been delegated for behaviour support and the primary schools also employ their own ICT technician locally largely because the county service is over-stretched and unable to meet their needs. It is this kind of model that offers a better way forward for Denbighshire schools - locally managed and under schools' control.
7. Schools' views of other services vary. Some services (and indeed many individual officers) are valued highly; with other services are regarded as poor. Trading is not well developed in Denbighshire. The authority is not always clear on which services it offers on a traded or non-traded basis and why. Some services are not provided – we might expect to see a CPD programme for instance. Denbighshire seems not to have one. In some schools, heads went to other authorities for CPD, though in the absence of a CPD programme we might have expected the authority to have set up a framework on behalf of its schools.
8. There are aspects of what Denbighshire does that still seem to be about 'managing' schools even though those schools operate under delegation. Denbighshire has a feel of being way behind the times in that regard. For instance, as we understand it, only one school runs its own bank account. In other authorities the majority of schools have had 'BAFS' (bank accounts for schools) since the early 1990s. Schools in Denbighshire are tied into the council's financial systems rather than operating their own. In some schools we visited, the annual formula allocation (the single sum of money that the formula will generate for each school) seemed to be regarded as 'the budget'. Consequently, budget making in the school – linking resources to the curricular needs of the school – may not happen effectively.
9. There have been improvements in the way in which the authority seeks to work with schools in recent months. The Director's restructuring gives a more clear focus to what each element of the service ought to be doing. The outgoing Head of Education's earlier work on 'Sharper Focus' was important too. We comment on this – what a school improvement service is or ought to be about – below. But a sharper focus is an important change towards focussing on school support and challenge, moving away from what can be a dependency model of albeit highly regarded 'link officers' who both

- seek to solve school problems but who also can manage and control resources that may be more properly delegated to schools.
10. The situation with school building maintenance in Denbighshire is a case study of an 'unmodernised' local education authority. Responsibilities for the repair and maintenance of school buildings were delegated to schools at the inception of Local Management in the 1980s. Not having to go through 'the office' or the buildings department for building repairs illustrated the advantages of local management. Delegation initially involved schools' increased responsibility for largely internal fabric of the building, along the lines of a landlord-tenant split.
 11. In Denbighshire, in contrast, the authority's Directive is that "All contractors used in Denbighshire educational premises MUST be commissioned through building services". This follows, in 2005, Denbighshire County Council being issued with an improvement notice by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This notice was only discharged when Denbighshire put in place this particular process for controlling contractors. This was acceptable to the HSE. For schools, the requirement to use central services has meant a 12.5% fee imposed immediately, though this has been reduced "for the time being". Consideration has been given to top slicing schools' budgets to cover a Building Services 'administration' fee of 5%. Not surprisingly, this is deeply unpopular with schools.
 12. In our view, the Council may be unduly infringing schools' rights to determine how they use formally delegated funding; further, the conditions imposed by the Council on the use of premises funds mean that such funds may not count as formally delegated (and as centrally retained). In many authorities, schools have the option of buying in Council property staff to manage building work, but requiring them to do so is highly unusual and goes well beyond normal practice (issuing a list of approved contractors; providing guidance and training on good practice). That tends to ensure better value for money and a more responsive repairs service, one that better reflects the needs of the school. Should a school neglect its legal responsibilities or breach basic rules of probity, any authority is entitled and obliged to act. Schools do of course need to develop the capacity and capability to manage their own affairs in this regard, as evidenced in the authority's health and safety audit that found many shortcomings.
 13. In conclusion, more work needs to be done to develop schools' understanding of the role of a modern authority and move them towards greater self management and autonomy. We recommend greater delegation to schools and a shift by the county towards brokering rather than providing services- the Estyn inspection framework provides a model as to what a modern education service looks like in that regard. New ways of working may take the form of cluster working (of which there are currently

some good examples), and local delivery. At present the relationship with schools and other stakeholders is not a genuine partnership based on trust and transparency. Given the nature of the diversity in the county, schools also need to have a better understanding of each others' needs. Schools need to understand too that with greater autonomy comes greater responsibility and accountability.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the school improvement service and its changing role

14. The school improvement service has made significant progress over the last year in moving towards fulfilling its roles and responsibilities. However, much remains to be done. Not least of this is making sure that schools understand the role of the LEA and are confident that officers and members are working together to bring about the improvements required in order to raise standards. The need for this is very clear and at the centre of the modernisation agenda.
15. Standards in Denbighshire schools are not high enough. There are considerable inequalities in achievement and attainment between advantaged and disadvantaged areas. Boys' performance is well below that of girls, attendance is unsatisfactory and too many students leave school without any qualifications. Estyn, in their recent discussion paper, correctly identify the need to take action by 'Transforming Schools'. It requires a transformation in the way schools work; a focus on how children learn and what is the best way to meet the needs of individuals. It is the role of the school improvement service to support, monitor, challenge and intervene in schools to achieve this but they cannot do it in isolation.
16. The authority must take a genuinely collaborative and strategic approach to education to make sure that all children, young people and adults have the skills they need. It is recognised nationally in Wales that there is a higher proportion of adults with a relatively low knowledge and skills base when compared with many European neighbours. Education must therefore be the highest priority for the County Council.
17. For the School Improvement Service to be fully effective it will require strong, strategic direction and leadership which is understood and supported by members and all services within the authority. Decisions, at all levels, and the allocation of resources must be based on agreed goals and plans of action. Individual interests and agendas need to be set aside and the inequalities across the County dealt with.
18. The recent restructuring of services provides an opportunity to set up clear lines of communication between the different services and teams that support schools. Effective monitoring of schools can only take place when services pool their data and

knowledge on a regular basis. Criteria need to be agreed and shared, not only within the authority but with schools. Procedures and decision-making processes should be transparent. Subsequent challenge and support for schools will have clear, agreed plans, success criteria and lines of accountability. Consequently, human and financial resources will be targeted in proportion to the differing needs of individual schools.

The way forward: school improvement

19. Using the evidence gleaned from the application of a self evaluation framework with the authority and its staff, we are led to conclude that in order to meet a satisfactory standard the authority needs to address the following issues:
20. All schools need to understand the role of the local authority and what needs to change in order that the service can move forward. This will require greater levels of consultation and transparency. Recent events have highlighted the need for an agreed policy for schools requiring special measures and others in need of significant improvement and where intervention is necessary. The authority must not be dependent on the outcomes of Estyn inspections to take action on under-performing schools. The authority's monitoring procedures must be robust. Schools should be completely aware of why and when they are likely to be challenged to bring about improvement. Reports received by the School Standards Monitoring Group should be aligned with these systems and procedures.
21. All school visits by officers should be recorded. Monitoring and support visits by school improvement officers and other advisers should result in written reports which are discussed with governors. The service has recently introduced an annual report to governors whereby the authority can share data and make comment about the performance of the school. This should assist governors and heads in planning for improvement. Target setting has also been more rigorous in the past year. However, the service will need to make sure that rigorous quality assurance procedures are in place for senior officers to monitor the quality and consistency of support and advice to schools. Current arrangements for the provision of curriculum support are being reviewed. The authority must ensure that the current or any new arrangements are managed effectively with clear lines of responsibility and accountability.
22. Schools need to be aware of the clear distinction between the services the authority provides to carry out its statutory duties to monitor, challenge and intervene and those that a school may purchase from its delegated budget. In this respect, there is a need for greater delegation of the school improvement budget. At present, the authority is not brokering a range of services and other providers for schools so they have access to a variety of cost-effective services if they require it. A change of culture is required

- which encourages more school self-management and autonomy and breaks the cycle of dependency. The authority is not placing a sufficient emphasis on developing school's autonomy.
23. Consideration needs to be given to new ways of working through delegated services or clustered arrangements. The authority has supported schools in developing self-evaluation procedures. There is now a need to ensure that training plans are based on the identification of needs from self-evaluation and school development plans. This will also help identify areas of weakness which are common to schools across the LEA.
 24. The range, quality and use of performance data has developed over the past year and is beginning to give a clearer picture. It is essential that this continues to develop. Both the authority and schools need access to high quality data in order to monitor and improve performance. Some schools have demonstrated a reluctance to use data which highlights the need for the authority to make sure it can monitor performance accurately in these schools as a basis for challenge. The next stage in the use of data is critical. The authority needs to disaggregate the data so that it has detailed information about local performance and different pupil groups. For example, boys' performance is well below that of girls across the key stages. The authority needs to track this in detail, identify and disseminate progress and agree targets for improvement with schools. The use of cohort and value-added data is undeveloped. The authority also needs to raise awareness of the county's performance in relation to all Wales, but more significantly compare it with that of the 'family group' of authorities.
 25. Consideration should be given to developing groups of 'similar' schools within the authority so more 'like for like' comparisons can be made. Low expectations, particularly of pupils and their families in disadvantaged areas of the county, have led to a degree of complacency and inertia. This must be addressed as a matter of urgency and detailed data is needed to highlight the scale of the problem. Some services and teams within the authority appear unaware of what the data is saying or remain in denial. The School Improvement Service must be active in communicating the need to raise standards at all levels. Schools need access to timely data especially on transition from one key stage to another. Further development in accessing data on line would be beneficial.
 26. Improvements in joint working across the authority are essential. There is a need to make the links across the department (indeed with other departments too) so that everyone is focused on school improvement. Regular meetings, the analysis and interpretation of data, shared agendas and planning should be routine. Many successful LEAs have these arrangements in place. Interventions need effective structures and interdisciplinary team working to agreed action plans. Funding

arrangements are discussed in detail elsewhere, but it is unacceptable that sizeable budgets should be controlled and distributed by individual officers unless it is part of an agreed and transparent strategy across the range of services.

27. The move to strengthen the capacity of the service by using Associate Headteachers has been welcomed. However, headteachers and pupils should be given a greater say in the development of policy and the opportunity to play a part in the work of the authority. Increased consultation with young people is a crucial component in the modernisation agenda.
28. The provision of curriculum support and enrichment and broadening opportunities for learning are limited by the lack of capacity amongst the central team due to the focus on core school improvement and the shared curriculum support service. This has led to fragmented support in some areas. There is a need to take strategic decisions and make plans to ensure that all pupils have access to a range of learning opportunities and activities which will widen their interests and help develop better motivation. This is particularly true of the arts and sport. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is limited.
29. The service has recognised the need to provide support for school leadership and management including governors. Some senior officers have been active in this area but this is not always fully understood amongst schools. Governor training is not well attended. The service needs to consult more widely and find alternative arrangements to support governors.
30. There is a need to carry out regular reviews of economy, effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of service provision. This must be directly related to raising standards.

The role of the school improvement teams in the modernisation of education

31. Having established a cohesive and efficient service which works in partnership with schools, the school improvement teams will need to lead developments in transforming the ways schools work. This requires the officers to have a clear vision of what is to be achieved and strategies and plans to turn the vision into reality. Strong, inspirational leadership is essential. All authority staff will need to demonstrate a commitment to the new ways of working and actively promote them within schools. Consultation and collaboration with schools and communities are central to success. Creativity, flexibility and adaptability are necessary as no one model will meet the needs of different schools and different communities. It is to the school improvement team to hold on to the central component of ensuring all children achieve what they are capable of and gain the knowledge, skills and understanding that will equip them for the future.

32. First and foremost this means bringing about improvements in teaching and learning and the way in which schools work as described in 'Transforming Schools'. Denbighshire's schools have only recently been called to account by the LEA and some are still questioning the validity of this approach. Some preferred what they perceived to be the authority in supportive mode. Teachers, parents and communities are sometimes resistant to change preferring to stay within their comfort zones. Teachers will need to learn new skills and ways of working which may appear threatening and undermine their confidence initially. Overcoming these issues will need persuasive arguments and evidence that improvement will occur as a result. Members too will need to give their support and help the communities they represent understand the need for change. Addressing the significant inequalities that exist within the County will inevitably lead to compromises which might be difficult to understand. Pupils must be consulted about their needs and involved in decisions. The overwhelming majority of pupils are able to articulate how well they are doing and what kind of teaching helps them learn.
33. A key role of the service is the identification and sharing of best practice across schools and areas. It has an important role in facilitating joint working and the sharing of ideas. Equally, officers and advisers will need to establish common training needs and ensure that schools have access to high quality training within and outside the authority. During the course of the review many schools, and others, have indicated their concern to bring 'new blood' into the County. Undoubtedly the Welsh-speaking requirements can limit the amount of applications for posts, particularly at a senior level and the authority may wish to consider this. However, the main concern is to bring fresh ideas and new ways of working into the authority which can be achieved by other means. This could include, for example, providing high quality external training, access to mentoring, innovation conferences, networking and secondments to enable a broader perspective of leading edge teaching and learning. This applies equally to authority and schools staff. The recent move to involve Associate Headteachers in the work of the authority has been welcomed.
34. The authority will need to ensure that its central staff have the skills and expertise to support the necessary changes. Time is at a premium and the capacity of the school improvement team is very limited. Time has to be created to enable staff to undertake quality professional development and hone the skills they need. Performance management arrangements should underpin the modernisation and support improvement. Workloads have to be managed effectively and efficiently. Greater use of technology, reduction in travel, increased opportunities for home working, a focus on professional duties and providing opportunities for creative problem-solving and clear communication systems will improve job satisfaction and the effectiveness of the service.

35. The authority cannot, and should not, employ full and part time staff with the full range of specialist expertise to cover all its needs. Modernisation will mean that the authority will need to retain a highly effective core team who direct and quality assure the work of others. Support for the statutory work of the LEA can be accessed through a variety of means. The DfES/DCSF accredited 'School Improvement Partners' is one model which could be replicated. Further expansion of the Associate Headteacher role is another. Support could also be accessed from a range of private providers or from collaborative partnership arrangements with other local authorities. Whichever model is decided upon the key issues will be efficiency and effectiveness. The LEA will need to have sufficient controls in place to ensure high quality, continuity and that its goals and plans are being fully implemented and supported. As community schools develop and multi agency working becomes the norm, coordination of joined up services to support children's development is likely to be the role of school improvement professionals. Developing skills and understanding in multi agency and cross-phase working needs to be part of a long-term strategy.

Recommendations/ issues for consultation:

- **There needs to be a fundamental change in the relationship between the County Council, which is the LEA, and the schools it maintains.**
- **The LEA should be more focussed on school improvement – monitoring, challenge and support – rather than 'running' schools, intervening when schools are failing to provide a good education.**
- **There should be a planning forum of the Director, school leaders and senior managers to address strategic issues in the county.**
- **Services to schools should increasingly be brokered rather than provided by the authority; more resources should be delegated to schools.**
- **Cluster working and cluster management should be developed among schools.**
- **Schools need to develop greater self management.**

7. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Denbighshire County Council, and indeed the wider community, should make education its top priority. This is not simply a matter of increasing the resources for education but getting greater value from existing resources. Modernising Education is about raising the profile of education in the county with a clear focus on raising standards.
2. The authority should re-focus its educational priorities towards standards in schools. That will require a rigorous focus, targeting resources and managing data intelligently.
3. There should be a debate with schools about the need to change styles of teaching and learning in the county that are more appropriate for the 21st century, recognising the need to share the good practice that does exist in the county. There needs to be a wide-ranging debate about learning which will reform the vision for education and, in turn, shape professional development, school design and many other issues in the education service.
4. To begin with, there should be an audit of the use of ICT in the classroom and development of a funding package that would help to address deficiencies.
5. There needs to be a fundamental change in the relationship between the County Council, which is the LEA, and the schools it maintains. The LEA should be more focussed on school improvement – monitoring, challenge and support – rather than ‘running’ schools, intervening when schools are failing to provide a good education; services to schools should be brokered rather than provided; more resources should be delegated to schools; cluster working and cluster management should be developed; schools need to develop greater self management.
6. Because the funding regime for schools in Denbighshire is outdated, it needs reform with more transparent accountability right across the education service for a shared vision and equitable funding linked to priorities.
7. All schools should become bilingual with a gradual reduction in categories.
8. Clear policies need to be agreed and implemented on:
 - admissions (nursery, primary and secondary)
 - criteria for successful schools

- **school organisation, especially with regard to small schools, very large schools and separate Infants and Junior schools.**
- 9. Empowering schools and their communities to assist in thinking of areas and clusters, multi-agency working, early years' provision and inclusion.**
- 10. To that end, new models of provision, at primary, secondary and post-16 should be implemented that are more in tune with the needs of 21st century education, that put the interests of learners first and address at least some of the issues of standards and delivery in Denbighshire schools:**
- **re-provision of post 16 in Rhyl in a sixth form centre based in the college**
 - **renewal and rebuilding of the Rhyl High Schools as 11-16 schools for the future with learning transformed**
 - **creation of all through primary schools to replace infant and junior schools and address issues of transition**
 - **options to deal with surplus capacity and curriculum offer within small primary schools in Denbighshire that range from further federations to area schools.**

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MODERNISING EDUCATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to introduce the Modernising Education in Denbighshire report commissioned by Denbighshire County Council and carried out by Cambridge Education Ltd. and to summarise the responses received since the report was published for consultation in September.

2. BACKGROUND

The Cambridge Education 'Modernising Education' report was published on 19 September. It was made publicly available for consultation with the principal recommendations put forward as issues for consideration. A separate document, the Area Profiles report, was also made available for comment. The consultation period closed on 30 November.

We have received comments from individual schools and governing bodies, town and community councils, individual members of the public, professional associations and Assembly members. We also presented the reports to all Denbighshire headteachers at their conference on 4 October and had comments them and briefed elected members, headteachers and governors at the launch of the reports in September.

This report summarises the responses received by reference to the recommendations in each of the five sections in the main Modernising Education report.

A number of responses were also received concerning the Area Profiles. These were in the main matters of fact or interpretation and these amendments have been made to the Area Profiles.

3. RESPONSES RECEIVED.

SECTION 1: PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES.

Recommendations:

- *That the authority and its community should raise its game and move education to the top of the community agenda if it is to realise its vision.*
- *This is not simply a matter of increasing the resources for education but getting greater value.*
- *That the focus of the school community in Denbighshire should be the raising of standards.*
- *That there should be a re-thinking of the ways in which we teach and learn in Denbighshire.*

From the responses received, there was a broad welcome for the report and indeed for the County Council's actions in commissioning the work, seeking an external and objective view, to help it in its work to modernise education within the county. A comment was made at the headteachers' meeting that it was "an astute and detailed study"; further, that it came at an appropriate time for the authority and its schools.

There was little if any argument with the thrust of the recommendations in the first section of the report and "total agreement" with the general recommendations from a number of schools. However, one town/community council argued that this suggested that education be prioritised regardless of what the community as a whole wanted whereas it was one component, albeit an important one, in achieving the Community Vision.

Responses from professional associations/teacher unions welcomed this set of recommendations, but linked the priority attached to education to the resourcing of the service (funding, buildings, training, ICT). One association "strongly agreed" that raising standards was the single most critical issue.

In the view of one school's governing body, refocussing the authority's work on 'raising standards' should involve a range of qualitative and quantitative indices, not just a narrow view of pupil performance alone. To achieve this, a greater share of resources along with better value for money must be ensured. A discussion of teaching and learning styles would be preferable to a debate. There are many examples of good practice available.

Whilst there was agreement with the analysis, the report raised questions about how the authority and the family of schools could go on to deliver the improvements needed.

SECTION 2: PROVISION OF SCHOOL PLACES.

Recommendations:

- *That clear policies need to be agreed and implemented on:*
 - *admissions (nursery, primary and secondary)*
 - *criteria for successful schools*
 - *school organisation, and criteria for review.*

- *Proposals for change that may involve*
 - *The re-provision of post 16 in Rhyl in a sixth form centre based in the college*
 - *The creation of all through primary schools to replace infant and junior schools and address issues of transition*
 - *That the establishment of further federations and area schools be pursued as means of dealing with surplus capacity and curriculum offer within small primary schools in Denbighshire.*

- *In the long term, all schools in Denbighshire should seek to become bilingual with a gradual reduction in categories.*

There was some agreement the recommendations and some further comment on the need for the authority to clarify its current policies on admissions and criteria for review. Consideration of 'small schools' needed to recognise the actual numbers of people using the building throughout the day and that the criteria for the viability of small schools should be the standard of teaching and learning, the quality and range of curricular and extra curricular activities, services provided from the school (as in 'extended schools'), the nurturing of Welsh language skills by the school and the nature of the community served by the school. Smaller schools could help the overcrowding in some of the county's urban schools (again, acknowledging issues identified over admissions policies).

A number of comments were received to the effect that investment in post 16 provision in Rhyl was necessary and desirable, but that the model put forward (college based) was not the right one for the area (this has been subject of a separate consultation exercise that has been reported to members).

There was one comment that the case for creating all through primary schools from previously separate infant and junior schools was not proven with additional comments that it was not practical in particular locations. Other respondents thought the recommendation was a reasonable one.

So far as federations and/or area schools were concerned, there was: a view that the authority should proceed carefully with discussions with those potentially affected; similarly

that the authority should look in more detail at local circumstances before moving on with such developments; a need to acknowledge what was currently provided in Denbighshire; that, when considering such moves, the educational needs of pupils should be paramount and that ‘making savings’ was not the only criterion for such decision, while one community council welcomed such “innovative approaches to the governance of schools”, though these must be discussed extensively within localities.

The recommendations on bilingualism as a long term aim attracted a range of comment – some seeing it as long term aim to simplify the categorisation of schools and supporting an increase in the number of schools classified as bilingual. On the other hand, a number of respondents said that we had not fully understood the nature of bilingualism and also the contribution of naturally Welsh schools in particular and that what was being suggested was open to misinterpretation. It was pointed out that the whole issue of what bilingualism meant was under discussion nationally. Further, that a distinction needed to be made in these discussions between Welsh as a medium of education and Welsh as an outcome. There were difficulties with the current system for some parents. Arguments for maintaining the current four categories were put forward, as were arguments for making category C and D schools in the county more Welsh. The authority’s Welsh language scheme needed to be revisited in the light of “Iaith Pawb” and the issues identified and targets set in that document.

SECTION 3: FUNDING.

Recommendations:

- *That the funding regime for schools in Denbighshire is outdated, and is in need of reform with more transparent accountability right across the education service for a shared vision and equitable funding linked to priorities.*
- *That new forms of investment in the school stock be pursued, including Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes as a means of renewing the stock of schools, particularly in the secondary sector.*

There was support for our analysis of the funding of schools in Denbighshire and arguments put forward that funding was a long term issue that the authority needed to address, though noting recent increases in funding.

The subsequent work that a Cambridge Education consultant has carried out with the authority to review the funding formula was welcomed by schools and the professional associations. The desirability of a ‘needs led’ approach to school funding was mentioned by two respondents.

There was some scepticism expressed over the suggested use of Private Finance Initiative funding as a means of renewing the stock of schools. There was a suggestion to increase sponsorship from local business in the future.

SECTION 4: STANDARDS AND ATTAINMENT.

Recommendations:

- *The authority and its schools should re-focus its educational priorities towards standards in schools. That will require a rigorous focus, targeting resources and managing data intelligently.*
- *There should be a debate with schools about the need to change styles of teaching and learning in the county that are more appropriate for the 21st century, recognising the need to share the good practice that does exist in the county There needs to be a wide-ranging debate about learning which will reform the vision for education and, in turn, shape professional development, school design and many other issues in the education service.*
- *A greater sense of community ownership needs to be developed through empowering schools and their communities to assist in thinking of areas and clusters, multi-agency working, early years' provision and inclusion.*
- *To begin with, there should be an audit of the use of ICT in the classroom and development of a funding package that would help to address deficiencies.*

Responses to these recommendations included statements along the lines of - the issue of standards is a matter for schools, the authority and the whole community.

'Standards' is top of the agenda for all schools and there is continuous review of teaching and learning in each school with the endeavour of delivering high standards of education. However, the modernising education agenda requires attention to be given to defining the criteria of what makes a good school and how it adds value.

The recommendations with regard to ICT provision in Denbighshire schools were well received by a number of respondents who supported them. References were made to what was seen as the limited training opportunities availability as well as levels of provision of ICT in schools. While recognising that there will be funding implications, an audit/review of ICT "is a golden opportunity to make a difference and show people that the local authority is serious about modernising and providing learners with what they deserve and what they are entitled to".

SECTION 5: MODERNISING THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Recommendations:

- *There needs to be a fundamental change in the relationship between the County Council, which is the LEA, and the schools it maintains.*
- *The LEA should be more focussed on school improvement – monitoring, challenge and support – rather than ‘running’ schools, intervening when schools are failing to provide a good education.*
- *There should be a planning forum of the Director, school leaders and senior managers to address strategic issues in the county.*
- *Services to schools should increasingly be brokered rather than provided by the authority; more resources should be delegated to schools.*
- *Cluster working and cluster management should be developed among schools.*
- *Schools need to develop greater self management.*

The need to change the relationship between schools and the local authority was welcomed by headteachers and teacher unions/professional associations. Similar views were expressed by elected members during the consultation period with a desire for better partnership working with schools.

As one school put it, there is a danger of the relationship disintegrating and fragmenting and a tendency to over-manage and mis-advise. The authority should recognise the experience, knowledge and skills within the school community.

There was support for the idea of greater local clustering and local partnerships to deliver education and to increase opportunities for learning locally (e.g. post 16 and informal education in the south of the county) with locally based LEA support. There was support for greater delegation to schools individually and to clusters of schools.

Hopes were expressed that the recommendations of the Cambridge Education report and the findings of the Estyn report will herald a more positive way forward in the county.

CAMBRIDGE EDUCATION'S RECOMMENDATIONS 1-6

1. Denbighshire County Council, and indeed the wider community, should make education its top priority. This is not simply a matter of increasing the resources for education but getting greater value from existing resources. Modernising Education is about raising the profile of education in the county with a clear focus on raising standards.
2. The authority should re-focus its educational priorities towards standards in schools. That will require a rigorous focus, targeting resources and managing data intelligently.
3. There should be a debate with schools about the need to change styles of teaching and learning in the county that are more appropriate for the 21st century, recognising the need to share the good practice that does exist in the county. There needs to be a wide-ranging debate about learning which will reform the vision for education and, in turn, shape professional development, school design and many other issues in the education service.
4. To begin with, there should be an audit of the use of ICT in the classroom and development of a funding package that would help to address deficiencies.
5. There needs to be a fundamental change in the relationship between the County Council, which is the LEA, and the schools it maintains. The LEA should be more focussed on school improvement – monitoring, challenge and support – rather than ‘running’ schools, intervening when schools are failing to provide a good education; services to schools should be brokered rather than provided; more resources should be delegated to schools; cluster working and cluster management should be developed; schools need to develop greater self management.
6. Because the funding regime for schools in Denbighshire is outdated, it needs reform with more transparent accountability right across the education service for a shared vision and equitable funding linked to priorities.

CAMBRIDGE EDUCATION'S RECOMMENDATIONS 7-10

- 7 All schools should become bilingual with a gradual reduction in categories.
- 8 Clear policies need to be agreed and implemented on:
 - admissions (nursery, primary and secondary)
 - criteria for successful schools
 - school organisation, especially with regard to small schools, very large schools and separate Infants and Junior schools.
- 9 Empowering schools and their communities to assist in thinking of areas and clusters, multi-agency working, early years' provision and inclusion.
- 10 To that end, new models of provision, at primary, secondary and post-16 should be implemented that are more in tune with the needs of 21st century education, that put the interests of learners first and address at least some of the issues of standards and delivery in Denbighshire schools:
 - re-provision of post 16 in Rhyl in a sixth form centre based in the college
 - renewal and rebuilding of the Rhyl High Schools as 11-16 schools for the future with learning transformed
 - creation of all through primary schools to replace infant and junior schools and address issues of transition
 - options to deal with surplus capacity and curriculum offer within small primary schools in Denbighshire that range from further federations to area schools.

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT BY: COUNCILLOR H H EVANS, LEADER AND LEAD MEMBER FOR EDUCATION

DATE: 18 MARCH 2008

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF 16-19 PROVISION IN RHYL

1.0 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 To move to formal consultation on changes to 16-19 education in Rhyl. This would involve bringing to an end the current sixth form provision at Rhyl High School and at Blessed Edward Jones Roman Catholic High School and replace it with the agreed 'Rhyl Sixth' partnership arrangement (Appendices 1 and 2). The partnership agreement is between both high schools, their governing bodies, Wrexham Diocese and Coleg Llandrillo. It gives all parties a say in the curriculum for post 16 learners in Rhyl. This agreement supersedes the options that were put to the Council on November 20th 2007 and on which it agreed to consult.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Cambridge Education Review of Post 16 Education in Rhyl and the subsequent consultation on the proposals indicated clear acceptance that the existing sixth form provision cannot continue and has to change. A new way of providing post 16 education that offers greater choice, encourages more pupils to stay on and is of the highest standard was accepted.

2.2 During the Cambridge review of post 16 education in Rhyl consultation, two clear options emerged for the delivery of post 16 education in Rhyl. At the November 20th Council meeting a decision was taken to proceed with the statutory consultation process to ensure that new arrangements are in place by September 2009. A series of factors has led to a delay in starting the formal consultation process on both options, principally agreement on the partnership arrangement between the two high schools and Coleg Llandrillo and the statutory requirement to have the capital funding in place, which depends on decisions by the Welsh Assembly Government.

2.3 The governors of Blessed Edward Jones would like to develop further aspects of the partnership agreement to enrich the Catholic ethos and consider some specialist provision at the school.

2.4 The delay in reaching a consensus on the partnership agreement and the need to comply with statutory consultation requirements means that the new building might not be ready for the first cohort of young people until the start of 2010. The partnership agreement will start to be implemented this September. This will give parents' and young people confidence that high quality transition arrangements are in place for the period 2008 to 2010.

- 2.5 Coleg Llandrillo made an application to DCELLS for capital funding programme on the 31st January 2008. A decision is expected in March 2008. Schools and the Local Authority do not have access to this funding.
- 2.6 Rhyl High School, Blessed Edward Jones Catholic High School, Wrexham Diocese and Coleg Llandrillo have established a common partnership agreement called the 'Rhyl Sixth' that gives all parties a say in the curriculum. This agreement supersedes Option 1 and 2 that were put to council on November 20th
- **Option 1.** The Cambridge recommendation to close both Rhyl high school 6th forms and create a flagship 6th form centre on the Rhyl College site. This centre would deliver A levels, Welsh and International Baccalaureates in addition to the extensive range of vocational courses on offer at the college.
 - **Option 2.** The Rhyl high schools and Coleg Llandrillo are developing a partnership arrangement. A draft proposal was submitted to the council by the Rhyl high schools; agreement with Coleg Llandrillo could not be reached in time. Fundamental issues regarding leadership, funding and governance are yet to be resolved. A detailed proposal agreed by the three partners must be submitted to the council no later than the end of the statutory consultation period if it is to remain an option."
- 2.7 The Rhyl Sixth agreement recognises the need to close the sixth forms at Rhyl High and Blessed Edward Jones and building of a new, state of the art post 16 centre at Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl. It will provide the main base and delivery centre for students with some clearly identified provision being delivered at Rhyl High and Blessed Edward Jones Catholic High School.
- 2.8 The branding "Rhyl Sixth" indicates a commitment to traditional sixth form college academic standards whilst emphasising that this will be a model which will prepare young people for future success in Higher Education and the World of Work in the twenty first century.
- The College will enrol the post 16 learners with the funding quantum being drawn down by Coleg Llandrillo.
 - All teaching will be subject to Coleg Llandrillo quality systems and procedures.
- 2.9 The Rhyl Sixth provides clarity for the learner and parent in terms of learning programmes and progression possibilities whilst enabling, where appropriate in terms of widening student choice and cost effectiveness, some post 16 provision to be delivered on the High School sites.
- 2.10 In addition the Rhyl Sixth provides a system which will support improved performance for 16 to 19 year olds including the delivery of level 2 vocational choices in line with expected Welsh Assembly Government requirements for

September 2009. The Rhyl Sixth, alongside the other provision and courses offered by Coleg Llandrillo, will provide the town with an outstanding post 16 learning system. This will cater for the needs of all young people whatever their ability and however high their aspirations.

3.0 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

3.1 Performance at A level is poor in Rhyl. The table below shows results for pupils attaining 2 or more A-C grade A levels over the last 3 years:

Year	Rhyl High	Blessed EJ	Denbighshire	Wales
04/05	31%	13%	64%	68%
05/06	48%	33%	65%	68%
06/07	34%	53%	66%	67%

3.2 The staying-on rate post-16 is very low. Over the last 3 years the average number of pupils in the sixth forms is 84 at Rhyl High and 40 at Blessed Edward Jones

3.3 To continue with the current state of affairs is unacceptable.

3.4 If council agrees to proceed, statutory consultation will begin during March 2008.

3.5 It is important to stress that a decision to undertake statutory consultation does not commit the Council to implement the proposal. A final decision would be taken after the consultation period.

3.6 If agreement for a new centre is reached, detailed plans and planning consent will have to be in place by autumn 2008.

4.0 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

4.1 As a result of legislation under the Local Government Act 2000, only the full Council can approve the single education plan. Council accepted at its meeting on 20 November the principle of amending the Single Education Plan if the proposals are to be implemented. However the powers to publish statutory proposals are executive functions, which fall to the Cabinet.

5.0 COST IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Rhyl Sixth will have some impact on both Rhyl high schools. This has been assessed in detail. However the wider effects of falling number of pupils entering from primary schools over the coming years also has to be considered. If the sixth forms closed, the schools would no longer receive post 16 funding from DCELLS from the date of implementation (assumed to be September 2009).

5.2 The cost of providing Post 16 provision at both schools is currently higher than the funding received from DCELLS, so both schools are currently

subsidising this provision from their own delegated budgets. If the sixth form were to close, both schools would still be liable to pay the fixed cost element associated with the post 16 provision e.g. premises, grounds maintenance etc

5.3 Based on current pupil numbers, the impact on the schools delegated budget is there is very little difference between the cost of closure and the cost of retaining the sixth form. This is despite both schools experiencing a decrease in funding from DCELLS this year in respect of 2007-08 clawback.

5.4 If the impact of the closure of the sixth forms resulted in redundancies, the cost for the council could be as high as £150k. However, there are various options that could be explored to minimise or eliminate the risk of any redundancy:

- Redeployment of teaching staff. The authority has a good track record of redeploying school based staff and we would look to this an option wherever possible
- Some staff could transfer to the college as their employees under TUPE regulations
- The college would look to buy-in expertise from high school staff as and when needed, depending on the courses offered and what subjects young people opt for on an annual basis
- Both schools will need to reshape the teaching and ancillary staff as a result of Rhyl Sixth. However they will already be undertaking this process due to the impact of falling roles
- Some teachers may opt to take early retirement which would be funded from central provisions

If all the above options are implemented, this would significantly reduce the number and cost of redundancies, and might even eradicate the need for any redundancies completely

5.5 There may be some additional cost implications to the council under the Council's transport policy if parents choose to send their children to an alternative Roman Catholic provision e.g. in Denbigh. The council's transport policy provides free transport to the nearest relevant provider of education and the impact of this, depending on the uptake could be between £13,500 and £25,500 per annum.

5.6 There will also be minor costs associated with the consultation process to meet statutory requirements. They will be absorbed within existing budgets. As with any decision by the council, there is the possibility of challenge through the courts by way of judicial review, which might involve more substantial costs. The risk of such challenge being successful is assessed as low at the present time.

5.7 Coleg Llandrillo has applied to the Welsh Assembly Government (DCELLS) for capital funding for this project from the strategic capital investment fund. It is unlikely DCELLS will ask the Local Authority to contribute towards the capital cost of the project.

5.8 In any event, the Council would not agree to spend its limited capital resources on creating assets for a third party, even if the change is one that the council wishes to see: there are pressing capital investment needs in our schools and roads, for example and capital resources for 2008-09 have already been allocated. The council would not be able to use existing Objective 1 applications allied with the Learning Centres project, and there appears to be little opportunity under Convergence funding.

5.9 Revenue funding for a new centre at the College will be drawn down from the DCELLS' National Planning and Funding System (NPFS) by Coleg Llandrillo.

6.0 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER'S STATEMENT

6.1 There are only minor costs associated with consulting on options for the future provision of sixth forms. However, it is clear that there may be some one off costs if the sixth forms are closed.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS

Possible implication for HR policy
TUPE regulations regarding teaching and support staff.

8.0 OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

Single Education Plan
School Improvement Policy
Schools causing concern and Special Measures policy
14-19 Network Development Plan
A review of 16-19 provision in Rhyl - Cambridge Education 2007

9.0 THE VISION

"We will invest in our schools in order to sustain high standards of educational attainment to meet the needs of pupils, the wider community and the economy."

10.0 ACTION PLAN

Issue formal consultation document and consultation process.	Interim Head of School Improvement and Senior Education Officer (Secondary)
Prepare an accurate timetable for the council members, senior officers and partners.	Interim Head of School Improvement and Senior Education Officer (Secondary)
Formal consultation analysis and preparation of recommendations to Cabinet and Council	Head of School Improvement and Senior Education Officer (Secondary)
Detailed planning of 'Rhyl Sixth' partnership agreement	High schools, Wrexham Diocese and Coleg Llandrillo
Final decision on result of the consultation	Cabinet County Council

11.0 CONSULTATION

- 11.1 During the coming weeks discussions will take place with DCELLS and partners to formalize the consultation timetable, which will be shared with the community through the consultation document, local press and Denbighshire's website.

Suggested Formal Consultation Timetable	
Formal Consultation starts	1 st April 2008
Proposals published giving opportunity for statutory objections. Published notice and Schedule 4 information submitted to the Assembly	1 st June 2008
In the case of objections, the Council collates objections, responds and submits to Assembly for determination For other proposals Assembly collates objections and requests promoters' comments	1 st July 2008
Minister for Education determines proposals	1 st August or 1 st September 2008 if school holiday not included.
Decision made	1 st October or 1 st December if school holiday not included.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Council supports formal consultation on changes to 16-19 education in Rhyl that would take effect from September 2009. This would involve bringing to an end sixth form provision at Rhyl High School and at Blessed Edward Jones Catholic High School in its current guise. It is anticipated that a new building on the Rhyl College site will be in operation.
- 12.2 Council notes the financial and other implications of the Rhyl Sixth agreement and the closure of the sixth forms at both Rhyl high schools.
- 12.3 That the Schools and College be requested to review the prospects for current Year 11 students in September 2008, including the transitional arrangements that might be necessary between 2008 and 2010.

Remit for the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee would provide the strategic steer for The Rhyl Sixth, reporting into the Coleg Llandrillo Corporation Board and School Governing Bodies.

Membership

The Committee will comprise a maximum of 8 persons consisting of:

- The Principal of Coleg Llandrillo
- The Senior College manager with responsibility for 14-19
- The Director of Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl
- The Head Teacher of Rhyl High
- A Governor representative from Rhyl High
- The Head Teacher of Blessed Edward Jones
- A Governor representative of Blessed Edward Jones / representative of the diocese
- Council representative

The Council will Chair the meetings and appropriate records will be kept.

The membership and Chair arrangements will be reviewed after 2 years.

Quorum

The quorum for a meeting will be 5 people to include at least 1 representative from each partner organisation

Duties

The committee will be responsible for the identification of key strategic priorities and objectives in the context of:

- Curriculum planning 16-19
- Learning Pathways planning 14-19 and post 19
- Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets (to include value-added achievement)
- Learning Coaching and transition management
- Links to Partner organisation's strategic plans
- Links to the 14-19 Network Annual Network Development Plan
- Links to Children and Young People's plan and planning

The committee will be responsible for on going monitoring and review of activity in relation to:

- Achievement of KPI targets
- Delivery of quality improvement plans
- Equality and Diversity
- Transition arrangements

Post 16 Provision in Rhyl

1 Background

The Denbighshire Action Plan, produced in response to the Estyn Report on the LEA, opens with the following:

“This Statement of Intent is a commitment from Denbighshire County Council to work in partnership with schools and key stakeholders to achieve significantly better outcomes for children and young people. Our aspiration is for all of our schools to offer a first class education service. We accept that this requires radical change¹”.

This recognition of the need for radical change was reinforced by the decision of November 20th by the Council to go forward to consultation on the closure of the sixth forms at Rhyl High and Blessed Edward Jones and to consider 2 options for the delivery of post 16 education and training in Rhyl: a single centre model based at Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl or a partnership model developed between Coleg Llandrillo and the two High Schools.

Under both models the post 16 learners will be enrolled by the College with the funding quantum being drawn down by Coleg Llandrillo.

The paper below discusses the key demands which must be fulfilled by the post 16 education and training system in Rhyl and then describes the partnership model developed by Coleg Llandrillo, Blessed Edward Jones and Rhyl High.

2 Key Demands

Any new post 16 learning system in Rhyl must result in an immediate improvement in the quality of outcomes and increased levels of participation for post 16 learners. Increased choice for learners, including the option to mix academic and vocational qualifications, must also be provided to enable learners to access learning pathways in line with their interests, aspirations and the needs of the local economy. The choices available to learners must also fulfil the requirements of the “Duty to Collaborate” to be published by WAG in January 2008.

The above demands are in line with those factors considered to be key to ensuring a good educational experience by Estyn².

In addition the system must be attractive to parents and young people so that they have confidence in the quality of the education and training being delivered. This will also attract back to Rhyl those learners who currently travel out of the county to access their learning. The system must also be able to provide coherent 14-19 learning pathways, comprehensive and impartial advice and guidance to learners throughout their 11-19 learning pathway and access to comprehensive student support services.

¹ Denbighshire (2007) Action Plan in response to the Estyn Report

² Estyn (2007) Guidance on Area Inspections

3 The Rhyl Sixth

The preferred model is based on a partnership model which will be branded “The Rhyl Sixth” – indicating the commitment to traditional Sixth Form College academic standards whilst emphasising that this will be a model which will prepare young people for future success in Higher Education and the World of Work in the twenty first century.

The development of The Rhyl Sixth will involve the building of a new, state of the art sixth form centre at Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl which will provide the main base and delivery centre for students with some clearly identified provision being delivered at Rhyl High and Blessed Edward Jones.

This will be a flagship development for Wales which retains the strengths of the single centre option whilst also benefiting from the advantages of close working between the College and through Schools.

The Rhyl Sixth will provide high quality post 16 education and training to learners on a par with the best in country. This will be a centre that young people in Rhyl will aspire to and which will continue to underpin the regeneration work of the Rhyl Strategy, building on what has already been achieved with the recent £4.8million investment in Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl.

Developments within the The Rhyl Sixth will be in line with the College’s Welsh Language Scheme which will include facilitating the use of both languages and providing, wherever possible, access to bilingual provision.

The Rhyl Sixth main base will be accommodated in a purpose built centre attached to the current Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl building and will include classrooms, a common room, study facilities and specialist rooms for Science and Art and Design. The general infrastructure ie reception facilities, student café facilities, library and student support services are already in place in the College and have the capacity to cater for the predicted increase in student numbers.

The Rhyl Sixth will provide a comprehensive range of academic and vocational learning pathways which will provide more choice for learners than currently available anywhere in Denbighshire. 30 A level option choices will be offered including a range of subjects not currently available to learners in Rhyl such as Applied Arts, Electronics, Engineering, English Language, Psychology, Spanish, and Critical Thinking (see appendix 1 for the full list). Alongside the A level offer, 13 vocational learning pathways up to level 3 will be offered in Business, Secretarial and Administration, Tourism, Computing and ICT, Health and Care, Sport, Public Services, Built Environment, Motor Vehicle, Gas Installation, Hair and Beauty, Electronics and Retail, in line with the key labour market priorities for Denbighshire.

The International Baccalaureate will also be offered to provide for Rhyl's most academically able learners.

All learners attending The Rhyl Sixth will take the Welsh Bacculaureate- improving University progression opportunities for many and the transferable skill levels of all. This development will be welcomed by employers who frequently criticise the fact that such skills are lacking in many well qualified entrants into employment.

All learners will be provided with first class student support services including a personal tutor and weekly tutorial sessions as well as access to specialist services such as financial, study and welfare support.

Learning coaches will be used to ensure students receive appropriate help and guidance throughout their 11-19 learning pathway.

The provision of outstanding quality will underpin all learning delivered at The Rhyl Sixth. The College will ensure that the Rhyl academic provision achieves the same learner outcomes in terms of attainment, retention and successful completion as that achieved by learners at the Rhos campus through common coordination of the A level and International Bacculaureate provision across both campuses and the embedding of Coleg Llandrillo quality procedures in all provision including our robust teaching observation and performance management systems.

3.1 The Rhyl Sixth: Choice and Value for Money

Guidance on the minimum acceptable size of sixth forms is expected from WAG in January. This is likely to be around 150 pupils. The reason for this is related to the range of option choices possible, value for money and the effect of small sixth forms on the resourcing of key stage 3 and 4. Estyn have reported that in the case of sixth forms below 100 learners "Sixth form provision in these cases requires valuable resources to be diverted away from key stages 3 and 4 to sustain the small amount of sixth form teaching"³.

The College and schools are confident that through the schools continuing to improve outcomes for learners at 16 and a flagship sixth form development delivering high quality provision more learners will be attracted into post 16 learning. This should enable The Rhyl Sixth to grow over 5 years to 200-250 learners. This estimate takes into account the falling numbers currently evident in years 7-11.

3.2 The Rhyl Sixth and Partnership working

Although the main delivery will be on the Coleg Llandrillo site, to realise the full potential of the proposed learning system in Rhyl there will need to be close partnership working between the High Schools and the College. The key element to ensuring effective partnership working in the context of The Rhyl Sixth and 16-19 education and training in general will be the establishment of an Advisory Committee which will provide the strategic steer for The Rhyl Sixth and advise on other post 16 learning pathways in liaison with the Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl Consultative Committee. The Advisory Committee will report to the

³ Estyn (2005) Post 16 provision in schools-factors that influence the capacity of school sixth forms to meet the needs and aspirations of learners

Coleg Llandrillo Corporation Board and School Governing bodies. See Appendix 2 for details.

This close working will be needed to ensure the development of a coherent range of 14-19 learning pathways including opening up vocational options to 14 year old learners in line with the requirements of the “Duty to Collaborate”. These pathways will provide an exciting and attractive addition to the current post 14 offer. Together with the improving standards at both High Schools, this will raise outcomes at 16, increase staying on rates, reduce the number of NEETS and attract Rhyl and Rhuddlan learners, looking to travel out of county, back to study in Rhyl.

Rhyl High school has excellent Sports facilities and it is therefore envisaged that the 14-19 Learning Pathways in Sports, Leisure and Public Services are delivered at Rhyl High School as part of the overall 14-16 and post 16 offer.

Coleg Llandrillo works in association with the University of Wales and delivers a wide range of vocational degrees. Working in partnership with the schools, the Rhyl learning system will be able to offer not only 14-19 learning pathways but 14- honours degree pathways – putting developments in Rhyl at the forefront of learning pathways developments in Wales.

Every care will be taken to ensure that Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl and The Rhyl Sixth will not be remote institutions but familiar places which most Rhyl High and Blessed Edward Jones learners will aspire to attend. This will be achieved through the close partnership working between the College and the Schools, the support which will be provided to learners from a central “pool” of learning coaches and a commitment to ensuring that school pupils visit the College and make use of the facilities as appropriate for example the Sustainability Centre.

3.3 The Rhyl Sixth and Local Employers

Employer engagement is a strategic priority for the College. The College has well developed links with sector skills councils and local employers through its focus groups and Consultative Committees. In addition the schools have employer representation on their Governing bodies. This will ensure post 16 developments are in line with the requirements of the local economy and that students are prepared for the World of Work.

3.4 The Rhyl Sixth and Faith Based Learning

There will be a faith based tutorial stream option within The Rhyl Sixth with learners access having the opportunities to faith based tutorial support and Welsh Baccalaureate core subjects at the school. This will enable learners progressing from Blessed Edward Jones to retain a faith based element within their post 16 experiences as well as providing an additional option for learners progressing from elsewhere.

4 Staffing

Ensuring an outstanding delivery staff base is fundamental to the success of The Rhyl Sixth.

It is recognised by the Local Authority, in their briefing paper to the Council, that the development of a single centre would require the reshaping of the schools' teaching and ancillary staff.

Initial calculations by the College suggest that between 8-10 full time equivalent additional teaching staff will be required for The Rhyl Sixth. There would also be a requirement for 2 full time equivalent additional technicians and a Rhyl Sixth Manager, who would work closely with the Director of Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl and the Heads of both High Schools.

Some of these staff may transfer from the schools under TUPE arrangements.

5 Summary

The model described provides absolute clarity for the learner and parent in terms of learning programmes and progression possibilities whilst enabling, where appropriate in terms of widening student choice and cost effectiveness, some post 16 provision to be delivered on the High School sites.

In addition this model provides a system which will support improved performance at 16 including the delivery of level 2 vocational option choices in line with expected WAG requirements for September 2009.

The Rhyl Sixth, together with Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl, provides the town with the opportunity to have an outstanding post 16 learning system, catering for the needs of all young people whatever their ability or however high their aspirations.

Blessed Edward Jones RC High School	
Name:	Position:
Signature:	Date:
Rhyl High School	
Name:	Position:
Signature:	Date:
Coleg Llandrillo	
Name:	Position:
Signature:	Date:

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR H H EVANS, LEADER AND LEAD MEMBER FOR EDUCATION

DATE: 18 MARCH 2008

SUBJECT: PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION PROCEDURE RULES

1. DECISION SOUGHT

The report seeks Members' views as to the robustness of the Council's approach to risk assessment and management in relation to collaboration and partnership working and recommends to County Council that the Partnership and Collaboration Procedure Rules be adopted.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The Authority is driving forward the collaboration agenda and needs to ensure that robust procedures are in place and the risks of individual projects are effectively identified and assessed.

Collaboration and Partnership Working

- 2.1 'Partnering' describes the creation of sustainable, collaborative relationships with suppliers in the public, private, social enterprise and voluntary sectors to deliver services, carry out projects (works) or acquire supplies and equipment. The benefits of the partnering approach include better designed solutions, integration of services for customers, access to new and scarce skills, economies of scale and scope, investment and community benefits including jobs and local economic effects). 'Collaboration' describes the various ways in which councils and other public bodies come together to combine their buying power, to procure or commission supplies, services or works jointly or to create shared services.
- 2.2 In line with the Welsh Assembly Government's policy framework the Authority is progressing collaborative and partnership opportunities. Denbighshire County Council's Leader and Chief Executive Officer are members of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board which was set up to drive forward regional collaboration. The Leader is Chair of Denbighshire's Local Service Board (LSB) and the Chief Executive Officer is also a member of the Board. Denbighshire's LSB is an executive body which aims to improve policy areas and service delivery via partnership working.
- 2.3 In Denbighshire County Council, collaboration and partnership working are being progressed at two levels. There are the North Wales Regional Partnership Board and Denbighshire's Local Service Board projects, which have been commissioned by Board members, and projects which are being instigated and taken forward by service professionals.

- 2.4 The Regional Collaboration Officers Group (COG) exists to support the work of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board. Once a service or function has been chosen by the Board as a potential collaborative opportunity, a feasibility study will be commissioned. The study may be funded through the Assembly's Improvement Fund or via a contribution from some or all of the six local authorities represented on the Board. The COG ensures that risk assessment and management feature highly in any feasibility study. If following completion of the feasibility study, the Board agrees that the collaboration project is progressed, the project will follow project management methodology which includes risk assessment and management.
- 2.5 Similarly, all collaborative projects which are progressed by service professionals within Denbighshire County Council should follow the Authority's project management methodology which includes risk assessment and management. Collaboration and partnership working have already been identified as a corporate risk in the Authority's Risk Assessment Template (RAT) which is agreed between Members, the Corporate Executive Team and the Wales Audit Office. The Council's risks are also identified, assessed and logged on a database by the Head of Internal Audit who holds regular risk management meetings with Heads of Service.
- 2.6 To ensure proper procedures (including risk assessment and management) are carried out when a collaboration or partnership project is being undertaken draft Partnership Procedure Rules have been developed (Appendix I refers).

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Local Government Act 1972 Section 111

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

Although collaboration and partnership working seeks to improve services to the customer, one of the key drivers is efficiency. Collaboration projects support the efficiency agenda by aiming to make the best use of financial and staff resources. Some projects may require initial investment and a number of regional projects have been funded through the Welsh Assembly Government's Improvement Fund and some through the Council's Spend to Save fund. The key collaboration projects should aim to make the most efficient use of resources which should result in a reduction in costs over the longer term.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

Entering into any type of partnership brings enhanced financial risk to the Council. It is vital that clear procedures are agreed, adopted and enforced. Investing the appropriate level of time, resources and expertise at the early stages of a partnership to ensure it is properly understood and set up will reduce the risk of problems later on.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The report has been discussed with the Leader who is responsible for collaboration, the Corporate Director of Resources and the Head of Internal Audit. The draft Procedure Rules have been distributed to Corporate Directors, Heads of Services and key stakeholders for comments and was presented to the Resources Scrutiny committee on 28.02.2008 and the Corporate Governance Committee on 11.03.2008. Comments received to date are included in Appendix 2 to the report.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING THE VISION

- 7.1 Collaboration and partnership working support the Council's Vision, customer care and the efficiency strategy.

8 ACTION PLAN

ACTION	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
Report to County Council	Head of Strategic Policy	08.04.2008
Amend Constitution	County Clerk	End April 2008
Implementation of Rules	Head of Strategic Policy	08.04.2008

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members agree the Authority's arrangements in relation to risk assessment and risk management in collaboration and partnership working projects and recommend County Council adopt the Partnership and Collaboration Procedure Rules.

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S
DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION PROCEDURE RULES**

Introduction

Partnerships and collaboration are now forming a larger part of the way in which Denbighshire County Council seeks to procure and deliver services. The nature of these partnerships and the manner in which partners are selected is diverse however, they will each have similar characteristics.

'Partnering' describes the creation of sustainable, collaborative relationships with suppliers in the public, private, social enterprise and voluntary sectors to deliver services, carry out projects (works) or acquire supplies and equipment. The benefits of the partnering approach include better designed solutions, integration of services for customers, access to new and scarce skills, economies of scale and scope, investment and community benefits including jobs and local economic effects.

'Collaboration' describes the various ways in which councils and other public bodies come together to combine their buying power, to procure or commission supplies, services or works jointly or to create shared services.

Compliance with the Council's Constitution in all of these matters is an absolute requirement.

The Constitution impacts on partnership processes primarily in two ways:-

- it covers the decision making process in Article 13;
- it includes Contract Procedure Rules that guide individuals through any procurement process that may be required.

It is proposed that once finalised, the Partnership and Collaboration Procedures Rules will form part of the Council's Constitution as will the detail of the arrangements for delegation.

These Partnership and Collaboration Procedure Rules are designed to set out some basic principles which need to be applied when a partnership¹ is perceived as being the vehicle by which an objective is to be achieved. In some cases this will be in response to government funding initiatives or in other cases it may be that procuring services in this way is simply a better way to deliver those services. Each partnership will present a different set of issues to be overcome and some will require specialist support which can only be delivered outside the Council.

¹ The term partnership within this document also refers to any collaborative arrangement

It is the intention of these rules to provide guidance on the main characteristics of a partnership which will need to be considered and where advice may be sought. These Partnership and Collaboration Procedure Rules shall be reviewed and updated on a regular basis, not less than annually, by the Strategic Policy Unit and Legal Services in conjunction with the Strategic Procurement Unit. Amended Partnership and Collaboration Procedure Rules shall be agreed and adopted by the full Council.

Process

These rules set out the process of entering into a partnership and contain guidance on the following:

- Definition of a partnership
- Authority to enter into a partnership.
- Decision process.
- Selection of a partner.
- Partnership agreement and the contents a partnership agreement should contain
- Section 33 of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006
- Pooled fund arrangements

1. Definition

A partnership, within the terms of these rules, is defined as:

“An arrangement whereby the Council is seeking to enter in to an agreement with partners for either the delivery or procurement of services. The agreement will provide for mutual benefit between the Council and the co-partner(s) included in the agreement. The agreement may provide for direct participation in the venture by Council officers and members. The arrangement will be the subject of an agreement (Contract, Funding or SLA) between the Council and the partnering organisation which sets out the terms and conditions between the two and the expectations of the partnership”.

The agreement in whatever form should as a minimum provide details of what is expected of each partner and the degree to which the Council will monitor the performance and financial arrangements and what remedies are available to both parties for non delivery by the partner. The agreement must be in a form approved by the County Clerk.

2. Authority

Before entering into a partnership there must be a clear decision taken at the appropriate level which gives authority to enter into a partnership. The decision will need to be fully compliant with the Constitution.

In particular, the requirements regarding Article 13 – Decision Making must be met in full. A record of the decision must be in writing and a permanent record maintained.

The scheme of delegation for each department must clearly state who can take this decision if it has not been taken by Members. A permanent register of all partnership arrangements must be maintained in which the details of each arrangement are recorded. This Register will be maintained by the Head of Strategic Policy and held by the County Clerk.

3. Decision Process

3.1 Corporate Project Management

The setting up of a partnership should be viewed as a project and follow the Council's Corporate Project Management Methodology. At the inception stage a Project Proposal and Mandate should be completed and signed by an authorising officer. Any project undertaken by, or within, Denbighshire County Council which has implications of liability of any form for the Council must have an authorised and approved Project Proposal before starting. This requires any potential idea to be thought through to ensure that there is merit in developing the idea into a project. Areas which will need consideration include the strategic context for the partnership, its deliverables, stakeholders, the impact of the partnership, the resources requirements and an analysis of the risks associated with the venture.

3.2 Engagement and Communication

The importance of meaningful engagement with staff from the earliest stages of the development of partnership arrangements should not be underestimated. Operational staff are often in a good position to see what the barriers are, and how they can be overcome. They, like all other stakeholders, will be able to make suggestions about the better and more effective delivery of services. The success of the partnership arrangement will depend on the enthusiasm of skilled and trained staff in working together. When developing a partnership arrangement, particular attention must be paid to engaging with staff and communicating about the project as it develops.

3.3 Decision Report

Once the partnership project has reached the stage where a decision is required, a report should be prepared in accordance with the procedures set out in the

Constitution. This ensures that the correct decision type is taken and the decision is taken at the correct level.

Before any partnership is entered into the decision report must be submitted to the Corporate Director of Resources and the County Clerk for comments which will include financial implications, legal implications, property implications and the adequacy of the monitoring arrangements. The report should also take account of any commercial procurement processes as appropriate.

Financial Implications

These will be provided by the Financial Controller. If the partner is not a statutory body, the decision report must contain a risk assessment based on the latest audited accounts of the proposed partner if it is an established organisation. The decision report must indicate if the accounts of the organisation will need to be consolidated into the accounts of the Council. The decision report must indicate the full financial exposure of the Council and the budget from which any Council expenditure is to be funded.

Value for Money

All decision reports which record the decision to enter into a partnership must contain within them a description of how this arrangement will ensure that the Council receives value for money. It is important that this facet of the proposals is not overlooked. The initial business case for the proposition will consider such matters.

Legal Implications

These will provided by the County Clerk. The decision report must show that the legal implications of the partnership have been fully evaluated and the legal risk to the Council as result of the partnership assessed.

Property Implications

Any Council properties which are to be used as a part of the partnership must be clearly identified in the decision report. The terms of any lease which is to be granted to the organisation must be fully described in the decision report. This must also include the financial impact of such arrangements in terms of either the income which will be generated or the income which will be lost. The basis of transfer of any other assets to the partnership must be fully evaluated and set out in the decision report. The position relating to any assets or property should the partnership cease to exist for whatever reason must be fully stated in the agreement.

4. Selection of Partner

The Council will select partners in a number of ways. The method of selection will depend upon the nature of the partnership being proposed.

Set out below are the two main types of partnership which the Council may utilise. European Union procurement rules and competition rules as described in the Contract Procedure Rules must be applied in appropriate cases.

Strategic Partners

The Council may be invited to join a group or will be actively looking for partners among other public authorities. Partners may include other local authorities, health authorities, the police and any other organisation in the public /community/private sector. The selection criteria and arrangements for this type of partnership will be on the basis of those organisations invited to join. The criteria must be clearly identified in any decision report.

Service Providers

The Council may be seeking to provide or procure a service through a partner. The partner may be in the voluntary sector or a commercial organisation. The selection of providers for this type of arrangement will vary according to the precise nature of the project and the characteristics of the proposed partner. For commercial arrangements the selection will be carried out in accordance with the contract procedure rules.

For arrangements with the voluntary sector the selection will be from organisations within that sector who are active in the area of service delivery. Where the Director responsible believes that the provider is the only organisation capable of delivering this service then the selection will not be based upon a tender process. However in these circumstances he/she must keep a record of the decision and forward the exemption to the Corporate Director of Resources who will report at six monthly intervals to the Corporate Governance Committee.

Where there are many organisations that could provide the service then a tender process should be used to select. Under these circumstances the Council must be very clear and precise in specifying its requirements and in stating how it will evaluate any bids from differing organisations when coming to a decision.

Status of Partner

The Council can only enter into partnership arrangements with corporate bodies² and any organisation seeking to partner with the Council must be such a body.

² An organisation or group of persons that is identified by a particular name and that acts, or may act, as an entity. Typical examples of corporate bodies are associations, institutions, business firms, non profit enterprises, governments, government agencies, religious bodies, local churches, and conferences.

The Council would need to have full details of their status including where appropriate details of their financial affairs.

This is to ensure that the organisation has the resources to carry out the project to which they are about to commit. Details of the officers of both organisations must also be fully documented and evidence of their authority to commit their organisation must also be provided.

5. Partnership agreement

There are any number of vehicles which the Council may use to enter into a partnership arrangement. In any event any partnership entered into can only be executed using documentation approved by the County Clerk. All contracts or agreements for the creation of partnerships will be required to contain standard terms and conditions. Any decision report put forward must contain the legal implications of using the proposed vehicle for contracting. Where an agreement identifies a lead organisation the Council must ensure that it is willing to abide by the lead organisation's terms and conditions, contract procedure rules and financial regulations.

The agreement will cover as a minimum the following issues:

Member/Officer Participation

Members and officers may be invited to serve as representatives of the Council on these various partnerships. There are rules which govern their conduct when they are working in this way.

Member participation: This will be covered in the Members' Code of Conduct.

Officer participation: When officers serve as representatives of the Council in partnership arrangements, they are still governed by their terms and conditions of employment with the Council. Any conflict of interest actual or potential must be reported to their line manager immediately in order that the position can be clarified. The code of conduct for officers still applies and their actions and activities must not be contrary to those that apply to all Council staff during their normal employment. Any Officer undertaking duties of this nature should inform Central Personnel at once and the details of his/her activity should be recorded on their file.

Monitoring performance

A clear basis and process for monitoring the performance of any partnership must be set up at the commencement. This must include a statement of the expected outputs and outcomes which the Council anticipates will be achieved. The actual outputs must also be recorded and any shortfall noted and explained.

Any additional tasks added to the partnership must be noted along with the associated benefits which will accrue.

Audit / Compliance arrangements

The agreement should clearly set out the arrangements that the organisation has in place for auditing its financial statements and systems. If the organisation is small then less onerous but nonetheless important arrangements must be in place to monitor compliance and ensure that an acceptable form of governance is applied.

Duties and responsibilities of both parties

The agreement must set out clearly what the duties and responsibilities are for both parties. This will set out processes and procedures which will operate should either party not deliver the agreed requirements and it will also contain remedies which are available to both parties.

When drawing up a partnership agreement consideration should be given to whether the following areas should be contained in the document:-

DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT³

Contents

1. Definitions and Interpretation
2. Term
3. Aims and Objectives
4. Contributions
5. NHS Health Care Functions and Health Related Care Functions (if applicable)
6. The Service and its operation (this may be commissioning or provision)
7. Pooled Fund/Financial Management
8. Indemnity and Insurance
9. Review
10. Termination
11. Effects of Termination
12. Variation/change of law
13. Confidentiality
14. Dispute and Resolution
15. Exclusion of Partnership and Agency
16. Assignment and sub-agreements
17. The Contract (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999
18. Prevention of corruption/quality control
19. Complaints

³ MAKING THE CONNECTIONS - PARTNERSHIPS FOR DELIVERY POOLING RESOURCES ADVICE NOTE 2

- 20. Notices
- 21. Governing Law

6. Section 33 of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006

Partners who decide to use the flexibilities available by virtue of section 33 of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 and applicable subordinate legislation should complete a signed agreement which sets out the key terms which accords with statutory requirements. An example of contents is detailed above. The agreement should not be used as a delivery plan. Supporting activity should occur alongside the drafting of an agreement to ensure that it is deliverable day to day through the host's corporate framework for service and finance. Partners should also be clear on the scope of any governance arrangements and further advice on this is offered in the Assembly's Making the Connections Partnership for Delivery Advice Note 3.

Partnership working and pooling of resources should not be confined solely to health and social care: there are numerous examples where pooled resources deliver economies of scale and accrue significant gains in effectiveness and efficiency.

7. Pooled Fund Arrangements

The first task is to identify and agree the shared aims and outcomes which will be set out in the partnership agreement regardless of the level of contribution each partner may commit. A pooled budget is a mechanism by which the partners to the agreement each contribute to the delivery of the outcomes required by creating a discrete fund. The intention must be to enable flexibility in fulfilling the functions that are part of the pooled fund arrangement and therefore the use of these funds. This is important to enable proper accountability in the use of the pooled fund.

The identification of resources that each partner will contribute to the pool is a key element in establishing a pooled fund arrangement and finance leads should agree the framework for financial contributions i.e. what is to be included in any contribution. Partners will wish to have some confidence in the figures proposed.

Resources that can be contributed are generally those normally used for the services identified in the pooled budget but an essential step is to establish whether the individual contributions are based on past expenditure and if so whether this is at the level of out-turn or at budget for spend. Furthermore there needs to be an explicit understanding between the partners whether the contributions include overheads and other organisational inputs such as training, IT and other management support. No limit is put on the size of a pooled fund that may be created. However, the likelihood is that each partner will want to

consider carefully the proportion of the total budget they feel they should commit, especially when they are using it in conjunction with the delegation of functions. Partners will need to balance the amount of flexibility that they want to enable through a pooled fund against the risk of being able to fulfil all service needs. The levels of contribution do not have to be equal and could depend on how each partner has historically met its obligations on a particular service or linked for example to the relevant population base. The contributions can be used on any of the services agreed as part of the pooled budget. Partners will retain statutory responsibility for their functions carried out under the pooled fund. This means that the partnership agreement is carefully drawn up between the partners to cover the governance arrangements, which address accountability, decision taking and how the budget is to work. Comprehensive monitoring arrangements must be put in place that assures partners that their shared aims are being fulfilled. This is covered in more detail in the Assembly's Making the Connections Partnership for Delivery Advice Note 3.

The pooled budget can be hosted and managed by a statutory partner, or it can be hosted by a statutory partner and managed on their behalf by another organisation contracted to do so. The host will provide the financial administrative systems on behalf of the partners, but will not incur any additional liabilities, except those that relate to the management of the budget. Also the appointed auditor will expect the same level of internal control to apply to the pooled funds as apply to other parts of the partner organisation. The auditor will also retain full right of access to the financial records and systems and expect a clear audit trail to be maintained for all financial transactions. One of the advantages of the pooled fund will be that the partner organisation/s and local authority staff identified in the agreement will be able to access and take decisions on the use of the resources in the pool, according to the process agreed locally between those staff and pooled fund manager. There will need to be an agreed process to authorise identified staff to do this.

Depending on the nature of the flexibilities to be used, the audit and accounting requirements will vary. The Assembly's Making the Connections Partnership for Delivery Advice Note 3 explains the arrangements for accounting for pooled budgets. It will be important to involve local external audit representatives in commenting on the audit and accounting implications of a local draft agreement. The Welsh Assembly Government's Making the Connections Team has developed a series of Advice Notes on Partnerships for Delivery which should be referred to when developing a partnership arrangement.

Advice Note 1 – Policy, Legislation, Usage

Advice Note 2 – Partnership for Delivery

Advice Note 3 – Corporate Governance and Accounting in Partnerships

Advice Note 4 – Treatment of VAT in Partnership arrangements

Advice Note 5 – Workforce Issues

Advice Note 6 – Charging for Services with S33 agreements

DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION PROCEDURE RULES

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

LEAD MEMBER / OFFICER	COMMENT	ACTION
Roger Parry, Financial Controller	Top of page 2, annual review. Please include Financial Controller or representative in the review process.	Procedures will be amended accordingly
Roger Parry, Financial Controller	1 Definition - It is crucial to get things right from the start. Avoiding dispute resolution is very important. Time invested up front should always make it easier to deliver over the longer term.	Procedures will be amended accordingly
Roger Parry, Financial Controller	3.1 This is a key stage for including SMAs. There are a number of issues people tend to forget about like VAT, but also insurance. Risk management needs to belong to the body best able to control and minimise risk. Bad insurance claims experience impacts upon premium levels so not thinking through who takes the insurance risk can result in higher premiums later. VFM is very much an issue for SMAs.	Procedures will be amended accordingly
Roger Parry, Financial Controller	5. Partnership agreements - the format and content is as much an issue for Finance as it is for Legal.	Procedures will be amended accordingly
Roger Parry, Financial Controller	7. Pooled Funding arrangements - need to include that Finance Department need to be involved in the development of pooled budget proposals from the very beginning and not just asked to comment when everything is largely in place. The SMAs will do this work and will be involved from the start.	Procedures will be amended accordingly
Stephen Jones, WLGA Regional Co-ordinator for Collaboration	Suggested a flow chart to illustrate the process and relationships, was content with the document	Procedures will be amended accordingly

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Cllr H H Evans, Leader and Lead Member for Education
DATE: 18th March 2008
SUBJECT: Progress against actions from Denbighshire County Council's Improvement Plan

1 DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 That Cabinet consider the progress made against actions from the Improvement Plan 2007 – 10 (See Appendix 1)
- 1.2 That Cabinet consider any issue arising from the report in greater depth, as deemed necessary and agree where actions which have not, or are not likely to be completed need to be followed up, or rolled forward to the 2008 – 2011 Improvement Plan.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- 2.1 Every year the Council must produce an Improvement Plan which details how the Council performed during the previous year and what actions it intends to take over the following year. The Improvement Plan for 2007 – 2010 was agreed by Council on the 15th May 2007 and contained actions that were grouped under the themes of the Community Strategy. Appendix 1 shows what progress has been made against each action.
- 2.2 The Improvement Plan for 2008 – 2011 will be published in July following the County Council elections in May. It will be necessary to include progress updates against each of the actions from the 2007 – 2010 plan. Where an action has not been completed, it may be necessary to roll it forward to the next year.

3 POWER TO MAKE A DECISION

Section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999 obliges each authority to publish an Improvement Plan and the guidance has statutory force under section 6(4) of the Act.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

The cost implications of the actions and targets in the Improvement Plan should have been identified as part of the business planning process. The costs of achieving the Plan should therefore have been contained within service budgets.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The cost of implementing the improvements included in the Plan have been built into or will need to be contained within, the service budgets concerned.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The actions from the Improvement Plan were ones that had been included in the Directorate Business Plans and were therefore subject to consultation with Lead Members, Scrutiny, and staff as part of the business planning process. Both Council and Cabinet agreed the Improvement Plan before it was published.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

7.1 The Vision, other Policy Areas Including Corporate

The actions reflect the themes of the Vision.

8 ACTION

Action	Responsibility	Deadline
Include actions to be rolled forward in the 2008 – 2011 Improvement Plan	Head of Strategic Policy Unit	End of April 2008
Publish the 2008 – 2011 Improvement Plan	Head of Strategic Policy Unit	End of September 2008

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Members identify any actions which they wish to be rolled forward to the 2008 – 11 Improvement Plan.

9.2 That Members consider any actions where progress has not been made and whether they wish them to be followed up.

Progress against Key Actions Identified in the Improvement Plan

Sustainable Development and Equalities



Cllr Mike German
Lead Member for Environment



Cllr John Smith
Deputy Leader and Lead Member for
Business Management, Communications
and Personnel

Key Actions	Progress	Lead Service	Lead Member
We Will:			
Have sustainability as a guiding principle in the revised Community Strategy	The WAG Community Strategy guidance " <i>Preparing Community Strategies</i> " is currently out for consultation. The Sustainable Development Coordinators Cymru (SDCC) network is coordinating a pan-Wales response. The formal Community Strategy guidance is expected in April 2008. Revised date for revising the Community Strategy is December 2008.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German
Implement the actions from the sustainable development	The implementation of action within the Sustainable Development Action Plan is well	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

action plan	underway. A report went to Resources Scrutiny in January 2008 detailing progress.		
Monitor progress against the actions in the Sustainable Development Action Plan on a quarterly basis	The first report to Scrutiny was prepared for January 08, 6 months after the signing off of the action plan. Most of the actions are long term and take some time to show results. Future updates will be on a 6 monthly basis.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German
Take the initial steps to achieve level 1 of the Green Dragon award	The development of the Green Dragon Environmental Management System is well underway. The requirement to meet level 1 of the standard is virtually complete and progression to achieve level 2 has been taken. Although not yet assessed there is a provisional date set in May for the assessment by external auditor to verify the standard that is being met and provide certification.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German
Appoint a Sustainable Development/ Green Dragon Champion (for each service/level/building)	The Champions will be appointed once the Green Dragon Environmental Management System for County Hall has been achieved.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German
Create a Sustainable Development webpage on Denbighshire County Council's website to provide information and advice on Sustainable Development to the public	The webpage has been created. It is now used as a tool for communicating updates on sustainable development for the Council.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

Investigate the possibility of introducing Sustainable Development performance indicators	The establishment of sustainable development indicators is currently on hold until further development of the Ffynnon performance management software. The Welsh Assembly Government has published a suite of indicators for sustainable development. As an alternative, the development of the Green Dragon EMS for County Hall is being monitored using the Ffynnon software. The Green Dragon action plan includes basic indicators for environmental management.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German
Continue to use green energy in Council buildings and in our highway's lighting	During the last year 100% green energy was used in Council buildings. The option of procuring green energy is no longer viable. This is due to green energy procured in this way not counting towards carbon emissions reductions. Therefore the increased premium on green energy could not be justified when resources could be redirected to actual improvements that reduce the need for energy consumption.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German
Extend the trial use of bio-fuels in our Council vehicles during 2007/08	The trial has continued during 2007/08 however there has been no extension of the trial due to lack of funding. WAG may make some funding available during 2008/09.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Mike German
Agree an integrated equalities plan by July 2007	Full Council agreed the Equalities Plan in June 2007.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr John Smith
Collect baseline information on the make up of our workforce by April 2008	Employee information checks were carried out in August and September.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr John Smith

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>Use the integrated impact assessment tool to test all new strategies.</p>	<p>The Impact Assessment Tool is now being used to assess high-level strategies. Strategies are assessed at the quarterly IMPACT network meeting and strategies assessed include the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy, the Housing Strategy, the Equalities Plan, Supporting People Strategy and the LDP.</p>	<p>Strategic Policy Unit</p>	<p>Cllr John Smith</p>
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Health Social Care and Well Being



Cllr Pauline Dobb
Lead Member for
Social Services



Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Lead Member for Promoting
Denbighshire



Cllr Elwyn Edwards
Lead Member for Customer
Care and Community Safety



Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Lead Member for Regeneration
and Housing

Key Actions	Progress	Lead Service	Lead Member
Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the affordable housing policy by ensuring that all new developments contain a percentage of affordable houses through Section 106 agreements. We will make sure that 26 units of affordable housing are provided during 2007/08.	Revised Local Housing Strategy 2007-2012 was approved by Council and submitted to WAG in June 2007. Denbighshire received national recognition by winning a UK Housing Award 'Providing Housing Choice and Affordability' By end of Jan 2008 - 6 units of affordable housing have been provided. 30% of affordability is still being actively sought on all new residential developments.	Housing	Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Continue to improve the quality of local authority housing with our £50 million improvement programme. We will fit new windows and doors in 200 properties and install central heating in over 500 properties in 2007 – 08.	2007/08 is the third year of the Improvement Programme in order to meet Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2012. By end Dec 2007, 660 new windows and doors and over 200 central heating units had been installed in Council properties.	Housing	Cllr Gareth Rowlands

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>Complete the extra care housing scheme in Rhyl by August 2008 providing 59 units. Progress the building of extra care housing in Prestatyn in 2008-09 providing 61 beds and in Ruthin in 2009- 10. Complete feasibility study for Llangollen and for Corwen and find a suitable site for extra care housing in Denbigh.</p>	<p>Construction on the Rhyl scheme is progressing well. Due to poor weather completion has slightly slipped to October 2008. Construction of the Prestatyn development should begin before the end of 2008. Feasibility has been completed for Llangollen but the site is not considered viable at this time. Corwen feasibility is outstanding and work is progressing on identifying a site for Denbigh.</p>	<p>Adult Services</p>	<p>Cllr Pauline Dobb</p>
<p>Ensure that people are able to stay for longer in their own homes with the help of technology. We will develop and implement a Telecare Strategy as part of a North Wales project and will train staff to demonstrate how telecare can be used.</p>	<p>The Draft Telecare Strategy is in the final stages with the production of a Training Strategy. A Telecare Team has been set up and the referral process is in place. A demonstration facility is available to visit by appointment through the HSCWB unit. 6 Pilot projects are underway and working well, with further pilots being considered. First 12 month evaluation on Elderly Mental Health pilot has been carried out successfully. PI SCA010 on target. Capital spend has been extended to 2009.</p>	<p>Adult Services</p>	<p>Cllr Pauline Dobb</p>
<p>Expand the Night Rider transport service to three rural areas by March 2008.</p>	<p>Completed. The service now operates in Denbigh and Ruthin areas as well as the North</p>	<p>Adult Services</p>	<p>Cllr Pauline Dobb</p>
<p>Hold two Healthy Living Days to promote the health and well being of older people.</p>	<p>Completed. These were held March 07 and September 07</p>	<p>Adult Services</p>	<p>Cllr Pauline Dobb</p>
<p>Reduce the number of homeless presentations by strengthening our relationship with private landlords so we can provide more alternative accommodation. We will concentrate on preventing</p>	<p>By end Dec 2007 full homeless applications had reduced to 175 compared to 240 in the same period 2006/07. This is a direct result of the homeless prevention initiative. Alternative accommodation is continuing to be actively sought. The percentage of all potentially homeless</p>	<p>Housing</p>	<p>Cllr Gareth Rowlands</p>

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

people becoming homeless by helping out with deposits and bonds, by mediation, by the mortgage rescue scheme and by helping people to explore all the housing options available to them before they become homeless.	households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months has remained at a constant 98% for the period April - Dec 2007.		
Raise public awareness on the key public health themes by developing the role of the Health Champions for each theme.	Themes have been developed. Radio advertising throughout the year to promote public health. 8 Champions are in place (4 of the original 12 have left due to change in jobs / retirement) Health Challenge Denbighshire re-launch is planned for April 08	Adult Services	Cllr Pauline Dobb
Promote health and wellbeing through our libraries by developing an action plan and allocating £15,000 to buy books and other materials relating to health and wellbeing to support a programme of promotional events.	£15,000 of the bookfund was allocated to support the health and well being strategy, with each library receiving a variety of new titles to address healthy eating and diets, healthy lifestyles and keeping fit, self-help and alternative therapies, and coping with illnesses and conditions. Promotional events included four drop-in sessions for the deaf community, a focussed Deaf History Day with BSL interpreters at Rhuddlan Library, and stock promotions at GP surgeries and libraries. A web page to promote the range of stock will be set up in March 2008.	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Hold Sport Spectacular days for people with disabilities to try out a range of different sports in a fun session. These days will be held in Rhyl leisure centre in September and October.	In partnership with other North Wales Authorities, two full days were delivered at Rhyl Leisure Centre, providing access to schools and general public.	Countryside and Leisure	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Hold an Excellence Wales	The Excellence Wales learning Exchange event	Adult Services	Cllr Pauline Dobb

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>Learning Exchange in November to share our good practice on health improvement with other local authorities.</p>	<p>due to take place in Nov 2007 was postponed and rearranged for 11th March 2008. The theme of the event is Denbighshire County Council as a health improvement agency. There will be presentations on housing, culture and arts, community safety and regeneration and the way these services can impact on people's health and well-being. So far to date 60 delegates have registered to attend, this includes colleagues from DCC, partner organisations and other Local Authorities.</p>		
<p>Complete the refurbishment of Corwen leisure centre to include front entrance access, main reception, new changing, new disabled changing, new toilets, fully refurbished 16 station fitness suite with wellness system, along with new pool viewing area.</p>	<p>All works carried out and completed, fitness membership now up to 200.</p>	<p>Countryside and Leisure</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
<p>Hold cardiac rehabilitation sessions at Denbigh leisure centre as part of the GP exercise referral scheme.</p>	<p>In partnership with Community Cardiac Nurses, sessions are now in place at Denbigh Leisure Centre. WAG GP Referral scheme commenced January 2008 and is now an active scheme.</p>	<p>Countryside and Leisure</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
<p>Promote the take up of Community Chest funds for sport and physical activity.</p>	<p>The Sports Development Team have undertaken a programme of promotion of the Sports Council for Wales Community Chest fund grant scheme at leisure centres.</p>	<p>Countryside and Leisure</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
<p>Continue to offer free swimming session to under 16s and over 60s, with a target of 30,500 people taking part in 2007-08.</p>	<p>Pools across the County continue to deliver the Free Swim Initiative for under 16's and over 60's and are on track to meet the agreed target figure.</p>	<p>Countryside and Leisure</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
<p>Provide a balanced approach in terms of the education,</p>	<p>We have arranged 2 training days for food business operators on 'Safer Food - Better</p>	<p>Planning and Public Protection</p>	<p>Cllr Elwyn Edwards</p>

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>monitoring and regulation of food related premises.</p>	<p>Business', which was attended by over 50 delegates. Another two days are planned for March. We are also on target to achieve 85% inspection rate to our high risk food businesses. We have sent over 250 warning letters to food businesses who are not achieving the required standards, as well as served 10 Improvement Notices.</p>		
<p>Reduce the number of high risk food related premises by 5% (from 576 to 547).</p>	<p>The number of high risk food premises has reduced by 100+ therefore we have exceeded our target. This was a combination of the premises achieving a better standard of hygiene when they were inspected and therefore the risk rating reducing and some of the premises are no longer trading.</p>	<p>Planning and Public Protection</p>	<p>Cllr Elwyn Edwards</p>

Community Safety



Cllr Elwyn
Edwards
Lead Member for
Customer Care
and Community
Safety



Cllr Mike
German
Lead Member for
Environment



Cllr Hugh
Evans
Lead Member for
Education

Key Actions	Progress	Lead Service	Lead Member
Allocate 38 days to carry out test purchasing at on and off licensed premises.	Between July 2007 and January 2008 we carried out 11 days of test purchasing of alcohol at 51 off licenses where 15 sales were allowed to an underage junior. In addition to the above we also carried out various other test purchasing in the same period for example fireworks, cigarettes, dvds and knives.	Planning and Public Protection	Cllr Elwyn Edwards
Increase multi-agency visits to licensed premises, inspecting areas such as food hygiene, health and safety, smoking requirements etc.	Work is ongoing in producing a multi agency form so that enforcement officers from different disciplines can include simple signal checks in key areas at licensed premises at a single visit. The questionnaire is being developed and it will enable enforcement officers to work together so there is less duplication and so that at risk premises are identified at an early stage and prioritised for visits by the most appropriate	Planning and Public Protection	Cllr Elwyn Edwards

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

	agency.		
The Community Safety Partnership will fund 200 community clean up days which are managed by the Probation service and the STARS wardens	Between May 2007 and February 2008, 214 clean ups have taken place by STARS who use offenders on community punishment orders	Planning and Public Protection	Cllr Elwyn Edwards
Develop a coordinated response to the effects of alcohol on the community through the work of the local service board's first project	Denbighshire's LSB receives an update against this project at every meeting and action plans have been produced by the Substance Misuse Action Team	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Hugh Evans (Chair of the Board) Cllr Elwyn Edwards
Provide two theatre based projects exploring Community Safety issues such as substance misuse.	3 performances of "Crash" have taken place. The performance deals with the issues of homelessness, alcohol and drug misuse.	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Run the 'Choose life' project in all secondary schools.	The following schools have taken part or are scheduled to take part in the choose life project; St Brigid's school, Lysol Dines Bran, Lysol Glen Clyde, Prestatyn High School, Blessed Edward Jones High school, Denbigh High school, Rhyl High School. 10 sessions with primary schools have also taken place. A conference for those Community Safety parishioners involved in the Choose Life project was held in Denbighshire in March.	Education	Cllr Hugh Evans
Tackle environmental crime by issuing more fixed penalty notices	Between 14/2/07 and 7/2/08 49 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued; 34 have paid the £75 fine and 3 are still within the payment time limit for fixed penalties. 10 have been summoned to court, and to date 8 have been convicted (there was one trial when an offender pleaded not guilty and he was convicted and fined £100 with £500 costs). Two are awaiting their first appearance	Planning and Public Protection	Cllr Elwyn Edwards

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>Introduce 25 new neighborhood watch schemes.</p>	<p>Neighborhood watch is still in process of being re-organized. A Countywide meeting has been held, and training for Co-coordinators has taken place. A countywide audit of existing schemes is taking place, and some new schemes have been started by Regional Co-coordinators but the actual figures are not available.</p>	<p>Planning and Public Protection</p>	<p>Cllr Elwyn Edwards</p>
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Lifelong Learning



Cllr Hugh Evans
Lead Member for Education



Cllr Pauline Dobb
Lead Member for Social Services



Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire

Key Actions	Progress to 1 st January 2007	Lead Service	Lead Member
Install lesson tracking systems at four more schools by summer 2007.	Lesson tracking systems have now been installed at four more schools: Ysgol Emmanuel; Denbigh High School; Prestatyn High School; Christchurch School.	Education	Cllr Hugh Evans
Continue to monitor national curriculum subjects in primary schools with 9 schools monitored by specialist subject every year.	The Curriculum Support advisors continue to monitor primary schools 24 months after inspection has taken place.	Education	Cllr Hugh Evans
Train all governing bodies so that they are aware of their role in school improvement.	An annual training programme for all governing bodies was delivered with a training event held in the south, north and central areas of the County. On April 25 th a conference for school governors will be held, entitled Supporting Your School. A chair of governors forum has also been	Education	Cllr Hugh Evans

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

	established.		
Produce a Service Asset Management Plan (SAMP) every year to determine priorities for spending on school buildings.	The annual SAMP update has been undertaken and the document was approved by the Asset Management Group in November 2007. Subsequent bids to the Capital Strategy Group were based on priorities identified in the SAMP.	Education	Cllr Hugh Evans
Review the use of temporary accommodation so that we can reduce its use by 15% by 2009 – 10.	To achieve this figure we need to withdraw 3 mobiles each year. In 2007/8 we have already withdrawn 1. Agreement has also been reached with schools to remove a further 3, (this includes 2 doubles so in effect 5 temporary classes will be withdrawn) However as these mobiles are linked to building projects it will be April/May before they are withdrawn.	Education	Cllr Hugh Evans
Open the new primary school in Prestatyn in September 2008.	Ysgol Clawdd Offa is on course to open in September 2008	Education	Cllr Hugh Evans
Train 50 people to become skilled surveyors of wildlife species through a series of biodiversity training events.	20 members of the public attended courses run by the Countryside Service in sand lizard and water vole surveys and butterfly identification. They can now help staff in surveys and monitoring. Over 1000 participants attended 168 volunteer events and activities during the year and learnt new skills and experiences in the process.	Countryside and Leisure	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Teach new adult skills in felting, stained glass and clay modelling through an advertised programme of events.	Felting workshops ran at Plas Newydd throughout April; stained glass workshops during Deaf Awareness Week and Adult Learners Week in May; clay modeling workshops ran at the Gaol in May and will be continued into 2008.	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Provide volunteering opportunities for 26 people in 2007 – 08 at Rhyl Pavilion Theatre	30 people have been provided with volunteering opportunities over the last year.	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Hold a healthy living day for	This event was held on the 20 th September 2007	Adult Services	Cllr Pauline Dobb

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

older people, "Grey Matters" with the theme of staying mentally active.			
Involve older people and younger people in an intergenerational project "Timeline" to teach people about our modern history.	The Timeline project was rolled out to include older people who are deaf and use British Sign Language	Adult Services	Cllr Pauline Dobb
Increase the number of adults attending community education courses by increasing the range of courses on offer and promoting these effectively.		Education	Cllr Hugh Evans

Economic Prosperity



Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Lead Member for
Regeneration and Housing



Cllr Julian
Thompson Hill
Lead Member for
Property and
Sustainability



Cllr Gyneth
Kensler
Lead Member for
Promoting
Denbighshire



Cllr John
Smith
Lead Member
for Business
Management,
Communications
and Personnel



Cllr M German
Lead Member for
Environment

Key Actions	Progress to 1 st April 2007	Lead Service	Lead Member
Develop a joint information and training initiative on records management for small businesses with Clwydfro.	No progress made	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Create an action plan for the Economic Growth Strategy by October 2007.	Strategy approved by Cabinet on 26/06/07. Cabinet approved arrangements for the Regeneration Partnership to steer delivery of the strategy and to report to the LSB (Local Strategic Board) at its meeting on 15th January 2008	Development Services	Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Develop a North West Wales Convergence partnership and strategy within 3 months of the Convergence Programme being agreed.	Matrix of project proposals discussed and approved at June and November 07 Cabinets. Details of the arrangements for the process of applications for the programme are still emerging. The action plan will be completed once these are known.	Development Services	Cllr Gareth Rowlands

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Identify a match funding allocation for the Convergence Programme by December 2007	Included in capital plan for 2008/09	Development Services	Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Promote and give advice on European Union funding and external funding by holding roadshows through the Denbighshire International Development Forum, newsletters, the website and the Convergence working groups.	A programme of roadshows has been arranged for the wider community, these were held at Rhyl, Llangollen and Ruthin. A monthly newsletter has been developed. An officer working group has been created and meets monthly to discuss all matters relating to the structural fund programmes and the DIDF meets quarterly. Additionally responses are provided to individual enquirers both internally and externally	Development Services	Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Develop four partnerships by December 2008 to maximise non Convergence external funding opportunities.	The Rural Development Partnership has been established, as has the Regeneration Partnership. A replacement for the Rhyl/Athy Partnership is currently being developed.	Development Services	Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Consult on the draft Local Development Plan (LDP) in September 2007.	Extensive discussion and participation has been undertaken in the preparation of the Pre-Deposit version of the LDP. Consultation on this first draft will now take place in June 2008, the date has been chosen to avoid a clash with the local elections in May.	Planning and Public Protection	Cllr Mike German
Continue to make opportunities for young people to gain employment within the Council.	There are 46 modern apprentices working towards NVQ level 3, of which 17 were recruited in 2007/8. There are currently 2 National Management Trainees recruited through the National Graduate Development Programme.	Central Personnel	Cllr John Smith
Submit a funding bid to improve watersports facilities at Marine Lake, Rhyl		Countryside and Leisure	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Complete the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Tourism Project	The AONB Sustainable Tourism Project has been completed and a strategy will be published in the next few weeks. It has successfully engaged with	Countryside and Leisure	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

(part funded by the European Union)	all businesses in the AONB and increased the profile of tourism within the area and the concept of the AONB as a tourism asset and destination. The project has enabled the creation of a website for businesses, an exhibition, some promotional materials and an improved photo library to sell the area. It is hoped that the majority of the actions in the strategy will be delivered through the forthcoming Rural Development Plan.		
Deliver workshops specially designed for tourism businesses to help improve quality and profitably (co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, Interreg IIIB Atlantic area)	14 workshops have been held across the County based on business needs. 456 businesses have attended these. The satisfaction rate was very high with 100% of attendees from the first phase of workshops saying they would attend future workshops.	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Organise a programme of visits for travel writers to promote the County's rich cultural tourism		Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Continue to promote the take up of benefits with a planned programme of publicity and events. This will include improving our accessibility by extending our opening hours and taking the service to our customers, utilising the Pension Service Benefit Bus and extending the role of our visiting officers. Advancement in technology will also assist this process	To increase take up of Benefit, we have been running a pilot with the Financial assessment (FA) team, within Social Services, to discover which customers we have in common and who are not known to each others department. We are developing a joint form in order to share data. Visiting officers work with the Pension Service and can complete applications for their welfare benefits and the Pension Service complete our applications and verify for us. They also hold joint surgeries for take up of benefits. We promote benefit take up in County Voice, especially around the time of annual billing.	Revenues and Benefits	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill

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<p>for our customers and partners.</p>	<p>We have just developed Landlord and tenants packs that will be displayed in all frontline offices. We have held benefit surgeries at community centres, libraries, cash offices and one stop shops. We have attended, displayed and talked at many other events and information days organised by Denbighshire, ourselves and others. Messages have been put on payslips to remind employees, their friends and families that they may qualify for Benefits. We have delivered presentations at team meetings of internal and external customers who deal with vulnerable people.</p> <p>We also promote Benefits with stakeholders and train their staff to complete application forms e.g. Registered Social Landlords, Benefit Agency, Citizens Advice Bureau, Landlords and Housing officers.</p> <p>All reminder notices issued for Council Tax inform customers to contact our department to check if they could be entitled to Benefit.</p> <p>An article is included in Money matters (the booklet that is issued with every Council Tax bill) every year, to inform about Council Tax benefit.</p> <p>Our public counter is open until 6pm on a Wednesday, it normally closes at 4.30pm.</p>		
<p>Continue with the Rhyl Going Forward Programme. Phase 2 (the marina and site development feasibility) is due to be completed by the end of May 2007. 14 – 16 and 18 Edward Henry Street renovation work (part funded by the European Union) will be completed by March</p>	<p>The feasibility study now extended to mid 2008 so as to include more investigative works. Edward Henry St works to be completed by June 2008</p>	<p>Development Services</p>	<p>Cllr Gareth Rowlands</p>

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2008.			
Develop a City Strategy for Rhyl by October 2007.	Rhyl has been selected as a City Strategy pathfinder in 2007. This is a UK pilot scheme to reduce worklessness. Work is proceeding and DCC currently provides the governance for the project.	Development Services	Cllr Gareth Rowlands

Environment and Countryside



Cllr M German
Lead Member for Environment



Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire

Key Actions	Progress to 1 st April 2007	Lead Service	Lead Member
Increase the total percentage of municipal waste that we recycle or compost to 30% in 2007/2008. We will do this by extending the x2 scheme to Ruthin and Denbigh and by increasing the number of bring sites in the County to make it easier for people in rural areas to recycle their waste.	The percentage will not be known until the end of the financial year but it is likely that the percentage recycling and composting will be in the region of 27.5%. This is below target for two main reasons: 1.) due to the poor summer of 2007 leading to lower than average green waste composting figures and 2.) because of SITA sending more "general waste" from Civic Amenity Sites direct to landfill than to Material Recovery Facilities. Expansion of x2 scheme to a further 9,000 households has increased take up of kerbside recycling by 50%.	Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German
Procure a waste treatment / disposal facility by April 2010	This action is on target. Chief Executives of 5 North Wales Local Authorities agreed to work on joint procurement in December 2007. All Authorities have set budgets for procurement costs. Officer group formed to take procurement forward, reporting into Strategic Directors/Chief Executives' groups.	Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German
Launch and sell reusable	The eco-friendly reusable jute book bag was	Tourism, Heritage and	Cllr Gwyneth

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book bags in Denbighshire's libraries to promote the recycling message.	launched in April 07 in a partnership venture involving the Children's Information Service and the Library Service. This attractive alternative to the plastic carrier bag has proved extremely popular and practical, providing good marketing opportunities for the library service whilst reinforcing the county's environmentally friendly message. Most of the 5,000 bags have been sold.	Culture	Kensler
Continue to operate an effective enforcement unit against litter, fly tipping, dog fouling, abandoned cars etc.	The team has exceeded their annual target of 200 enforcement actions by more than 25% as of the 3rd quarter.	Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German
Train our enforcement officers so that they are able to issue fixed penalty notices for more than one type of breach.	The training programme for enforcement officers and Community Support Officers to issue fixed penalty notices is well underway. 38 people employed by the Council have been trained to issue fixed penalty notices. 10 more are being trained in March to issue fixed penalty notices for graffiti, dog fouling and littering. 19 Community Support Officers have also been trained.	Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German
Operate an anti-litter initiative in relation to fast food outlets		Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German
Use resources to improve the quality and level of service of our public toilets.	Further improvements include the refurbishment of the Children's Village public convenience. 87% of the sites inspected in the 3rd quarter achieved the pass mark required, above the target of 80%.	Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German
Conduct an online survey to assess public perception of the cleanliness and appearance of our public spaces.	A survey on public realm was carried out via the Council's website. However very few people completed the questionnaire and the results were too few to be significant.	Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German
Complete the Highway Asset Management Plan by March 2008. This will include not		Transport and Infrastructure	Cllr Mike German

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only roads and footways but bridges, structures, street drainage, traffic signals etc.			
Review all transport provision we provide ensuring that it is being delivered in as efficient and effective way as possible.	Education transport budget and eligibility transferred to Finance & Performance Department with effect from December 2007. Negotiations with Social Services continue	Transport and Infrastructure	Cllr Mike German
Continue to invest in improving Denbighshire's roads	In the past year the Highways Maintenance Section has received £2.6 million capital funding which includes a grant of £615,000 from the Welsh Assembly Government. This has allowed us to improve the condition of the network by resurfacing schemes such as Vale Road in Rhyl and Lower Denbigh Road in St. Asaph with other schemes in Eryrys and Saron about to be carried out. A number of footway improvement works were carried out (mainly in Prestatyn) with drainage works being undertaken at a number of critical locations throughout the county. Surface Dressing was a major focus of these works with large lengths of the A525 and A5104 being treated. Micro Asphalt took up the remainder of the allocation with the A525 at Brookhouse and the Nant y Garth area being amongst the locations addressed.	Transport and Infrastructure	Cllr Mike German
Continue to manage the Little Tern Colony at Gronant to ensure a stable population.	There has been a lot of hard work and time expended on the Little Tern Colony on the shingle ridge at Gronant Dunes this year. The Service changed a few aspects of the management and these have proved very successful with 160 fledged birds, a record year. The colony was watched by staff and volunteers for 18 hours a day from 1st May to 20th August and this dedication has made the difference to the colony and bird survival rates. Despite adverse weather conditions the extra effort	Countryside and Leisure	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler

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	put in by DCC staff and volunteers (over 1,000 volunteer hours) resulted in the colony being the most successful in the United Kingdom. Our partner and principal partner, the Countryside Council for Wales, have recognised our achievement by agreeing to fund the project over the next 5 years. The Little Tern Colony (last remaining in Wales) has become a flagship project for the Authority and receives positive media publicity in the press, papers, internet and television.		
Produce a Geodiversity action plan for the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	The Clwydian Range AONB Local Geodiversity Action Plan [LGAP] was written, published, widely consulted on & launched. As part of the LGAP process, 7 new Regionally Important Geological Sites [RIGS] were documented and notified to landowners & the local authority; 4 Earth caches were developed which encourage people to participate in geology and explore the landscape; 10 guided walks and 6 presentations to local societies and interested parties took place; 'Genius Geology', a children's geology club in the summer holidays was oversubscribed. Current projects include the Loggerheads geodiversity trail, the Loggerheads KS2 Education materials and further RIGS and earth caches.	Countryside and Leisure	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Review the management plan for the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and carry out four consultation exercises.	The main review of the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan is taking place next year. Work has progressed on the AONB extension project with 2 consultation events and a report written on the special features of the extension area which includes some of Wrexham. The new Management Plan is to be completed by April 2009.	Countryside and Leisure	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Complete five projects each	2007/8 saw the completion of several major erosion	Countryside and	Cllr Gwyneth

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<p>year until 2009-10 to improve the Offa's Dyke National Trail. The projects include installing a sculpture at the Trail's end in Prestatyn and restoring the Moel Fenlli footpath.</p>	<p>projects on the Offa's Dyke National Trail, along with regular maintenance work to keep the path furniture at a National Trail Standard. Erosion control was carried out by the installation of stone steps and pitching on the North side of Foel Fenlli, the re-profiling of a section of the path leading up to Jubilee Tower, Moel Famau and by drainage work at Cynr y Brain to prevent water eroding the path. Six stiles, eleven fingerposts, five way mark posts and four kissing gates have been installed as part of a rolling maintenance programme along the forty mile length of the path in Denbighshire. The sculpture will be part of a larger collaborative project between Economic Regeneration, County Arts Service and the Countryside Service to be completed in the forthcoming year.</p>	<p>Leisure</p>	<p>Kensler</p>
<p>Increase the County's woodland area with a programme of new planting.</p>	<p>There have been few opportunities during the year for tree planting on Denbighshire owned sites as most have already been planted up. However, we have planted a total of 9 hectares- 5 hectares of new woodland at Glan Morfa, Rhyl (10,000 trees) and a further 3.5 hectares at Coed y Morfa, Prestatyn (7,000 trees). In addition the equivalent of a further half hectare has been planted at various locations in the north area (1070 trees).</p>	<p>Countryside and Leisure</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
<p>Encourage more people to think about the environment and work with the Black Environment Network to launch a programme of events looking at landscape interface projects.</p>	<p>A joint exhibition at Denbigh Museum was produced in September/October called Diversity in Denbighshire together with four events associated with the subject, and a photographic exhibition at Y Caban in August.</p>	<p>Tourism, Heritage and Culture</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
<p>Create a north east Wales archives partnership to preserve historic landscape</p>	<p>A North East Wales partnership has been formed and an application to CyMAL was lodged by the January deadline. We are awaiting results of the</p>	<p>Tourism, Heritage and Culture</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>

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<p>records, promote appreciation of landscape heritage, and encourage access and enjoyment by the public.</p>	<p>application which will become known at the end of March. In addition the partnership applied for another grant to establish an educational resource using material in north east Wales local authority archives.</p>		
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Children and Young People



Cllr Pauline Dobb
Lead Member for Social Services



Cllr Hugh Evans
Leader and Lead Member for Education



Cllr Gwyneth Kensler
Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire

Key Actions	Progress to 1 st April 2007	Lead Service	Lead Member
Develop and implement a Family Support Strategy	A family support co-ordinator was finally appointed after a lengthy search in November 2007 and work has commenced to develop a family support strategy. The first draft of the strategy for consultation should be available in April 2008. The current work involves mapping and gathering information to inform the strategy development. The timetable for this has slipped because of recruitment difficulties, so full publication may not be possible now until Summer 2008.	Children and Family Service	Cllr Pauline Dobb
Pilot the Common Assessment Framework in Upper Denbigh	The electronic CAF pilot started in September 2007 and will run until June 2008. We have currently trained over 100 people, this will continue until the end of the pilot. An evaluation team from the University of East Anglia have recently been appointed to evaluate the effectiveness of the framework. There has been an excellent engagement with all agencies both in the voluntary and statutory sectors in the field of	Children and Family Service	Cllr Pauline Dobb

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	health social care and well being.		
Improve placement choice and quality of provision through increasing the number of foster carers including carers for teenagers and disabled children	10 new general foster carers have been recruited and 2 left in 2007/2008 taking total number of general foster carers to 56. Improved support to carers and children and better matching of placements to carers has contributed to a significant improvement in placement stability for children. The PI for this is now in top performance quartile for Wales. Recruitment target of 12 additional short break carers set, and recruitment process to start in March 2008. Placing teenagers continues to be a challenge and recruitment strategy to be further revised by March 2008.	Children and Family Service	Cllr Pauline Dobb
Set up a Corporate Parenting Panel and will develop a Corporate Parenting approach alongside a 'Children's Champion' pilot	The Elected Members Corporate Parenting Forum is well established and has a detailed work programme to help develop opportunities for care leavers. This group is supported by the Corporate Parenting Working Group that is taking forward service and practice developments to help improve and promote outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. A 'LAC Education Champions' scheme in conjunction with Corporate Executive team will be rolled out in September 2008.	Children and Family Service	Cllr Pauline Dobb
Invite representatives from every secondary school council to attend a Cabinet meeting and question Lead Members	No progress made	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Hugh Evans
Invite pupils from each primary school to visit County Hall's Council	No progress made	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Hugh Evans

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Chamber, meet the Leader of the Council and have a tour of the building			
Work with Careers Wales to provide more work experience opportunities at the Council and promote local government careers	We have worked in partnership with Careers Wales to hold "Mock Management" workshops with Rhyl High School, Ysgol Glan Clwyd, Blessed Edward Jones High School and Prestatyn High School	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Hugh Evans
Prepare the Single Children and Young People's Plan by September 2008	Work plan identifies actions and completion dates for the single plan. Needs assessment has been completed and consultation is in progress on the emerging priorities. Draft plan will be produced for further consultation from the end March on the plan itself. The Single Plan will be published by September 2008.	Children and Young People's Partnership	Cllr Pauline Dobb
Establish children's art classes at Plas Newydd in Llangollen and Ruthin Gaol starting in Spring 2007	Art and craft sessions provided throughout 2007 on both sites. The Arts Service ran classes in Y Caban, Plas Newydd every Saturday throughout the season. At Ruthin Gaol Heritage Services ran arts sessions during school holidays.	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Cllr Gwyneth Kensler

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>Support the Young Archaeology Club by holding 11 meetings per year involving 160 children</p>	<p>The Young Archaeology Club has continued to thrive with successful meetings through the year and several activities undertaken as part of the National Archaeology Week in July. Following the Assistant Leader leaving she has been replaced by a colleague internally and there are plans to relaunch the club in the coming year and to attract more youngsters. YAC activities- 11 (every month except August) 4 activities during National Archaeology Week, 2 walks and 1 re-enactment group (for two days) and 1 Archaeology Uncovered activity at Pen y Cloddiau. Approximately 120 children attended the YAC events and 1500 went to see the re-enactment at Loggerheads Country Park [500 of which were children]. During National Archaeology Week next year [July 12th – 20th] we will be holding a similar event based on the medieval period.</p>	<p>Tourism, Heritage and Culture</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
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Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>Develop and deliver a programme of library events for children and young people</p>	<p>The programme of events enhances and complements the education received in school by providing enrichment opportunities for children and young people, by contributing to higher standards and an improved quality of life, and by supporting most aspects of the curriculum. Over 16,000 children and young people participated in the events, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - over 3,000 children participated in the annual Summer reading Challenge which sustains and develops children's reading skills and motivation over the summer holiday break from school - Denbighshire's Writing Squads (with 280 attendances) offered the most talented young creative writers in the county the opportunity to work with top children's authors and poets to develop their skills - 955 children participated in Children's Book Week when the best children's authors and illustrators visit libraries to inspire children to read and write. <p>Over 950 children and adults attended Bookstart sessions which introduces babies and their families to the world of books and libraries, to give them a head start in life. Rhymetime sessions in libraries and community venues in areas of need build up parents' confidence in sharing books and rhymes with their children, and make a positive impact on children's early language and social development.</p>	<p>Tourism, Heritage and Culture</p>	<p>Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
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<p>Develop an accurate picture of the needs for childcare in Denbighshire and support 323 people to enter employment with the support of the Genesis project</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly announced in Dec 07 that Denbighshire has the highest number of childcare providers in Wales in comparison with all other authorities in Wales. However, the Children's Information Service have found that there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision in the county but it is highly concentrated in the north of the county and urban areas, • The south of the county has no provision (including both childcare and nurseries) at Llangollen. Corwen has only one nursery for the whole of the area. • There is no provision between Pwllglas and Corwen a distance of approximately 9 miles. • There is very little provision in the rural areas of Denbighshire. Many families still rely on family members and friends for childcare and not registered provision and hence do not apply for working tax credits or take advantage of child voucher schemes within their place of work. <p>The Denbighshire Children's Information Service provide free advise to all parents in Denbighshire, they have a website which is accessible 24 hrs a day and have accurate information provided by the CSSIW on Childcare providers in the county. The service has since April 07 received 7978 individual web hits</p> <p>Genesis targets: the actual figures of beneficiaries up until the 31st January 2008 is 320. As we have been actively putting on training courses during February, we are likely to have approximately 30 more beneficiaries by the end of Project (31.03.08).</p>	<p>Children and Family Services</p>	<p>Cllr Pauline Dobb</p>
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Develop a strategy to meet the emotional and mental health needs of children and young people in Denbighshire	No further action has been made on this to date	Children and Family Services	Cllr Pauline Dobb
Deliver the playground improvement programme with the completion of three projects each year until 2009 - 10	The progress of the playground improvement programme was delayed until the framework agreement was put in place in February. The projects which make up the playground improvement programme will now be delivered from April onwards as the budget has been rolled forward.	Environmental Services	Cllr Mike German

A Dynamic Council



Cllr Julian
Thompson-Hill
Lead Member for
Finance



Cllr Elwyn Edwards
Lead Member for
Customer Care and
Citizen Engagement



Cllr John Smith
Lead Member for
Business
Management,
Communications
and Personnel



Cllr Paul
Marfleeet
Lead Member for
Modernisation and
Improvement



Cllr Hugh Evans
Leader of the
Council

Key Actions	Progress to 1 st April 2007	Lead Service	Lead Member
Appoint a head of Customer Care	The Head of Customer Care has been appointed and a customer care service has been in existence since August 2007.	Customer Care	Cllr Elwyn Edwards

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<p>Ensure Denbighshire citizens can access services in Welsh upon request and promote the use of language line</p>	<p>During March and April 2008 a random sample of Services will be contacted through the medium of Welsh in order to monitor the standard and consistency of our Welsh Language service delivery. This exercise may take the form of personal visits, telephone calls, written correspondence or e-mails etc. This exercise is being undertaken by an external organisation and a report will be produced to inform senior management of the service provided. Customer service centre staff have been trained in how to use the language line service when speaking to members of the public. Information about language line available on the Denbighshire Information Centre.</p>	<p>Customer Care/ Strategic Policy Unit</p>	<p>Cllr Elwyn Edwards/ Cllr Gwyneth Kensler</p>
<p>Ensure that all of our staff receive an annual performance appraisal</p>	<p>68.55% of staff have had a performance appraisal in the last year.</p>	<p>Personnel</p>	<p>Cllr John Smith</p>
<p>Identify staff who can use bicycles at work and deliver cycling training to them. This will help promote and encourage physical activity as well as reducing carbon emissions.</p>	<p>The bikes have been purchased and a bid has been submitted to fund the employment of an active workplace organizer.</p>	<p>Personnel</p>	<p>Cllr John Smith</p>
<p>Investigate the possibility of using computer pop-ups to deliver health advice and tips to desk based staff</p>	<p>Computer pop ups have been used to promote health awareness and advice to staff and will be used to promote smoking cessation during no smoking week.</p>	<p>Personnel</p>	<p>Cllr John Smith</p>
<p>Promote stress awareness and management amongst staff by encouraging them to attend stress management training</p>		<p>Personnel</p>	<p>Cllr John Smith</p>

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Continue to support staff to give up smoking by running a series of roadshows in the workplace focusing on the dangers of passive smoking	All reception areas have received no smoking information packs and there will be a series of electronic information notices on giving up smoking which will be given out during no smoking week.	Personnel	Cllr John Smith
Achieve the silver level of the Corporate Health Standard	This was achieved in June 2007	Personnel	Cllr John Smith
Complete a review of our support services (Finance, Personnel and ICT) by August 2007 and implement the findings during 2007/08	Review of finance completed and resulting centralisation now complete. The work to review and harmonise recruitment processes is complete.		Cllr P Marfleet
Complete the development training for senior managers by October 2007	All Heads of Service have completed the programme. It will be rolled out to managers in the near future.	Personnel	Cllr John Smith
Write a workforce plan for Denbighshire County Council by April 2008	Meetings have been held with all Heads of Service and workforce plans for each service have been completed as a result of this. A Corporate workforce plan will be complete by March 2008.	Personnel	Cllr Paul Marfleet
Progress the Year 2 North Wales regional collaboration projects	The Contact Centre project has been discontinued due to regional lack of capacity. The other projects are progressing at various levels. Updates against progress are available on the Working Document Store under collaboration.	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Hugh Evans
Increase the number of joint visits between the Benefits service and the Pensions service	The number of joint visits are no longer monitored as the focus is now on monitoring outcomes. A feasibility pilot to look at the possibility of including all financial assessments at one time is being carried out.	Benefits	
Revise Denbighshire's Community Strategy by	The Community Strategy guidance will not be issued until April at the earliest. The Strategic	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr Hugh Evans

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April 2008	Policy Unit has set up a Corporate Strategic Planning Group which is made up of the leads of strategic partnerships with the aim of developing the Community Strategy. Revised date for the production of the strategy December 08.		
Continue to reduce staff sickness absence	Staff sickness absence up to the end of quarter 3 (end of December) was 8.58 days per Full Time Equivalent member of staff. This means we are highly unlikely to hit the 9 days target and staff absence is likely to be higher than last year.	Personnel	Cllr John Smith
Agree the Efficiency Strategy	The Efficiency Strategy was agreed at Council in June 2007. The Strategy is being monitored monthly by Change Management Board and quarterly by Cabinet.	Strategic Policy Unit/Finance	Cllr Paul Marfleet
Run project management training course and train 10 people by December 2007	The Project Team ran a workshop (attendance of 15) introducing the revised project management methodology and providing detailed guidance on how to complete the new Project Proposal and Business Case forms. No further training courses undertaken since Sep 07	Finance	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill
Implement the e-procurement software and run pilot projects	Proactis has been piloted in some areas since May 2007. Phase 1 is due to go live on 31 st March. This will involve the Resources Directorate and school using the system.	Finance	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill
Implement the Electronic Document Management System in the benefits department by April 2008	On hold pending a decision on regional collaboration.		
Launch a series of consultation events on the Council's budget at the Denbigh and Flint show in August and hold a number of roadshow events for the	A budget consultation roadshow was held during October and visited towns and villages across the County. Over 200 people filled out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was also made available on the website. A change in Lead Member prevented the planned consultation with	Strategic Policy Unit/Finance	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill

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public	Town and Community Councils from being able to happen.		
Arrange three Town and Community Council cluster meetings in 2007/08	3 cluster meetings took place in November. It is likely that the next round of meetings will take place in June 2008 following	Strategic Policy Unit	Cllr John Smith
Expand the range of queries that the Customer Service Centre can deal with	The Customer Service Centre now deals with queries about the following issues: Council House Maintenance; Job application form requests; Highway Matters; Bridges; Waste; Abandoned vehicles; Coastal Protection; Bulky Household items; Cycle Routes; Bulky Trade item; Drainage; Cars for Sale; Flooding and Sandbags; Clinical Waste; Gritting and Snow Clearance; Dead Animals; Highway adoption / new developments; Fixed Penalty Notice; Highway lighting incl. sign illumination; Payments; Highway signs, markings and barriers; Fly-tipping; Public Footpaths and bridleways; Graffiti; Road & Pavement Maintenance; Nappy Voucher Scheme; Road / Pathway; Recycling / Composting; Streetworks; Recycling Centres / Tips; Refuse - Alternate Weekly Collection; Refuse – General; Refuse - Missed Collection; Sharps - Syringes / Needles; Street Cleansing; Trade Waste; Public Transport; Cemeteries; Parks & Gardens; Play Areas; Toilets; Fleet / Drivecare Scheme; Smoke Free; Electoral Registration & Elections; School and College Transport; Road Safety; Traffic Safety; Car Parks; Parking Fines & Traffic Wardens; Pelican Crossings; Traffic Lights	Customer Care	Cllr Elwyn Edwards
Ensure that all One Stop Shops have access to the Customer Relationship Management System by July 2007	All one stop shops now have access to the Customer Relationship Management System	Customer Care	Cllr Elwyn Edwards

Appendix 1 Progress against key actions in Denbighshire's Improvement Plan 2007- 10

<p>Carry out equalities monitoring every six months to understand who is accessing council services and ensure all citizens have fair and equal access</p>	<p>Interviews with Heads of Services were carried out in April 2007 and again Oct-Dec 2007 to assess how equalities is addressed through their service delivery and what Equality Training departmental staff were undertaking. Equality Monitoring Forms were filled in by frontline staff with the public over a 2 week period and data collected, who uses Council services 6 monthly review of the Equalities Action Plan complete</p>	<p>Strategic Policy Unit</p>	<p>Cllr John Smith</p>
<p>Agree a Customer Access Strategy by April 2008</p>	<p>The Customer Care Strategy is currently out for consultation</p>	<p>Customer Care</p>	<p>Cllr Elwyn Edwards</p>

REPORT TO CABINET

**CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR G O ROWLANDS, LEAD MEMBER
REGENERATION AND HOUSING**

DATE: 18TH MARCH 2008

SUBJECT: DENBIGHSHIRE RURAL STRATEGIC PLAN

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To approve a Rural Strategic Plan for Denbighshire

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The County Council has developed a Vision for Denbighshire as a central plan to influence and guide the work of the Council and its partner organisations. The Rural Strategic Plan sets out how the Vision will be delivered in sustainable rural communities and will take into account the legislative and policy framework, expenditure patterns and examples of good practice in shaping service delivery and formulating responses to consultations from the Welsh Assembly Government. It is intended to encourage dialogue and partnership working with other organisations, give prominence to rural issues and improve policy co-ordination. The document will have a key role in shaping the future direction of Denbighshire County Council, and it will influence all aspects of policy, funding and delivery of services in rural areas. The Rural Strategic Plan is included in the annex to this report.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 confers upon a local authority the power to do anything which they consider is likely to promote or improve the economic well-being of the area.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

None

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

There are no obvious cost implications of approving the strategy. Any specific proposals that are developed as a result will need to be contained within existing budgets or require separate costed proposals to be developed and appraised.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

An initial draft was considered by the County Council's Rural Action Plan Task Group which comprises the Central and Southern Area Members' Groups. A delegated decision was taken by the Lead Member for Regeneration & Housing to

approve a consultation draft on 22nd January 2008. The draft was sent to key stakeholders and published on the Council's website with responses to be returned by 10th March. A verbal update in relation to any responses received will be provided at the Cabinet meeting.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS:

7.1 THE VISION

The Rural Strategic Plan will contribute towards the delivery of the Vision for Denbighshire 2025 by supporting rural communities to be economically, socially and culturally active whilst maintaining the beautiful natural and historic environment.

7.2 OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The Rural Strategic Plan will contribute towards the achievement of the Council's Economic Growth Strategy:

“By 2007, we aim to make sure that no area in the county is within the top fifty most deprived Wales by 2007 (with none in the top one hundred by 2012) by achieving the targets set out in our Economic Growth Strategy”

8 ACTION PLAN

Action	Officer	Deadline
Publish the approved action plan on the Council's website	Principal Regeneration Manager	31 st March 2008
Monitor implementation of action plan	Rural Members' Group	On-going

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

To approve a Rural Strategic Plan for Denbighshire

DENBIGHSHIRE RURAL STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction

The County Council has developed a Vision for Denbighshire as a central plan to influence and guide the work of the Council and its partner organisations. The Rural Strategic Plan sets out how the Vision will be delivered in sustainable rural communities and will take into account the legislative and policy framework, expenditure patterns and examples of good practice in shaping service delivery and formulating responses to consultations from the Welsh Assembly Government. It will encourage dialogue and partnership working with other organizations, give prominence to rural issues and improve policy co-ordination. This document will have a key role in shaping the future direction of Denbighshire County Council, and it will influence all aspects of policy, funding and delivery of services in rural areas.

Background

The Vision for rural communities in Denbighshire is that they

“will be economically, socially and culturally active whilst maintaining the beautiful natural and historic environment. There will be access to affordable housing, to employment and to services for people from all parts of our rural community. More housing will sustain community facilities such as schools and shops. Local transport structures will improve access between communities while the unique rural culture and identities of our small villages will be protected and celebrated. Economic activity will sustain the natural beauty of the AONB and rural areas. The agri-food sector, tourism and contemporary communications technology will enable further rural diversification.”

In addition, there are aspects of the Vision for the whole of Denbighshire which are particularly relevant to rural communities and these are,

- the retention and attraction of younger people
- developing better transport links between rural communities
- encouraging entrepreneurship by supporting the growth of small to medium sized businesses (SME's) and recognising the importance of the knowledge based economy
- supporting agricultural production and processing industries
- providing access to lifelong learning including investment in schools
- the attraction of more visitors
- bringing services closer to communities in shared locations
- building social capital through the elimination of deprivation and encouraging people to help themselves and their communities
- raising awareness of the benefits of taking regular exercise and eating well, and
- respecting diversity and protecting the environment

Action Plan

Actions to achieve the Vision for rural communities	How this will help to achieve the Vision for Denbighshire	What we are going to do	How we are going to do it	Who is going to do it	By when
Sustaining community facilities such as schools, shops, post offices, health and recreation	Retention and attraction of younger people	Allow the development of new housing including conversions of agricultural buildings and on farms in rural communities to achieve a sustainable increase in population	Local Development Plan policy	Head of Planning & Public Protection	2010
	Bringing services closer to communities in shared locations		Local Housing Strategy	Head of Housing Services	2007
	Investment in schools	Amend Council priority to "school and educational improvement"	Work in partnership with schools and key stakeholders to implement post Estyn inspection action plan	Corporate Director Lifelong Learning	2012
Provide access to affordable housing	Retention and attraction of younger people	Require new housing developments to provide a proportion of affordable housing	Local Development Plan policy	Head of Planning & Public Protection	2010
			Local Housing Strategy	Head of Housing Services	2007
Improve access between rural communities and between rural communities and "service centre" towns	Developing better transport links between rural communities	Develop more responsive local transport	Regional Transport Plan policy	Head of Transportation & Infrastructure	2008
Encourage economic activity	Growth of SME's	Allow conversion of agricultural buildings and development of small scale green field employment sites	Local Development Plan policy	Head of Planning & Public Protection	2010
			Implement demonstration projects through Rural Development Plan Axis 3	Head of Development Services	2013

Actions to achieve the Vision for rural communities	How this will help to achieve the Vision for Denbighshire	What we are going to do	How we are going to do it	Who is going to do it	By when
Maintaining the beautiful natural and historical environment	Protection of the environment	Provide recycling facilities in rural communities	Council revenue budget	Head of Environmental Services	2008
Support the agricultural sector as a growing, productive contributor to the economy	Raise awareness of the benefits of eating well Growth of SME's	Develop and supply niche markets	Rural Development Plan Axis 1	Head of Development Services	2013
			Support the Council's agricultural estate	Head of Development Services	On-going
Enable people to work in high value occupations in rural communities through the use of contemporary communications technology	Recognise the importance of the knowledge based economy	Provide more broadband access points	Rural Development Plan Axes 3 and 4	Head of Development Services	2013
Seek new higher value tourism markets to help to diversify the rural economy	Attraction of more visitors	Allow the development of new tourist facilities, conversions and extensions	Local Development Plan policy	Head of Planning & Public Protection	2010
	Attraction of more visitors Raise awareness of the benefits of taking more exercise	Improve access to the County's countryside and rural heritage	Heather & Hillforts Landscape Partnership Rural Development Plan Axis 3 Sustainable tourism strategy for the Clwydian Range AONB	Head of Countryside & Leisure	2013

Actions to achieve the Vision for rural communities	How this will help to achieve the Vision for Denbighshire	What we are going to do	How we are going to do it	Who is going to do it	By when
Protection and celebration of rural culture and identities	Elimination of deprivation and encouraging people to help themselves and their communities	Support the development of community facilities	Community Capital Grants Rural Key Fund through Rural Development Plan Axis 3	Head of Development Services	2013
	Celebrating and respecting diversity and protecting the built and natural environment	Ensuring development in Conservation Areas and the AONB is appropriate	Local Development Plan policy	Head of Planning & Public Protection	2010
	Celebrating and respecting diversity	Implement and review Welsh language action plan	Welsh language scheme	Corporate Director Resources	2009

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor G O Rowlands, Lead Member for Housing & Regeneration

DATE: 18th March 2008

SUBJECT: Housing Revenue Account Budget & Capital Plan Report 2007 / 2008

1 DECISION SOUGHT

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

Members approve a variation to a contract to complete improvements to the Council's stock of Airey Houses.

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.

Denbighshire County Council Financial Regulations (Contract Procedure Rules 31.1 (3)).

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

Housing Revenue Budget 2007/08

- The latest figures show that the HRA will generate a surplus of £750k by the end of the financial year, which is £26k lower than the surplus forecast in the original budget.
- There has been minor movement in the Housing Management budget of £14k which is the net impact of increased office accommodation costs (based on some back-dated electricity charges) and the transfer of £30k environmental works to the Housing Capital Plan.
- The forecast over spend on Repairs and Maintenance of £30k is due to repair works on garages. Also within the R&M budget, £100k of expenditure has been capitalised as part of the wider housing improvement programme. This has a revenue impact on the capital financing charge of approximately £5k.

- The capitalised repair works are those that would eventually have been completed as part of the improvement programme.
- Rental income for council dwellings is on target but leased rent income is below original forecasts because of fewer than planned numbers in the scheme and high voids throughout the year. This has now been reviewed and the voids have dropped in the last quarter from 18% to 11%, with indications that it will drop further in the new-year.

Housing Stock Business Plan (HSBP)

- The HSBP has been fully updated for 2008/09 and was approved at February cabinet.
- There have been 12 sales under the 'Right to Buy' scheme so far this year. The forecast in the HSBP was originally 25 but 13 is now a realistic forecast. The Business Plan has now been amended to account for 15 sales annually from now on.
- The current council housing stock stands at 3,473.

Housing Capital Plan

- Achievements to the end of February on the major contracts are as follows (the figures quoted in brackets are those that were reported to the end of January 2007):

Major Refurbishments	334 completions (291)
Window s contract	2,772 properties completed (2,701)
Heating contract	1,089 properties completed (1,019)

- The current major refurbishment contract continues and is progressing very well with 334 properties now having been completed. The HSBP had allowed for £2m slippage from previous years to be recovered over the current and next financial year but most of that slippage has now been recovered.
- The number of completions this year already exceeds the target in the HSBP (which is 248) and is likely to be over 400 by the end of the March.
- The table below shows an extract from the original HSBP and the level of planned works in each year. There was £2.430m slippage in the first two years but it is estimated that the planned expenditure will be exceeded in the current and next year by £2.410m. The excess over four years is as a result of additional Disabled Facility Grant works (see below) being brought forward.

	2005.06	2006.07	2007.08	2008.09	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
HSBP Plan Costs*	7,299	7,412	7,528	7,646	29,885
Actual Costs	6,071	6,210	9,934	7,891	30,106
Slippage/(Catch-up)	1,228	1,202	(2,406)	(245)	(221)

*Extracted from the original version of the HSBP 2005

- A total of £100k repairs and maintenance works have been capitalised but, as above, these are costs that would have been incurred legitimately later on in the improvement programme.

Airey Houses

- Included in the Capital Plan and HSBP is provision for improvements to the council's stock of 16 Airey houses. These are non-traditional, concrete panel based constructions. A tendering exercise was completed in September to refurbish nine of these houses, while planning regulations were being considered for the remaining seven. The planning issues have now been resolved and it is therefore advantageous to extend the contract from nine to fifteen properties.
- The original contract was awarded after an evaluation of contractors to the lowest priced tender. The original process was based on a pre-qualification questionnaire and the contractor selection was aided by Adams Consultants, who are specialist in the area of Airey home improvement. This process left five contractors to submit tenders to a robust specification and the lowest priced tender was selected.
- Given the robust process that was undertaken originally, extending the contract will continue to provide value for money as discounted rates will be negotiated as previously agreed and it will provide continuity in this specialist field.
- The original contract sum was £411k and the extension is estimated at £320k.
- The Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR 31.1(3)) states that:

No variation may be made to a contract if that variation would:

- *extend the contract period by 50% or more than three calendar months, whichever is the greater; or*
- *add more than 20% to the agreed contract sum or increase it from below £50,000 to £60,000 or more; or*
- *mean the works, services or goods to be added to or deleted from the original contract are substantially different in scope,*

unless it has been approved in the following manner:

- *by a Chief Officer if the contract value is under £50,000 (including the variation) providing that the variation costs can be met within the budget;*
- *by a Cabinet Member in whose portfolio the services falls based on a report from the Chief Officer in agreement with the Chief Finance Officer if the contract value is over £50,000 (including the variation) providing that the variation costs can be met within the budget;*
- *by Cabinet if the contract value is over £250,000.*

Summary

- The revenue and capital budgets as reported at the end of February 2008 do not adversely affect the Council's Housing Stock Business Plan.
- The HRA Capital Plan is progressing very well and previous slippage is being caught up. The windows contract has been successfully completed. The considerable backlog of disabled facility grant works is now being cleared.
- The Business Plan is still on target to achieve the Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2012.
- The HRA and capital plan position as reported does not have any additional staffing implications.
- The contract extension provides value for money and continuation of specialist works.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The latest HRA position continues to contribute positively to the Housing Stock Business Plan.

The contract extension to complete the improvements to Airey houses complies with Financial Regulations. The original contract was subject to public tender and a robust selection process that should ensure that contract rates continue to provide value for money.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Cabinet agreed the HRA capital and revenue budget in January 2007 and the 2008/09 budget is being considered by Cabinet today.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE & THE COUNCIL'S VISION

The level of funding available to services together with budgetary performance impacts upon all services of the Council. The HSBP will help achieve the ideal living vision, through access to good quality, affordable housing, which is more energy efficient and designed to meet their needs.

8 ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsibility	Date
Ongoing monitoring of the HSBP.	Head of Housing Services & Senior Management Accountant.	Monthly updates to Cabinet.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

That Cabinet approve the variation to the contract with Gareth Morris Construction Ltd. for works on an additional seven properties to complete improvements to the council's sixteen Airey Houses by the end of 2008/09.

Housing Revenue Account ~ 2007/08 Budget

<u>2006/07</u> Actual Outturn £	<u>Period 11 February 2008</u>	Original Budget £	<u>2007/08</u> Forecast Out-turn £	Variance to Budget £
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
1,098,305	Supervision & Management - General	1,517,750	1,564,290	-46,540
251,946	Supervision & Management - Special	260,750	256,780	3,970
134,887	Welfare Services	138,400	144,882	-6,482
229,387	Homelessness - Leased Properties	405,000	333,785	71,215
367,845	Rents	0	0	0
2,500,157	Repairs and Maintenance	2,563,300	2,593,321	-30,021
4,582,526	Total Housing Management	4,885,200	4,893,058	-7,858
1,048,660	Item 8 Capital Charges	1,321,524	1,433,065	-111,541
0	Rent Rebate Subsidy Limitation	212,000	125,000	87,000
2,761,385	Subsidy	2,854,279	2,842,402	11,877
6,690	Provision for Bad Debts	50,000	20,000	30,000
8,399,261	Total Expenditure	9,323,003	9,313,525	9,478
<u>INCOME</u>				
8,938,397	Rents (net of voids)	9,564,200	9,561,252	-2,948
145,583	Leased Rents	255,000	180,769	-74,231
103,685	Garages	140,450	146,850	6,400
152,503	Interest on Balances & RTB Mortgages	140,000	175,000	35,000
9,340,168	Total Income	10,099,650	10,063,871	-35,779
Surplus / Deficit (-) for the Year				
940,907	General Balances	776,647	750,345	-26,302
1,838,624	Balance as at start of year ~ General	2,779,531	2,779,531	0
2,779,531	Balance as at end of year ~ General	3,556,178	3,529,876	-26,302

Appendix 2

HRA Capital Plan Update 2007/08

Month 11

Actual 2006/07 £	Description	Approved Schemes £	Actual at End Feb £	Forecast Outturn £
35,482	Housing Repair Work Pre 2007/08	0	30,230	30,000
16,911	Environmental Improvement Works	257,500	122,088	310,500
1,001,418	2005/06 Major Improvements – All Groups	0	66,974	137,558
1,444,675	2006/07 Major Improvements – All Groups	3,995,370	4,960,331	5,574,310
2,572,010	Windows Replacement	618,000	2,400,619	2,400,619
1,139,880	Central Heating Contract	1,802,500	638,015	780,771
0	DFG - Council Properties *	103,000	319,757	600,000
0	HRA Capital Contingency	961,630	0	0
0	Capitalised HRA Repairs & Maintenance	0	80,000	100,000
6,210,376	Total	7,738,000	8,618,014	9,933,758

2006/07 £	HRA Capital Plan Financed By:	Original £	Forecast £
2,400,000	Major Repairs Allowance Grant	2,400,000	2,400,000
431,406	Useable Capital Receipts	370,000	325,000
3,378,970	Prudential Borrowing	4,968,000	7,208,758
6,210,376	Total	7,738,000	9,933,758

Note * - DFGs were funded by a contribution from HRA capital receipts in 2006/07.

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT BY: Councillor J Thompson-Hill
Lead Member for Finance.

DATE: 18 March 2008

SUBJECT: Revenue Budget and Summary Capital Plan 2007/2008

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 To note the budget performance figures for the 2007/08 financial year as detailed in the attached Appendix 1.
- 1.2 To also note the summary capital plan performance for 2007/08 financial year as detailed in the attached Appendices 2 and 3.
- 1.3 To note the current position on the vacancy control procedure recently introduced.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- 2.1 The need to deliver the Council's agreed budget strategy for the 2007/08 financial year and avoid reducing already inadequate reserves.

3. POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 3.1 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

- 4.1 This report details the latest service budget year-end projections as reported by Directorates, together with information on pressures and savings within the corporate budgets. The service projections are at the end of February 2008.

Appendix 1 details a forecast overall underspend of £466k. This excludes the schools' delegated budgets. The position has changed from the last report as follows;

- i) *Lifelong Learning* is forecasting an over spend of £627k. This is an increase of £64k from last month's report; this is mainly due to:

a) *The School Funds Held Centrally budget shows a further improvement with an additional saving of £5k as a result of contractual variations to the school transport budget. The projected total underspend now stands at £35k.*

b) *The Non School Funding budget is projected to be overspent by £554k. This is an increase of £42k from last month's projection. The main increase relates to costs associated with the Modernising Education and restructuring budget amounting to £54k. The majority of these are one off costs and will not continue in 2008/09 and should not present a pressure on next year's budget. The position on the 52 week residential unit at Hyfrydle has slightly improved, with the projected overspend now at £265k overspend, a reduction of £12k (see paragraph 4.2.i).*

c) *The Countryside and Leisure services projected overspend has increased by £27k of which £35k relates to backdated electricity costs for Events Arena, which has been partly offset by an additional saving of £8k as a result of delayed appointments.*

d) *The Tourism Heritage and Culture projected overspend remains the same at £59k.*

ii) Social Services & Housing

The Directorate's position has improved by a further £23k to £833k projected underspend.

a) *Children's Services remains relatively stable, with a projected £204k underspend.*

b) *Adult Services net underspend has increased by £128k and within the individual services there are changes in projections and these are summarised.*

- *Learning Disabilities reducing their projected overspend by £68k mainly as a result of securing placement funding from the NHS.*
- *Older People increased underspend by £20k due to numerous minor changes within the service.*
- *Mental Illness projected overspend has increased by £51k as a result of increased pressure relating to preserved rights.*
- *The PDSI, Performance Management and Other Adult Services show a net improvement of £115k. These additional savings are mainly as a result of staff slippage, reduction in equipment spend and improved charging policy income.*
- *Cefndy Enterprise projects additional £24k overspend due to continued increases in material costs and a projected reduction on sales.*

c) *Business Support and Development is now projecting £62k overspend. This is mainly as a result of the next milestone payment for the PARIS Project and additional Social work trainee costs.*

d) *Homelessness remains relatively volatile and the overspend has increased by £22k to £139k. This is partially reflected in higher standards of accommodation in addition to a high number of void properties throughout the year. The Homeless budget is being reviewed to try to ensure costs can be contained next year.*

As part of the budget setting process for 2008/09, the Council has approved that the projected underspend for Social Services is to be carried forward to 2008/09 financial year. However, because of the nature of the underspend this year; it is very unlikely that similar levels will recur – particularly if demand grows as projected.

- ii) **Environment** *The projected year end underspend has increased to £140k, an improvement of £50k. This is mainly as a result of savings due to freezing vacant posts. However, the on going Animal Health case is proving costly and the latest forecast indicate that these costs will exceed £52k to the end of the financial year. These costs are being absorbed by delays in filling vacant posts in particular in the Food Safety and Pollution Control service*
- iii) **The County Clerk** *The Translation service is projected to overspend by £50k. County Clerk is projected to overspend an additional £30k, which is as a result of reduced recharges. This work is now being outsourced due to increasing workloads within Legal Services.*
- iv) *A review of the likely outturn position on Capital Financing costs, investment interest and required provisions, suggests there will be a saving of about £200k.*

4.2 Current major pressures within the Education Service;

- i) There is a marginal reduction in the anticipated overspend at the new 52 week residential facility at Hyfrydle that was reported to last month's meeting. Members will be kept informed of progress on this matter.
- ii) The costs of the temporary cover for the Director and head of service post together with the anticipated initial costs of the response to the Estyn report and the restructure of the Strategy and Resources service will exceed the budget by £289k; an increase of £54k from last month's projection.
- iii) There is no change to the financial position regarding Blessed Edward Jones High School's where the delegated budget is expected to be overspent.

4.3 **The Pay and grading review** has been agreed locally with the unions. It now has to be reviewed by the union nationally. This is likely to be completed shortly and a separate updating paper will be presented to full Council as a Part 2 item. No assumptions have been made in Directorate budgets or forecasts at this stage. Figures will be built into the 5 Year Budget model for 2009/10 to 2012/13.

4.4 **The schools' delegated budget** – Forecasts are that the schools will spend a reduced element of their balances brought forward which reflects planned usage.

4.5 Details are also included in Appendix 1 showing Directorates' progress in achieving the required efficiency savings.

4.6 Appendix 2 shows a **capital plan summary** and Appendix 3 shows expenditure split by Directorate priority.

4.7 Capital expenditure at the end of February is **£31.2m**. Full details of the Capital Plan are contained in a separate report in part two of the agenda.

4.8 Appendix 4 provides the current position on the vacancy control procedure introduced as part on the budget setting exercise for next financial year. Broadly all directorates are confident at present that the additional staffing savings will be achieved during 2008/09. The reporting mechanism as shown in Appendix 4 is being refined so that in future reports will record headcount reductions, financial implications (including any potential restructuring costs) and likely significant operational impacts.

5. FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

5.1 Directorates need to exercise continued tight control over their revenue expenditure to ensure they are able to remain within their budgets.

5.2 The situation regarding the financial impact from the opening of the residential unit at Hyfrydle on the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn site is under review. Urgent action is currently being considered to ensure the financial risk to the Council is minimised while always giving priority to the needs of the children concerned.

5.3 Members will be aware of the continuing pressure resulting from the school in special measures. It is likely that further sums will need to be spent in the current year to assist with improvement.

5.4 The remaining winter period may still bring additional spending pressures for several services including Highways and Social Services.

5.5 The current areas of overspend are likely to recur in 2008/9 although the exact level of overspend is uncertain. As there is no provision for additional resources for such an event the impact will fall upon general balances.

6. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

6.1 Lead Cabinet members will need to consult with Heads of Service to agree necessary remedial action to accommodate pressures in 2007/08.

7. IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS

The Vision

7.1 Proper management of the Council's revenue budget enables services to work towards delivering the Council's Vision.

Other Policy Areas Including Corporate

7.2 Proper management of the Council's revenue budget underpins activity in all of the Council's policy areas.

8. ACTION PLAN

8.1 All departments undertake regular budget monitoring to identify savings and efficiencies.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 To note the budget performance figures for 2007/08 as detailed in the attached Appendix 1.
- 9.2 To also note the summary capital plan performance figures for 2007/08 financial year as detailed in the attached Appendices 2 and 3.
- 9.3 That Members note the current position in connection with the vacancy control procedure.

Major Projects Summary

Project	Start on Site	Budget £m	Exp to Date £m	Forecast Exp £m	Forecast End Date	Recent / Current Milestones			Risk
						Action	Date	Achieved?	
Project Alpha (Prestatyn Primary School)	Apr-07	8.275	3.1	8.275	Sep-08	Purchase of land	Oct-06	Mar-07	Green
						Planning Application approved	Dec-06	Yes	
						Start on site	Apr-07	Yes	
Scala	Feb-07	3.5	1.2	3.5	Jul-08	Agreement completed with Prestatyn TC	Dec-06	Jan-07	Amber
						ACW Funding agreed	Nov-06	Yes	
						DEIN funding agreed	Dec-06	Yes	
						Contract awarded	Jan-06	Yes	
						Start on site	Feb-07	Yes	
Ruthin Craft Centre	Apr-07	4.3	1.6	4.3	Mar-08	Visit Wales funding confirmed	Sep-06	Agreed Dec 06	amber
						DEIN funding confirmed	Dec-06	Yes	
						Contract awarded	Feb-07	Yes	
						Start on site	Feb-07	Yes - mid April 07	
Rhyl Going Forward Drift Park		4.3	4.02	4.3		Completed Awaiting Final Payments			Green
Foryd Harbour	Oct-06	1.3	1.7	1.7		Completed Awaiting Final Payments			
Edward Henry St	Jan-07	1	0.557	1.5		on site			
Community Learning Centres	Mar-07	3.5	0.6	3.5	Jun-08	Confirmation of acceptance of redesigned scheme	Jul-07	Yes	Amber
						Start on site	Oct-07	Yes	
Heather and Hillforts		2.1	0.01	2.1	Jul-08	Project launched	Jul-07	Yes	Green
						Staff in post	Jan-08	Yes	

Denbighshire County Council - Capital Plan 2007/08 - 2010/11
Position as at February 2007

APPENDIX 2

		2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Capital Funding:					
1	General Funding:				
	Unhypothcated Supported Borrowing	4,200	5,896	5,896	5,896
	General Capital Grant	670	4,757	1,962	2,018
	General Capital Receipts	3,732	12	0	0
	Earmarked Capital Receipts	2,377	539	0	0
		10,979	11,204	7,858	7,914
2	Prudential Borrowing	6,291	6,321	0	0
3	Reserves and Contributions	890	1,565	110	91
4	Specific Grants	20,481	11,464	836	397
	Total Finance	38,641	30,554	8,804	8,402
	Total Estimated Payments	-38,641	-29,554	-1,841	-974
	Contingency	0	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
	Unallocated Reserve	0	0	-110	0
	Surplus/ -Insufficient Resources	0	0	5,853	6,428

Capital Expenditure By Directorate

	2007/08	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
	Spend to end February	Estimated programme	Estimated programme	Estimated programme	Estimated programme
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Environment	15,811	20,299	15,537	60	0
Lifelong Learning	14,686	17,208	12,600	1,545	724
Resources	364	699	759	0	0
Social Services and Housing	386	435	658	236	250
Total	31,247	38,641	29,554	1,841	974

Capital Expenditure by Council Priority

	2007/08	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
	Spend to end February	Estimated programme	Estimated programme	Estimated programme	Estimated programme
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
School Buildings	10,627	12,206	7,472	672	0
Highways	4,624	4,976	4,552	0	0
Public Realm	2,350	3,251	1,962	60	0
Total	17,601	20,433	13,986	732	0

As part of the 07/08 revenue budget, the Council agreed to fund the borrowing costs of additional Prudential Borrowing. The table below shows how the funds were allocated and forecast expenditure

Additional Prudential Borrowing

	2007/08	2007/8	2008/09
	Spend to end February	Estimated programme	Estimated programme
	£000	£000	£000
School Buildings	1,004	1,322	0
Highways	2,000	2,000	2,000
Health & Safety	275	500	0
Total	3,279	3,822	2,000

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008**

Directorate	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
Lifelong Learning (excluding schools delegated)	31,017	-11,092	19,925	31,648	-11,096	20,552	631	-4	627	563
Environment	38,101	-16,673	21,428	38,071	-16,783	21,288	-30	-110	-140	-90
Social Services & Housing	55,435	-17,612	37,823	56,797	-19,807	36,990	1,362	-2,195	-833	-810
County Clerk	1,890	-393	1,497	1,940	-363	1,577	50	30	80	80
Resources	10,114	-2,938	7,176	10,114	-2,938	7,176	0	0	0	0
Corporate, Miscellaneous & Benefits	29,180	-23,023	6,157	29,180	-23,023	6,157	0	0	0	0
Total All Services	165,737	-71,731	94,006	167,750	-74,010	93,740	2,013	-2,279	-266	-257
Capital Financing Charges/Investment Income			10,882			10,682			-200	-200
Precepts & Levies			4,212			4,212			0	0
			109,100			108,634			-466	-457

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 2007/08
LIFELONG LEARNING
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008

	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>55,098</u>	<u>-4,575</u>	<u>50,523</u>	<u>57,244</u>	<u>-6,503</u>	<u>50,741</u>	<u>2,146</u>	<u>-1,928</u>	<u>218</u>	<u>268</u>
School Funds Held Centrally	16,183	-4,915	11,268	16,148	-4,915	11,233	-35	0	-35	-30
Non school Funding	2,102	-905	1,197	2,656	-905	1,751	554	0	554	512
Corporate Services	311	-47	264	311	-47	264	0	0	0	0
Countryside & Leisure	6,060	-3,159	2,901	6,122	-3,172	2,950	62	-13	49	22
Tourism, Culture & Heritage	6,361	-2,066	4,295	6,411	-2,057	4,354	50	9	59	59
	31,017	-11,092	19,925	31,648	-11,096	20,552	631	-4	627	563
Total Lifelong Learning	86,115	-15,667	70,448	88,892	-17,599	71,293	2,777	-1,932	845	831

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08
LIFELONG LEARNING**

	Current Month £000s	Previous Month £000s
INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS BUDGET		
Following updates during January, projections would indicate that the school balances of £1,807k as at 31/03/2007 will reduce to £1,589k during 2007/2008.		
This is a decrease in expenditure of £50k from the last report in January. A number of school visits have been made to coincide with the release of indicative staffing budgets for 2008-09 financial year and therefore predicted balances have changed, notably Denbigh High School		
	218	268
SCHOOL FUNDS HELD CENTRALLY		
School Transport		
Detailed projections for the 2007/2008 Financial Year have been completed following receipt of updated contract daily rate prices from Transport and Infrastructure.		
Current projections indicate a predicted overspend of £11k. This is an decrease since last month's report due to contract variations	11	16
Other		
Various savings from vacancy control, delays in appointment of staff, variations in income and other management initiated cost savings. Budget managers will continue to work towards reducing the overspend until the end of the year	-139	-139
Education Services		
Savings identified in respect of home working are not likely to be achieved in 2007/2008 due to the delay in commencing pilot home working projects across the Authority.	93	93
	-35	-30
NON SCHOOL FUNDING		
The new residential unit at Hyfrydle centre was opened in November 2007. In the first year of opening the school is forecasting a loss of around £265k which will be carried forward to be offset by surpluses forecast in future years. The school is a regional specialise facility for autism and will generate income from out of county placements from other local authorities. In 2007-08 two placements are anticipated resulting in a surplus of expenditure over income however, the school is anticipating that it will be fully occupied in the following years.	265	277
As a result of the Estyn Inspection, expenditure has been identified in 2007-08 to deliver the first phase of the action plan. Bids will be submitted for permanent funding for these initiatives in the 2008-09 budget round.	98	98
Following the Education Services and Strategy and Resources restructures coupled with the retirement of key personnel, and the appointment of interim Corporate Director and Heads of Service to assist with the preparation of the Estyn action plan, this has	191	137
	554	512
COUNTRYSIDE & LEISURE		
Additional costs associated with Drift Park Paddling Pool, Amphitheatre & Play Area	40	40
Unplanned closure of Corwen Pool	5	5
Increased devolved repair & maintenance costs at Corwen Pavilion	7	7
Legal costs associated with the Ffrith & Marine Lake	6	6
Increased Utility Costs	3	3
Backdated electricity costs for Events Arena due to Scottish Power (negotiations are underway to agree terms of repayment)	35	0
Offset by:		
Increased income at Leisure Centres	-18	-18
Delayed Appointments	-22	-14
NNDR (Business Rates) refunds	-7	-7
	49	22
TOURISM, HERITAGE & CULTURE		
Increased operational & maintenance costs and lower than projected income levels at Royal International Pavilion	15	15
Provision of ill health cover at Pavilion Theatre	0	0
Cleaning of archive material infected by mould following tender process	77	77
Offset by:		
Savings resulting from Tourism Strategy tendering process	-30	-30
Underspend of training	-3	-3
	59	59
TOTAL	845	831

PROPOSED EFFICIENCY SAVING	EFFICIENCY	
	TARGET SAVINGS 2007/08	PROGRESS
	£	
Schools' Delegated Budgets - 0.3% Efficiency Target.	100	To be achieved by School Governing Bodies.
County Voice - Develop income from advertising.	1	On target.
Project Management Fees Recharge.	27	On target. May need to be achieved by alternative means.
Review of S.E.N. Transport Contracts.	10	On target.
Assorted Efficiencies across the Service e.g. Vacancies.	70	On target.
Reduce funding to grant aided bodies	6	Achievable
New income	30	Part achievable. Alternative savings being sought
Alternative service delivery	36	Part achievable. Alternative savings being sought
TOTAL	280	

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008

	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
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (Note 3)	8,845	-5,086	3,759	8,807	-5,086	3,721	-38	0	-38	-1
TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE (Notes 1,3 & 5)	9,357	-4,233	5,124	9,388	-4,253	5,135	31	-20	11	21
PLANNING & PUBLIC PROTECTION (Notes 2, 3, 4 & 5)	4,347	-1,941	2,406	4,338	-2,031	2,307	-9	-90	-99	-90
DIRECTOR & SUPPORT (See Note 3)	1,393	-331	1,062	1,383	-331	1,052	-10	0	-10	0
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Note 3 & 5)	14,159	-5,082	9,077	14,155	-5,082	9,073	-4	0	-4	-20
Total Environment	38,101	-16,673	21,428	38,071	-16,783	21,288	-30	-110	-140	-90

SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008

Potential areas of budget pressure

Potential areas of budget pressure

- 1 Flooding problems during the year to date have placed a strain on the Highways maintenance budget. In the event of severe weather during the remaining months it is possible that the winter maintenance budget, together with the winter maintenance reserve, will be insufficient to cover the costs.
- 2 Development Control income received to date is significantly higher than the budget. The potential appeal costs in respect of windfarm applications could be significant during 2008. During the past couple of months Development Control Income has been down on the same period of 2006/07 which might reflect the downturn in the current property market. Any continued trend might have a negative impact on the 2008/09 income levels
- 3 Savings from delays in recruiting staff to fill vacant posts.
- 4 The recent Animal Welfare case in Llandegla has placed a strain on this budget and the latest estimates project an additional cost to the service of £50k in 2007/08
- 5 As part of the Council's aim to reduce the head count the Directorate has made 4 redundancies in the current financial year and costs are absorbed in the above figures.
- 6 The Directorate put forward a number of efficiency savings as part of the Budget setting process. These totalled £250K and will be monitored on an on-going basis throughout the financial year. These are summarised between the service departments below

Details	£'000s	
Development Services		
Rationalisation of office accommodation following acquisition of Brighton Road	50	On-going
Station caretaker to also take responsibility for Children's Village	7	To be Achieved
Business grant assessment to be carried out in-house	8	On target
Restructuring - Valuation & Estates	8	Achieved
Transport & Infrastructure		
Remove Coastal Protection Agency post	6	To be replaced by substitute saving
Savings in salt procurement	20	To be Achieved
Review of streetworks recharges	5	Achieved
Review of School Crossing Patrols	5	Achieved
Increased income from increased workload in MPG	30	On target
Parking processing of PCN's jointly - savings year on year	10	Achieved
Planning & Public Protection		
Restructuring - not replacing vacant Section Manager post	12	Achieved
Restructuring of Building Control Section following staff vacancy	10	Achieved
New income streams from new Statutory legislation	10	Achieved
Absorb new legislation/powers within existing workforce	12	Achieved
Reduction in Contaminated Land consultants budget	4	Achieved
Formal SLA with Flintshire CC to assist with Mineral Planning	5	Achieved
Director & Support		
Reduction in working hours of officer in Performance Management team	12	Achieved
Environmental Services		
Public Conveniences - reductions in overtime payments	5	Achieved
Rationalisation of sweeper hire costs	5	Achieved
Transfer of officer to Leisure and not replacing	13	Achieved
Replacing Team Leader with lower graded employee	10	Achieved
Savings following refurbishment of Corwen PC	3	Achieved

250

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08
SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008

	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
Children Services	9,162	-585	8,577	9,746	-1,373	8,373	584	-788	-204	-202
Adult Services	35,943	-9,234	26,709	36,413	-10,149	26,264	470	-915	-445	-317
Business Support & Development	2,732	-468	2,264	2,996	-670	2,326	264	-202	62	-23
Cymorth Grant	1,711	-1,711	0	1,711	-1,711	0	0	0	0	0
Supporting People Grant	4,336	-4,301	35	4,336	-4,301	35	0	0	0	0
Underspend Brought Forward	0	0	0	0	-341	-341	0	-341	-341	-341
Sub Total Social Services	53,884	-16,299	37,585	55,202	-18,545	36,657	1,318	-2,246	-928	-883
Non HRA Housing	1,551	-1,313	238	1,595	-1,218	377	44	95	139	117
Underspend Brought Forward	0	0	0	0	-44	-44	0	-44	-44	-44
Directorate Total	55,435	-17,612	37,823	56,797	-19,807	36,990	1,362	-2,195	-833	-810

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08
SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008

<u>Comments</u>	<u>Current Month</u> £000s	<u>Previous Month</u> £000
SOCIAL SERVICES		
CHILDREN'S SERVICES There has been a further reduction in forecast spend across various headings. This offsets pressure areas in the specialist placement budget (£106k residential and £184k fostering placements)		
	-204	-202
ADULT SERVICES Learning Disabilities Purchasing - Overspend has reduced by £66k due to an agreement with Health to fund a residential placement in the short term, Children's Services continuing to fund another placement and proposed community living schemes not commencing. Other pressure areas continue to be the respite, residential and nursing placements, despite additional monies being allocated to these budgets. Provider - Projected overspend increased by £2k. The main pressure areas being Community Living (£99k) and work opportunities (£41k).	117	185
Mental Illness The main pressure here is still Residential and Nursing Placements / Day care showing an overspend of £179k. There is a forecast under spend of £28k on MI Preserved Rights clients. This budget and spend was previously shown under Older People in 2006/07. Both Team Dyffryn Clwyd and Hafod were forecast to be over spent by £18k (£27k over spent in 06/07). It is unlikely that two vacant posts will be filled before the middle of March which will bring spend down close to budget.	139	88
Older People Purchasing The projected under spend on Older People Purchasing has reduced by £42K from the previous outturn. This is mainly due to an increase in the projected spend for Community Care. Residential Homes The main pressure is still forecast to be Residential Homes, showing an overspend of £109k. However, there have been a number of minor improvements in the forecast reported last month, including improved income and reduced expenditure forecasts on Extra Care. Provider Day Centres This budget is predicted to be over spent by £2k (was £24k over spent in 2006/2007). Transport spend is the main budget pressure and Fleet recharges are not yet confirmed Homecare Provider This budget was under spent in 2006/07 by £43k. It was previously thought that a pilot scheme in respect of Six Weeks Free Homecare and reduced staff slippage on posts would mean spend would be on budget in 07/08. However, the current position is that employee spend is lower than the same period in 06/07. This budget was under spent in 2006/07 by £43k. It was previously thought that a pilot scheme in respect of Six Weeks Free Homecare and reduced staff slippage on posts would mean spend would be on budget in 07/08. However, the current position is that employee spend is lower than the same period in 06/07.	-488	-468
PDSI Based on 2006/07 experience there is still likely to be overspend on PDSI. The main pressure areas are forecast to be the Community Care budget, although staff slippage has reduced this pressure. Elsewhere spend on the Drug and Alcohol budget (£20k over spent in 2006/07) is currently low, and will probably now be under budget by £35k	101	128
Performance Management & Commissioning The majority of these budgets relate to staffing and are predicted to be under spent due to slippage on vacant posts and staff not currently being at the top of their grade. There has also been around £30K more income generated by Receivership than was budgeted for	-196	-153
Other Adult Services There is a projected overspend of £9k on Community Development which is offset by under spend on the out of hours service of £25k. Confirmation by WAG of the likely reimbursement from Fairer Charges Grant received and reported in January improved this budget line forecast significantly. Charging policy income has improved from last month by £48k.	-210	-165
Joint Working & Older People Strategy There is a £27k base budget to supplement these grants. In previous years this has been fully spent but it is intended to limit spend in this financial year with only £5k likely to be committed.	-22	-22
Cefndy Enterprises The main reason for the predicted overspend is due to 07/08 sales being less than expected and a considerable increase in the cost of materials. Sales in 06/07 reached just under £2.9m whereas current indications are that the 07/08 figure is likely to be between £2.6m and £2.7m.	114	90
TOTAL ADULT SERVICES	-445	-317
Business Support & Development The movement on BSD is because provision has been made for the next milestone payment for the PARIS Project (approx £65k), in addition, there has been an increase in the Workforce Development expenditure due to additional Social Work Trainee costs.		
	62	-23
Cymorth Grant All expenditure relating to the Cymorth grant has to be spent in year.	0	0
Supporting People Grant The expected under spend for SP is £889k, £448k relates to projects that are being commissioned part way through the year and the remainder relates to money set aside, by the planning group, to fund short term projects and future cuts. As reported to cabinet, last year, any under spends at year end will be transferred to reserves, to offset future cuts.	0	0
2006/07 Underspend Brought Forward	-341	-341
HOUSING Homelessness accommodation costs have risen this year causing a budget pressure. This partly reflects higher standards of accommodation but there have also been high numbers of void properties throughout the year.	139	117
2006/07 Underspend Brought Forward	-44	-44
TOTAL HOUSING	95	73
TOTAL SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING	-833	-810

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08
SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

Efficiency Savings

Service	Efficiency Saving	Further Saving	Details	Status
Children's Services				
Reduction in placement costs for looked after children (Children's Services)	121		Renegotiation of contracts with independent sector providers will result in cohort of 15 children remaining in the independent sector until the majority. These savings are detailed as a result of admitting fewer Children into care during 2007/08 - in line with the current performance.	Achievable
Adult Services				
Hospital discharge service	40		A review of the service is in progress with plans for more cost effective service delivery to generate this saving.	Achievable
Reconfigure posts / skills mix	20		Within Adult Services active consideration of existing posts has meant that in many cases more economical staffing costing arrangements have put in place of previous posts which have a greater cost. Examples are replacement of a Social Worker in Older People Services with a Reviewing Officer / Community Care Officer and recruiting Disability Assistants rather than Occupational therapists in Disability Resource Team.	Achievable
Joint Commissioning - Adults	26		Continued drive to share costs with partner agencies through joint commissioning and review of nursing care invoices	Achievable
Increased preventative work	20	20	The cost per week for residential care is £288 and for Very Dependent Elderly £360.50 so the target would be to reduce the admissions by at least 3 people despite the increase in numbers of older people, by following through on rehabilitation and health promotion strategies.	Achievable
Homecare reductions due to telecare		30	There is evidence from case studies in other areas that telecare can reduce the need for homecare per day by ½ hour. However there will be costs in setting up a telecare response team so initial savings will be modest with more certain savings generated in future years (see below).	Achievable
Re configure ABER project eligible for Supporting People funding		60	This project meets the criteria for Supporting People funding and would allow us to re configure an existing service more in keeping with the enablement agenda.	Achievable
Llys Marchan Draft mgt agreement and savings by negotiation with Clwyd		4	The negotiations on this matter need to be concluded which would save yearly legal costs.	Achievable
Review of use of external work opportunities services which are higher cost than in house		8	negotiation with Clwyd Alyn has resulted in a saving on the contract. There is evidence that external work opportunities are higher in costs than internal due partly to the income generation so a review of contracts and a drive to place more people in internal work opportunities would reduce costs	Achievable Achievable
Increase income		30	The review of charges in 2006/07 will generate additional income in 2007/08	Achievable
Business Support & Development				
Implementation of the PARIS system - improved processing	5		We have included only a small saving in 07/08 as there will be a lot of additional time and effort required on implementation. However by the last quarter of the year there should be a saving in time of MIS officers in verifying and checking data which should translate into actual cash savings	Not thought to be achievable-will source other savings to replace
Improved staff retention -	22		Savings on agency costs, recruitment costs and managers time	Achievable
Complaints Investigation collaboration and focus on resolution at stage 1	3		Additional time has been committed to meeting complainants at the first stage and working to an earlier resolution to avoid the need for formal investigation at stage 2. There is also joint work across north Wales being led by Denbighshire on the recruitment of Independent Investigators which should reduce costs.	Achievable
Deletion of ½ post in Senior management admin	10		Re design of some other admin posts will assist with this together with increasingly efficient working of the Directorate administration office.	Achievable
Receivership reconfigure post/generate additional income		10	Invest to save re design of a post which should mean a greater recovery of costs for the authority	Achievable
Efficiencies in office accommodation - Brighton Road		18	Savings from cleaning, caretaking shared facilities and repair costs are not likely to be realised until the last quarter of the year and so would be more suitable for 08/09savings targets.	Achievable
General				
Sickness Absence management	26		This figure is based on the saving to the authority of cover for sickness absence in direct care posts.	Achievable
Transport savings across Directorate		50	The target is to reduce the high cost of transport through the transport review, this is a specific project for the Senior Administrative Officer.	Achievable
Housing				
Housing Savings - Efficiency savings to be achieved by reduction in Bed & Breakfast Accommodation	2	15	The Council is using leased properties as a more cost effective replacement	Not achievable. Leased accommodation is being used but will not produce the savings required
Total	295	247		

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08
RESOURCES, COUNTY CLERK, CORPORATE & MISCELLANEOUS
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2008

	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
County Clerks	1,890	-393	1,497	1,940	-363	1,577	50	30	80	80
Resources Directorate										
Finance	4,857	-2,012	2,845	4,857	-2,012	2,845	0	0	0	0
Policy Unit	416	0	416	416	0	416	0	0	0	0
Audit	438	-85	353	438	-85	353	0	0	0	0
I.T	2,331	-429	1,902	2,331	-429	1,902	0	0	0	0
Personnel	1,378	-258	1,120	1,378	-258	1,120	0	0	0	0
Project Management	26	0	26	26	0	26	0	0	0	0
	668	-154	514	668	-154	514	0	0	0	0
Total	10,114	-2,938	7,176	10,114	-2,938	7,176	0	0	0	0
Corporate and Miscellaneous	7,029	-835	6,194	7,029	-835	6,194	0	0	0	0
Benefits	22,151	-22,188	-37	22,151	-22,188	-37	0	0	0	0
Total	41,184	-26,354	14,830	41,234	-26,324	14,910	50	30	80	80
Capital Fin Charges/Investment Income	10,882	0	10,882	10,682	0	10,682	-200	0	-200	-200

Comments

County Clerks

1. £30k projected overspend due to reduced recharge to capital receipts, as work now being outsourced due to increasing workloads within Legal Services

Note

All efficiency savings proposals on target to be delivered

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR J A SMITH, LEAD MEMBER FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS & PERSONNEL

DATE: 18th March 2008

SUBJECT: ROUTINE REPORTING ON PERSONNEL

1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 For Members to note the enclosed report on staff headcount.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1. This is an updated monthly report on employee data (appendix A). The monthly gross pay statistics which is a summary of the payments made to employees of Denbighshire County Council each month, and the number of jobs which have contributed to that expenditure remains in the report. Excluded from those figures are payments relating to refund of expenses, such as traveling and subsistence. The figures demonstrate the expenditure on salaries and the number of paid posts within the Authority excluding members. A summary of leavers details is contained on the bottom of the third page of the report.

2.2 A list showing the breakdown of starters is attached (appendix B).

Graphs showing the corporate sickness absence position since April 2006 are attached (appendix C). Last years data has been left on the graphs so a monthly comparison can be made with last year. There has been a downward turn in sickness levels this month, which takes the amount of absence for February to the same as February last year, however sickness levels overall remain consistently higher than last year. This month Environment, Social Services and Resources recorded higher levels of sickness than the same period last year and are above the required target, with Social Services significantly higher. The two other graphs show the "actual" number of days lost and "short term verses long term" sickness absence. Long term sickness equates for more absence than short term sickness in all directorates with particularly high levels recorded in Social Services this month.

2.3 The Full Time Equivalent (FTE) numbers and the payments made to employees as described in 2.1 with comparison from 2006/07 and 2007/08, are also attached. (Appendix D)

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

3.1. Section III of the Local Government Act 1972

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no significant cost implications associated with the preparation of this information.
- 4.2. Additional costs are involved in the implementation of the payroll system and also in developing the interface between the time recording system and the HR system.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

- 5.1 Payroll costs are one of the largest costs faced by the Council and therefore any further actions to monitor and control expenditure are beneficial.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 6.1. The headcount information has been prepared by the Central Personnel team directly from the HR system and discussed by the Corporate Directors.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

- 7.1. No direct implication on any corporate policy.
- 7.2 The Vision – being able to deliver the Vision depends on having the right number of staff in the right jobs.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1. Members note the information considered in this report.

Overall Council Position

Establish't		SS&H				LL				ENV			
		Number of staff	FTEs	Average Number of Days Lost Per Employee	Overall Percentage Absence	Number of staff	FTEs	Average Number of Days Lost Per Employee	Overall Percentage Absence	Number of staff	FTEs	Average Number of Days Lost Per Employee	Overall Percentage Absence
Jan	2007	797	717	1.31	5.98	2321	1888	1.04	5.19	958	744	1.27	5.77
Feb		803	721	1.31	6.53	2316	1872	1.01	5.91	958	744	1.23	6.14
Mar		809	729	1.13	5.14	2324	1897	1.04	4.73	959	752	1.19	5.41
Apr		812	710	1.20	6.31	2326	1905	0.66	4.24	948	743	1.02	5.30
May		814	712	1.25	5.96	2324	1902	1.00	5.10	946	738	1.05	5.53
June		823	718	1.41	6.70	2336	1915	0.60	2.89	961	746	1.11	5.31
July		826	720	1.32	6.01	2353	1935	0.78	4.17	967	752	1.22	5.53
Aug		825	721	1.15	5.23	2352	1936	0.46	2.07	955	742	1.16	5.28
Sept		822	716	1.00	4.98	2395	1951	0.66	3.40	953	740	1.02	5.11
Oct		825	723	1.40	6.09	2412	1973	1.00	4.63	951	741	1.50	6.31
Nov		815	712	1.81	8.24	2422	1982	0.82	3.90	950	738	1.40	6.44
Dec		816	711	1.36	7.16	2448	2002	1.00	5.79	953	738	1.00	5.26
Jan	2008	815	713	1.86	8.46	2449	2002	1.22	6.57	954	741	1.00	4.35
Feb		814	713	1.62	7.71	2442	1995	0.84	4.46	962	745	1.28	6.12

Rolling Average

Jan	2007	797	717	1.31	5.98	2321	1888	1.04	5.19	958	744	1.27	5.77
Feb		800	719	1.31	6.26	2319	1880	1.03	5.55	958	744	1.25	5.96
Mar		803	722	1.25	5.88	2320	1886	1.03	5.28	958	746	1.23	5.77
Apr		805	719	1.24	5.99	2322	1891	0.94	5.02	956	746	1.18	5.66
May		807	718	1.24	5.98	2322	1893	0.95	5.03	954	744	1.15	5.63
June		810	718	1.27	6.10	2325	1897	0.89	4.68	955	744	1.15	5.58
July		812	718	1.28	6.09	2329	1902	0.88	4.60	957	745	1.16	5.57
Aug		814	719	1.26	5.98	2332	1906	0.82	4.29	957	745	1.16	5.53
Sept		815	718	1.23	5.87	2339	1911	0.81	4.19	956	745	1.14	5.49
Oct		816	719	1.25	5.89	2346	1918	0.83	4.23	956	744	1.18	5.57
Nov		816	718	1.30	6.11	2353	1923	0.82	4.20	955	744	1.20	5.65
Dec		816	718	1.30	6.19	2361	1930	0.84	4.34	955	743	1.18	5.62
Jan	2008	817	717	1.35	6.40	2371	1939	0.85	4.45	955	743	1.16	5.50
Feb		818	717	1.38	6.50	2382	1950	0.84	4.33	955	743	1.16	5.50

Starters/Leavers - February 2008

Please see attached breakdown on starters and leavers

Please note that the figures contained within this report may differ from previous reports as the data is changing on a daily basis as HR staff input working hours

Overall Council Position

		CE + CC				RES				TOTAL							
		Number of staff	FTEs	Average Number of Days Lost Per Employee	Overall Percentage Absence	Number of staff	FTEs	Average Number of Days Lost Per Employee	Overall Percentage Absence	Number of staff	FTEs	Average Number of Days Lost Per Employee	Overall Percentage Absence	Leavers	Starters	Gross pay	No. of Employments
Establish't																	
Jan	2007	53	48	0.95	4.33	262	241	0.86	3.90	4391	3638	1.11	5.30	30	33	7290326	5363
Feb		53	48	1.08	5.40	266	246	0.63	3.15	4396	3631	1.07	5.35	34	31	7367968	5384
Mar		52	47	0.87	3.96	266	246	0.81	3.67	4410	3672	1.04	4.74	33	29	7390026	5383
Apr		53	48	0.97	5.08	267	247	0.63	3.34	4406	3653	0.84	4.88	46	33	7507420	5406
May		54	49	1.10	5.25	265	245	1.01	4.83	4403	3646	1.06	5.23	25	23	7357926	5383
June		53	48	1.07	5.08	270	250	0.87	4.15	4443	3676	1.03	4.95	26	39	7424895	5465
July		53	48	0.82	3.72	272	252	0.84	3.82	4471	3707	0.98	4.81	26	36	7530295	5518
Aug		53	48	0.69	3.11	280	260	0.79	3.57	4465	3707	1.00	4.53	100	12	7525557	5473
Sept		53	48	0.34	1.69	290	270	0.92	4.60	4513	3725	0.81	4.08	47	121	7418071	5107
Oct		54	49	0.67	2.90	289	269	1.09	4.73	4531	3754	1.17	5.24	35	47	7559522	5496
Nov		54	49	1.37	6.25	295	274	1.18	5.35	4536	3754	1.16	5.39	16	32	7774554	5546
Dec		54	49	0.71	3.73	299	277	0.85	4.49	4570	3777	1.05	5.83	23	16	8552299	6063
Jan	2008	54	49	0.80	3.45	310	288	1.10	4.95	4582	3793	1.27	6.06	36	28	7733130	5614
Feb		55	50	0.57	2.69	308	287	1.00	4.74	4581	3790	1.09	5.48	28	17	7863541	5642
Rolling Average																	
Jan	2007	53	48	0.95	4.33	262	241	0.86	3.90	4391	3638	1.11	5.30	30	33	7290326	5363
Feb		53	48	1.02	4.87	264	244	0.75	3.53	4394	3635	1.09	5.33	32	32	7329147	5374
Mar		53	48	0.97	4.56	265	244	0.77	3.57	4399	3647	1.07	5.13	32	31	7349440	5377
Apr		53	48	0.97	4.69	265	245	0.73	3.52	4401	3648	1.02	5.07	36	32	7388935	5384
May		53	48	0.99	4.80	265	245	0.79	3.78	4401	3648	1.02	5.10	34	30	7382733	5384
June		53	48	1.01	4.85	266	246	0.80	3.84	4408	3653	1.03	5.08	32	31	7389760	5397
July		53	48	0.98	4.69	267	247	0.81	3.84	4417	3660	1.02	5.04	31	32	7409836	5415
Aug		53	48	0.94	4.49	269	248	0.81	3.80	4423	3666	1.02	4.97	40	30	7424302	5422
Sept		53	48	0.88	4.18	271	251	0.82	3.89	4433	3673	0.99	4.87	41	40	7423609	5387
Oct		53	48	0.86	4.05	273	253	0.85	3.98	4443	3681	1.01	4.91	40	40	7437201	5398
Nov		53	48	0.90	4.25	275	254	0.88	4.10	4451	3688	1.02	4.95	38	40	7467869	5411
Dec		53	48	0.89	4.21	277	256	0.87	4.13	4461	3695	1.03	5.03	37	38	7558238	5466
Jan	2008	53	48	0.87	4.14	281	260	0.89	4.22	4477	3708	1.04	5.09	37	37	7595139	5487
Feb		54	48	0.83	3.91	284	264	0.92	4.35	4493	3721	1.04	5.10	37	36	7636436	5508

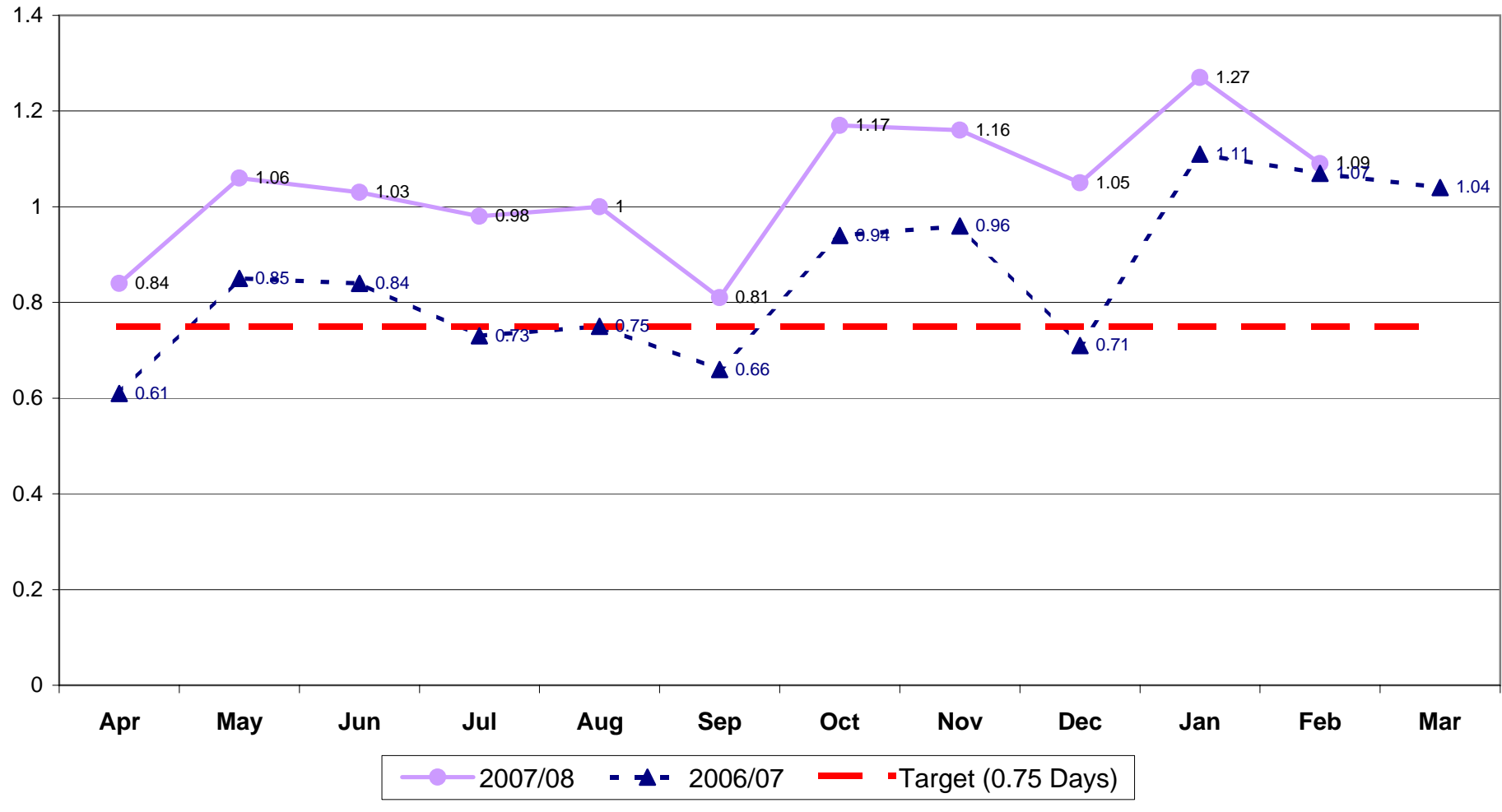
Leavers for February 2008

Leavers	Total
1.1 Age Retirement	1
1.3 Ill Health Termination/Dismissal	1
1.5 Redundancy	2
1.7 End of Fixed Term Contract	3
1.8 Early Retirement	1
2.1 Role, Job Description & Duties	1
2.4 Culture & Communications	1
2.5 Pay, Benefits & Conditions	5
2.6 Training & Career Development	1
2.8 Other - Please Specify	3
Moved Out of the Area	1
Resignation - Another Post Outside DCC	5
Resignation - Personal	3
	28

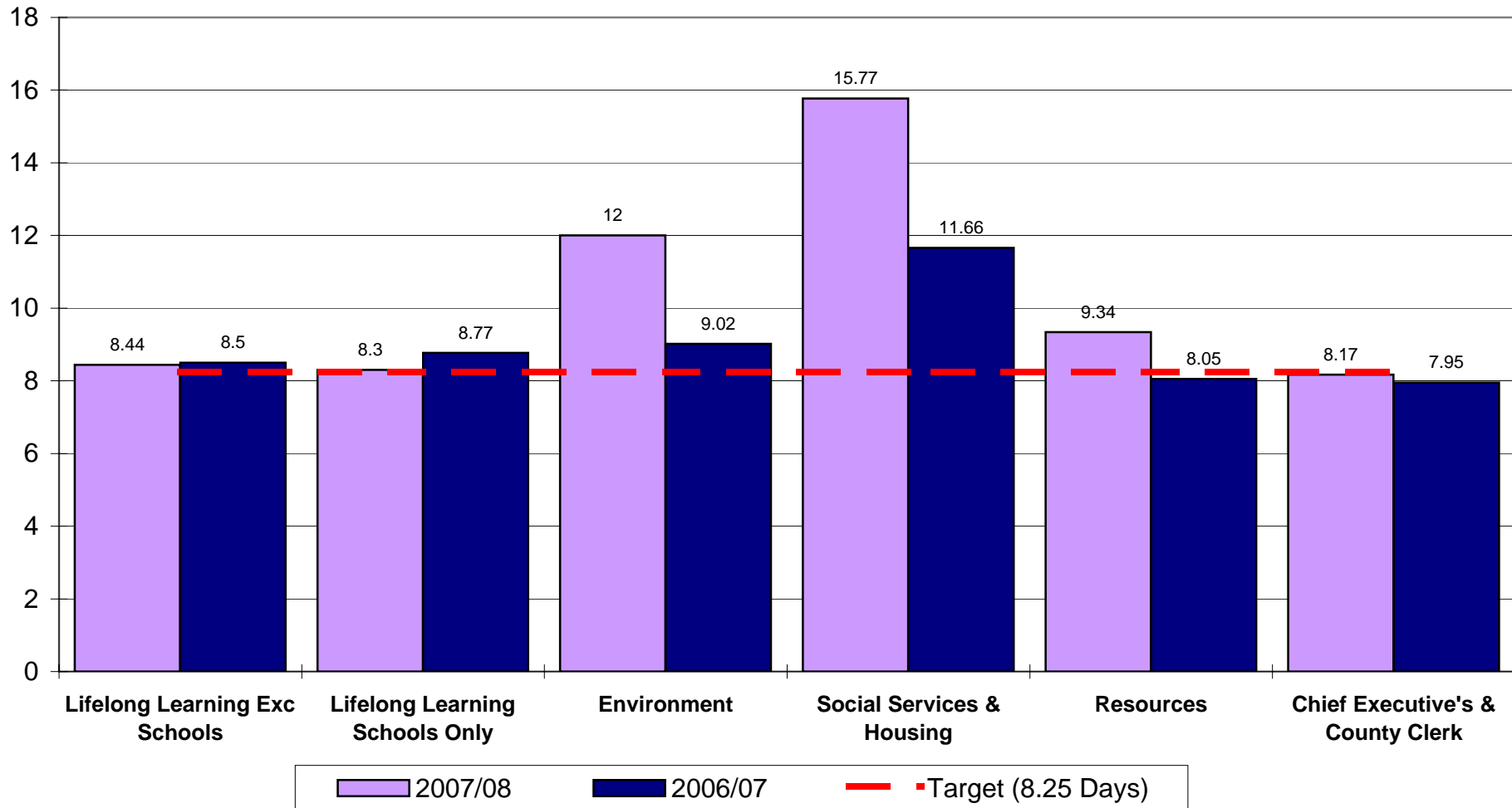
Starters in February 2008

Joining Date	Position	Directorate	Service	Dept	Location
01/02/2008	Clerk Of Works	Environment	Development Services	Property	Caledfryn
18/02/2008	Cook in Charge	Environment	Environmental Services	Catering	Bodelwyddan
19/02/2008	Catering Assistant	Environment	Environmental Services	Catering	Bodelwyddan
25/02/2008	Caretaker	Environment	Environmental Services	Cleaning Service	Kinmel Park Depot
25/02/2008	Cleaner	Environment	Environmental Services	Cleaning Service	Kinmel Park Depot
25/02/2008	Mobile Cleaner	Environment	Environmental Services	Cleaning Service	Kinmel Park Depot
04/02/2008	General Operative	Environment	Finance & Performance	Fleet	Fleet Management Centre
04/02/2008	School Secretary	Lifelong Learning	Schools	Primary Schools	Llandegla Controlled Ysgol Dyffryn Ial
04/02/2008	School Secretary	Lifelong Learning	Schools	Primary Schools	Llantysilio Controlled School
18/02/2008	Learning Support Assistant	Lifelong Learning	Schools	Primary Schools	Henllan C.P
18/02/2008	Administration Assistant	Lifelong Learning	Schools	Secondary Schools	Ysgol Dinas Bran
18/02/2008	Library Assistant	Lifelong Learning	Schools	Secondary Schools	Ysgol Dinas Bran
18/02/2008	Cleaner	Lifelong Learning	Schools	Secondary Schools	Ysgol Brynhyfryd
18/02/2008	Business Information Officer	Lifelong Learning	Tourism, Heritage & Culture	Library & Information Service	The Old Gaol
04/02/2008	Corporate Health & Safety Advisor	Resources	Central Personnel	Corporate Health & Safety	County Hall
04/02/2008	Social Worker	Social Services & Housing	Adult Services	Assessment & Care Management Older People	Russell House
28/02/2008	IT Mentor Children	Social Services & Housing	Adult Services	Social Inclusion & Voluntary Sector	Rhyl
17					

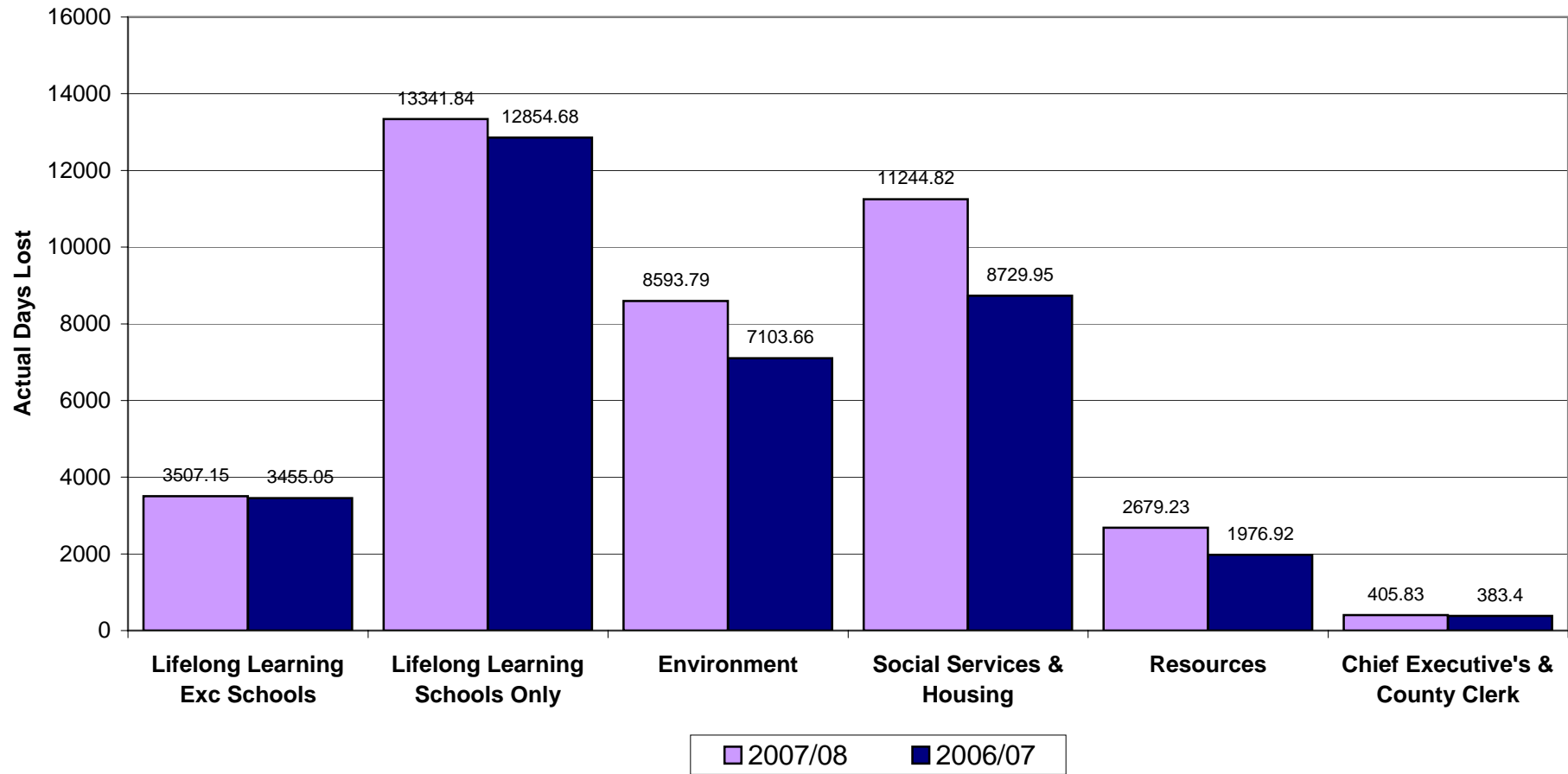
Denbighshire County Council Average Number of Days Lost per Employee February 2008



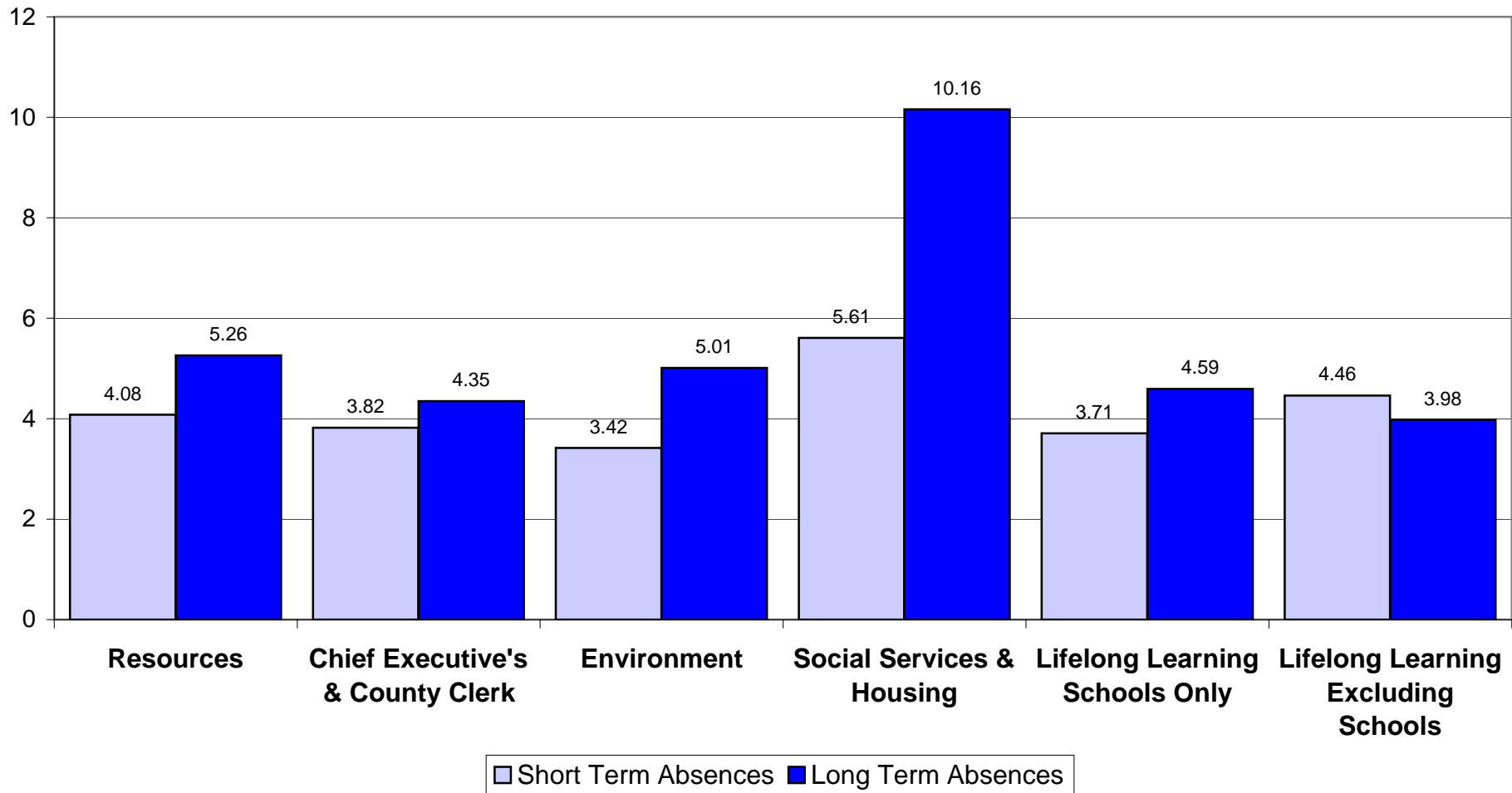
Denbighshire County Council Average Number of Days Lost per Directorate Cumulative April - February 2008



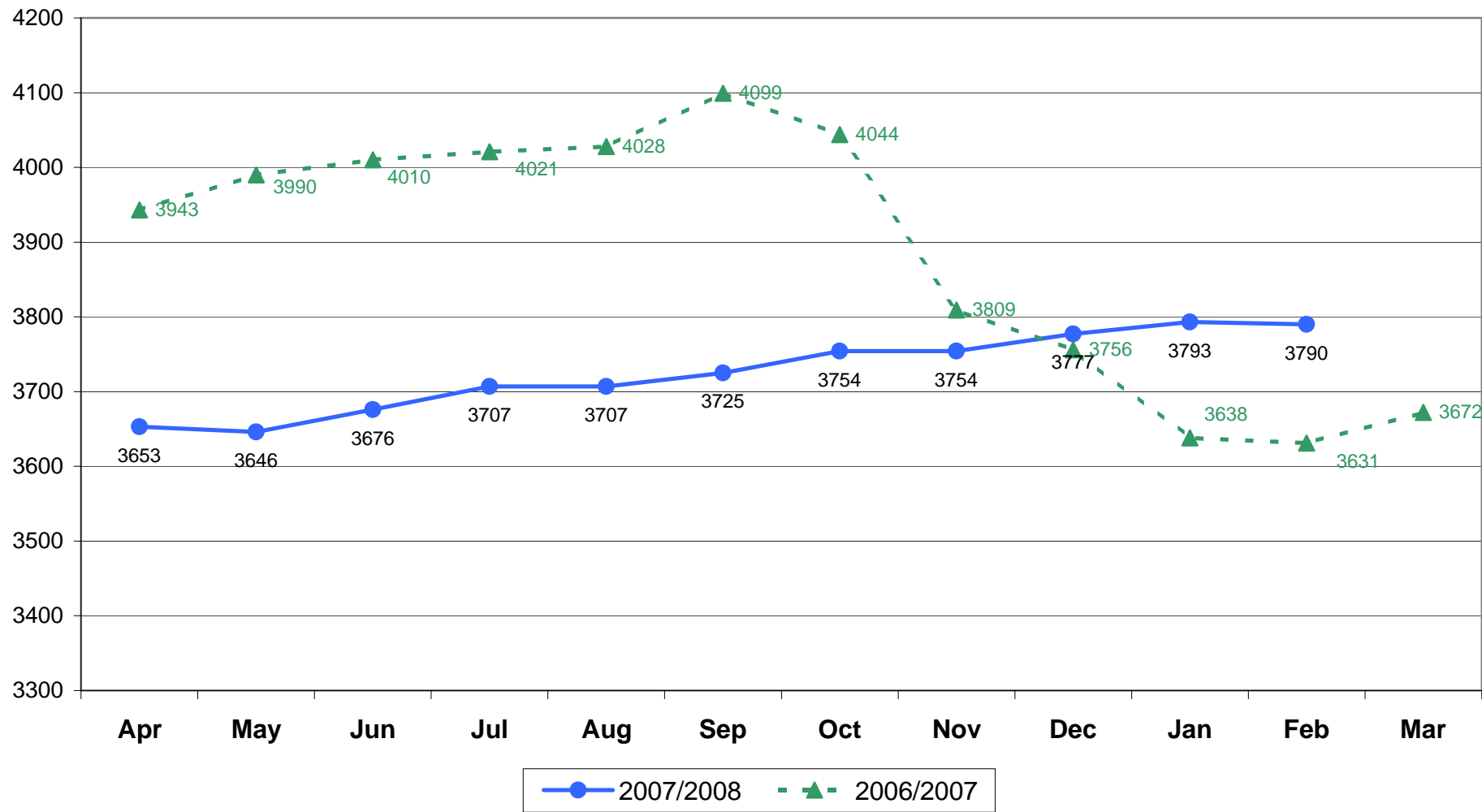
DenbighshireCounty Council Actual Number of Days Lost per Directorate April - February 2008

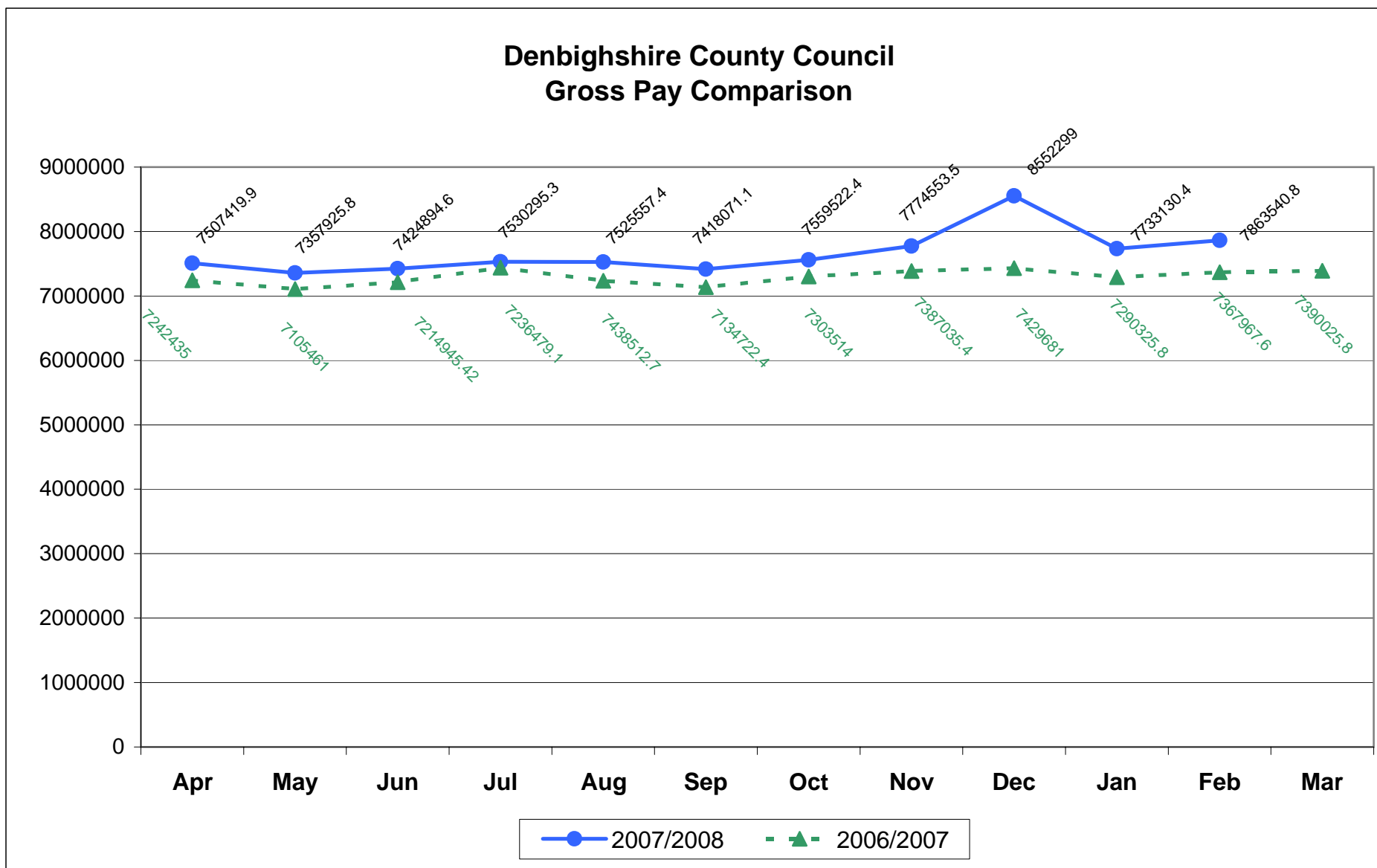


DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Short Term Absence v Long Term Absence April - February 2008



Denbighshire County Council FTE Comparison





**CABINET
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

22 APRIL 2008	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2007-2008	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor J A Smith L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor G O Rowlands P Quirk
Affordable Housing Task Group – final report and recommendations	Councillor G O Rowlands S Kaye
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor H H Evans J Curran
DCC School Development Strategy	Councillor H H Evans M Mehmet / C Simpson / Gareth W Jones
Corporate Consultation	Councillor E C Edwards J Williams
Review of Office Accommodation	Councillor G O Rowlands G Evans
Equalities Plan Update	Councillor J A Smith D W Davies
Tender Award for Collaborative Temporary Agency Contract PART II	Councillor J Thompson Hill A Staples or L Atkin
Community Equipment System Integration CESI - signing off of formal agreement	Councillor P A Dobb Cathy Curtis-Nelson / Marlon Roberts
Adult Mental Health Partnership (recommendation for continuing the Partnership)	Councillor P A Dobb Neil Ayling, Helena Thomas and Julie Mountford
Service Development Plan	Councillor P A Dobb Sue Wright
Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) - to seek ratification for the establishment of a joint Denbighshire and Conwy LSCB	Councillor P A Dobb Nicola Francis / Sue Trehearn
Acquisition of land at St Asaph PART II	Councillor G O Rowlands S Parker
Retrospective Approval of Passenger Transport Contracts PART II	Councillor M A German M Hitchings / P Daniels
3 JUNE 2008	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor R Parry
Provisional Revenue Outturn 2007-2008	Councillor R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P Quirk
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor J Curran
Monitoring Performance Against the Authority's Key Performance Indicators	Councillor J Williams
Special Guardianship - to seek ratification of the new Special Guardianship Policy and Payment Structure.	Councillor Nicola Francis / David Hynes

Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan	Councillor A Walls
15 JULY 2008	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P Quirk
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor J Curran
Prevention and Inclusion Strategy	Councillor Sylvia Jones
Serious Case Review of 'S' Children – outcomes and recommendations from the Review	Councillor Nicola Francis / Sue Trehearn
Youth Justice Plan - to seek ratification of the new Denbighshire and Conwy Youth Justice Plan	Councillor Nicola Francis / Emma Rathbone
NO CABINET MEETINGS WILL BE HELD IN AUGUST 2008	
9 SEPTEMBER 2008	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P Quirk
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor J Curran
Monitoring Performance Against the Authority's Key Performance Indicators	Councillor J Williams
30 SEPTEMBER 2008	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P Quirk
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor J Curran
28 OCTOBER 2008	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P Quirk
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor J Curran

UPDATE ON IMPACT OF VACANCY CONTROL**Appendix 4**

	No of posts vacant	No of posts frozen	No of posts temp frozen	No of posts to be filled	Potential savings 2008/9 £k	Impact upon services
<u>Directorate</u>						
<u>Lifelong Learning (target £150k)</u>						
- Education	8	4		4	90	
- Countryside & Leisure	3	1		2	28	
- Culture & Heritage	4	1		3	<u>30</u>	
					<u>148</u>	
<u>Social Services & Hsg (target £125k)</u>	38	10	13	15	<u>200</u> (2)	
<u>Environment (target £125k)</u>	42	6	22	14	<u>27</u>	
<u>Resources (target £100k)</u>						
- Finance	7	0	1	6	20	
- Personnel	1.5	1	0.5	0	15	
- Audit	0	0	0	0	0	
- Policy Unit	3	1	0	2 (1)	30	
- Contact Centre	1	0	0	1	0	
- ICT	7	1	5	1	<u>25</u>	
					<u>90</u>	

Notes.

(1) To be filled by temporary secondment.

(2) Savings also sought to fund demographic pressures.