

CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday 16 December 2008 in Conference Room 1, County Hall, Ruthin.

PRESENT

Councillors P A Dobb, Lead Member for Health, Social Care and Wellbeing; H H Evans, Leader and Lead Member for Education; S Frobisher, Lead Member for Communities; M M Jones, Lead Member for Children's Services; P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Modernisation and Improvement; J Thompson Hill, Lead Member for Finance; D A J Thomas, Lead Member for Environment: Regeneration and E W Williams, Lead Member for Environment: Sustainable Development.

Observers: Councillors W L Cowie, M LI Davies, G C Evans, and D I Smith.

ALSO PRESENT

Acting Chief Executive; Corporate Director: Social Services and Housing; Interim Corporate Director: Lifelong Learning, County Clerk and the Financial Controller.

APOLOGIES

Councillor R W Hughes, Lead Member for Personnel and Business Management and the Corporate Director: Environment.

Chair: Councillor E W Williams chaired the meeting.

1 URGENT MATTERS

There were no urgent items.

2 MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING 18.11.2008

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 November 2008 were submitted.

***RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.*

3 MODERNISING EDUCATION ACTION PLAN MONITORING

Councillor H H Evans presented the report seeking Members' consideration of the work undertaken to progress the Modernising Education Agenda. Of the initial 405 activities to be completed from the work plans which supported the Action Plan, 104 remained to be completed. The final monitoring visit by Estyn had taken place earlier in the month and findings would be reported in January 2009. The focus would then fall towards the

planning and preparation for the full re-inspection of Education Services and the partial re-inspection of Youth Support Services in March 2009.

Responding to a query from Councillor P A Dobb, the Interim Corporate Director: Lifelong Learning said any slippage detailed in the report was in hand and had been discussed during the final monitoring visit by Estyn.

RESOLVED that Members note the progress achieved to date by the Authority in relation to progressing the recommendations within the Action Plan.

4 UPDATE FROM THE FOCUSED AGENDA BOARD

Councillor H H Evans presented the report for Members to note the progress of the Focused Agenda Board as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 and subject to any amendments agreed by the Executive, Cabinet recommends to Council the model for bringing services closer to communities as shown in Appendix 1 and refers the model to Scrutiny Committees so that their observations can be fed back to Council.

The Board had three main programmes of work to deliver outcomes, namely to meet future challenges and support the delivery of the Council's Priorities, provide a Council service based on what local communities want and a Council which had modernised its education services, regenerated its communities, improved its roads and flood defences and met the challenges created by changes to its population. A Draft Structure would be presented to Cabinet in January 2009 before consultation with staff was carried out. The County would be split into 6 areas as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor P A Dobb said crime statistics and preventative measures should be included in the report, along with the need for people being able to continue to live independently and provision for youth. The Head of Strategic Policy assured Members that Community Safety would be included in the profiles and that all 6 Forums had said that provision for Youth was an issue to be taken forward. Councillor W L Cowie asked that emphasis also be put on relief for transport.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the progress of the Focused Agenda Board as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 and recommends to Council the model for bringing services closer to communities as shown in Appendix 1 and refers the model to Scrutiny Committees so that their observations can be fed back to Council.

5 CORPORATE EXECUTIVE TEAM QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Acting Chief Executive presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to consider progress against the Corporate Executive Team's key actions as provided at Appendix 1 and agree further actions as appropriate. Key issues requiring immediate attention were listed at paragraph 2.1 of the report. The main issue was to build up a response to the Corporate Governance Inspection by addressing recommendations in the report. It was, however, recognised that delivery of those in itself would not of themselves deliver the changes needed but formed the building blocks.

Councillor H H Evans thanked officers for an excellent report and said monitoring of progress on various issues was essential. He also welcomed the daily press digest.

Members were informed that the information that appeared in the press for Denbighshire from the Taxpayers' Alliance was incorrect and the actual increase was 2%. They had apologised.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note progress against the Corporate Executive Team's key actions as provided at Appendix 1 and agreed further actions as appropriate.

6 DCC / CCBC PLANNING & PUBLIC PROTECTION COLLABORATION

Councillor S Frobisher presented the report seeking Members' agreement/authority to progress work that would enable more formal collaborative arrangements across a wide range of "regulatory" functions between Regulatory Services in Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) and Planning and Public Protection Services in Denbighshire County Council (DCC). Councillor Frobisher outlined the similarity in work carried out by the two Authorities and the likely merger of the two Community Safety Teams. This was the first project of its kind in Wales.

Councillor P A Dobb said she was pleased to see such excellent creative collaborative work. She asked whether it was possible to have a pooled budget. Councillor E W Williams said that as each Authority had its own budget, pooled budgets were not feasible at the present time as all the joint working was currently for administrative work. Councillor Williams also suggested that discussions with East Wales Authorities should take place, in particular on provision of planning services. He also confirmed that cross-party working on ICT had been included in the post and had been included in the recent Joint Head of Transport and Infrastructure appointment. The Head of ICT confirmed that ICT provision had been considered and agreement would be required on the systems common to both Authorities.

The Head of Planning and Public Protection informed Members that issues would be worked through and resolved as the collaboration progressed. Denbighshire had a water laboratory which could provide a service for Conwy, for example.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree:

1 authority is given to the Head of Regulatory Services (CCBC) and Head of Public Protection and Planning Services (DCC), to initiate a Project aimed at evaluating and delivering joint working between Regulatory Services (CCBC) and Planning and Public Protection Services (DCC) and that the Project be reported to the Shadow Management Board

2 authority is provided to the Head of Regulatory Services (CCBC) and Head of Planning and Public Protection (DCC) to establish a Draft Service Level Agreement, in consultation with Legal Services in both Authorities to demonstrate how the

arrangement between the 2 Authorities may be formalised, and that the Draft Service Level Agreement be reported to the Shadow Management Board

3 the membership of the Shadow Management Board be confirmed as Cabinet Member for Corporate and Regulatory Services (CCBC), Cabinet Member for Corporate Modernisation (CCBC), Corporate Director of Resources (CCBC), Lead Member for Communities (DCC), Lead Member for the Environment: Sustainable Development (DCC) and Corporate Director: Environment (DCC)

4 a further detailed report on the conclusions of the Shadow Management Board on both the Project Plan and the Service Level Agreement be presented to Cabinet in March next year.

7 DENBIGHSHIRE BIODIVERSITY DUTY ACTION PLAN

Councillor D A J Thomas presented the report seeking approval of Denbighshire's Action Plan to implement the new local authority Biodiversity Duty required under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. He said the new legislation should be integrated into Local Authority services and activities.

The Head of Countryside Services informed Members that the Biodiversity Partnership was a County-wide group consisting of 15 or so organisations.

Councillor P J Marfleet commented on roosting sites for bats and suggested that the regulations for TAN 5 were at complete variance with what was contained in the Assembly's TAN 8 guidance.

Councillor J Thompson Hill reminded colleagues that a number of the actions would have cost implications for the Authority as once again the Assembly had decided not to fund the costs resulting from this additional responsibility for Local Authorities. The Head of Tourism, Heritage and Culture emphasised the importance of the new Duty and said there was a risk of missing out on funding to develop sustainable green projects.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves and supports Denbighshire's Action Plan to implement the new local authority Biodiversity Duty required under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

8 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report for Members to note the debate in Wales on Affordable Housing and the Essex Review and its implementation and to note the current information on Affordable Housing initiatives and issues in Denbighshire. A further report to full Council was also currently being prepared which proposes new interim arrangements for delivering affordable housing through the planning system, pending the completion of a review of the Council's affordable housing Supplementary Planning Guidance. Members were asked to agree to the establishment of a renewed Affordable Housing Working Party and approve the revised "Affordable Housing

Solutions” delivery statement. The Affordable Solutions paper had been provided by the Housing Strategy Officer.

Denbighshire’s current policies were now not as flexible as they could be and it was important to encourage builders to provide the units needed. A supply of cheaper housing was required.

Councillor P J Marfleet asked what impact the current national financial situation had on housing in general and not just affordable housing, and for information on the Mortgage Rescue Scheme. The Head of Housing Services said flexibility was required to respond to the current housing market. The Mortgage Rescue Scheme had been allocated extra funding but to date not many individual cases were coming through from Tai Clwyd, the administrators of the scheme. There was a need to react to the downturn in house prices and fewer mortgages being made available. The Assembly had allocated £42m to the Strategic Capital Investment Fund to allow extra housing support over a 3 year period, with bids of £0.5m being required by 19.12.2008.

Referring to the Draft Interim Planning Guidance for Rhyl West, Councillor D A J Thomas asked whether there was an element included for open space. The Head of Housing Services said this was an issue for Full Council to decide. The Head of Planning and Public Protection agreed and said the emerging policy for Rhyl West developments could need consideration by Full Council on the contributions towards a community regeneration fund and it was possible open space or affordable housing could be agreed to ensure flexibility.

Councillor Marfleet said it was important to ensure that the impact of the current economic downturn was not underestimated and he was pleased to note that the Assembly was channeling extra funding through Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd.

RESOLVED that Members note the debate in Wales on Affordable Housing and the Essex Review and its implementation and note the current information on Affordable Housing initiatives and issues in Denbighshire, and that a further report to Council is also currently being prepared. Members agree to the establishment of a renewed Affordable Housing Working Party and approve the revised “Affordable Housing Solutions” delivery statement.

9 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET & CAPITAL PLAN UPDATE 2008-2009

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report for Members to note the forecast outturn position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing Capital Plan for 2008-2009. The latest forecast suggested an in-year revenue surplus of £371k would be generated by the end of the financial year, which was £61k less than originally forecast in February 2008. A minor reduction of £27k was for planned repairs and maintenance expenditure. There was a decrease on garage rents with voids having gone down to about 12% from 18%. Any increase in bad debts was being monitored.

Details of the following year's subsidy settlement would be available later in the month and the Plan would be fully updated and reported to Cabinet in January 2009.

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

10 REVENUE BUDGET AND SUMMARY CAPITAL PLAN 2008-2009

Councillor J Thompson Hill presented the report for Members to note the estimate of the likely outturn figures for the current financial year as detailed in Appendix 1 attached to the report and the summary capital plan performance for 2008-2009 as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report. Members were asked to note the recent agreement of HM Customs to the Council's bid for a VAT refund as detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

Lifelong Learning were forecasting an overspend of £695k, mainly due to the costs for Hyfydle operation, the current interim management arrangements for the Directorate, and increasing losses incurred by the Schools Meals Service. However, the Social Services and Housing Directorate were forecasting an underspend of £74k with the Environment Directorate forecasting an underspend of £82k.

The Authority had been able to reclaim VAT from HM Customs from 1990-1996 for 'live public performances' as a national firm of accountants had found a loophole in VAT regulations. Denbighshire would receive £379k and £142k from the claim made on its behalf by the firm of VAT Specialists. A claim for backdated interest on the sums had also been agreed by HM Customs. Members were asked to earmark an element of the VAT refund in a similar way to the additional LABGI funding to form a regeneration fund with its use being determined at a later date.

National interest rates had again been cut which could mean a projected reduction in investment income of up to £1m for 2009-2010.

Councillor P A Dobb informed colleagues that the Healthy Meals Working Group would be reporting their findings to Cabinet in January 2009.

RESOLVED that Members note the projected outturn figures for 2008-2009 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and note the summary capital plan performance figures for the 2008-2009 financial year as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report. Members note the VAT refund from pre Local Government Reorganisation, the use of the back dated interest to supplement lost investment income and agree to earmark the VAT refund sum for investment in future regeneration projects.

At this juncture (3.30 p.m.) the meeting adjourned for 10 minutes to allow Members to participate in refreshments.

11 REVENUE BUDGET 2009-2010 UPDATE

Councillor J Thompson Hill presented the report to advise Members of the detail of the Assembly's final settlement at 3.6% for the next financial year together with the progress made to date on delivering the required level of budget savings and the review of potential service pressures next financial year. The draft budget position had assumed a minimum provision for 7 service pressures as listed in paragraph 2.2 of the report. Several further issues were currently emerging which would also increase pressures on budgets.

Councillor P A Dobb reminded colleagues that a subsidised healthy school meals provision would be required and would be reported to Cabinet in January 2009.

Members discussed a possible 3% increase in Council Tax and noted that the impact overall depended on the Police precept – if this was set at 6% it would mean an increase in Council Tax bills of 4%. Members agreed the 3% Council Tax increase target and the retaining of the resulting £880k spare resources as a contingency against the additional pressures.

It was noted that the full review of the Library Service was due in 2010-2011 that cost savings would be achieved in year 2 with the withdrawal of the mobile library service, at the end of the vehicle lease. Members noted the suggestion by Resources Scrutiny Committee that the production of County Voice be reduced to 4 editions per year. Officers agreed that County Voice budget would need further discussion as recruitment funding would still be required.

Members discussed various aspects of the Environment Directorate savings proposals and agreed to include the car parking proposal. They agreed discussions with other North Wales Authorities should take place on Post 16 Education related transport before any decisions were taken to make changes to the current provision. Members further agreed that further savings would need to be identified in the Tourism, Culture and Heritage Service and the Head of the Service would be asked to find further savings.

Referring to the Learning Disabilities Service, the Corporate Director: Social Services and Housing said some modernisation of the service would be required, some savings would be made and changes would be made to the service but at no detriment to clients.

RESOLVED that Members note the final WAG settlement figures for 2009/10 and note the progress to date regarding the delivery of cost savings / increased income for 2009/10 and the review of service pressures. Members agree to retain the 3% target increase in Council Tax for 2009/10 and earmark the resulting unallocated resources to part fund the issues identified in paragraph 2.7.

12 ROUTINE REPORTING ON PERSONNEL

The Head of Personnel presented the report for Members to note the statistics on Personnel. The number of staff employed had decreased in November 2008, a decrease from the previous month and detailed the reasons for the increase in headcount between January and October 2008.

Although he noted a decrease in sickness absence for the last month, Councillor Marfleet asked whether a correlation had been made between sickness absence and school holidays / half term. The Head of Personnel said that such an exercise had been carried out but there had appeared to be no correlation between the two and that there was a reduction in sickness absence during the summer months.

Discussion followed on the target days lost per employee. Councillor P A Dobb asked whether the figure set for Cefndy, which had many staff with disabilities, was fair. The Head of Personnel said that Cefndy did not have the highest rate in terms of sickness absence. The Corporate Director: Social Services and Housing that sickness absence targets were not set at the same rates in the Business Plan and that although staff absences at Cefndy were a hot spot, this was not exclusively because some staff had disabilities.

Noting that the Council Tax Department now employed a Bailiff, officers agreed to consider Councillor Dobb's suggestion whether it was feasible for the Bailiff to also work for Social Services.

RESOLVED that Members note the information in the report.

13 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Acting Chief Executive presented the Cabinet Forward Work Programme. Members noted that the first 5 reports for the Cabinet meeting due to be held on 13.01.2009 would now be presented at the meeting on 27.01.2009 and that the Charging for Post 16 School Transport report be removed from the Work Programme. Members agreed to the deletion of the proposed Cabinet meeting on 13.01.2009.

A brief discussion followed on the proposed report on the Application for the granting of a discount on the Lease for the Scala, Prestatyn and it was agreed the report, including full details of the financial situation, be presented to Cabinet on 27.01.2009. During this discussion Councillor J Thompson Hill declared his interest and left the meeting. Councillor P J Marfleet suggested that the next stage of the process regarding the Scala, Prestatyn be delegated to Finance Officers to enable the process to move forward, with a report being provided to Cabinet.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, as amended.

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 AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF DENBIGHSHIRE'S RECYCLING PARKS

Councillor E W Williams presented the report seeking approval to award the contract for the management and operation of the Council's recycling parks (civic amenity sites). He thanked the Head of Environmental Services and staff for their thorough work, as did Councillor D A J Thomas.

The Head of Environmental Services said the new contract should allow an increase from the current 25% recycling rates to an achievable 65%. The contract was set around landfill diversion, where a bonus would be paid. The bonus would be offset against a lowering of other landfill diversion activities.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the award of a seven year contract for the management and operation of the Council's recycling parks (civic amenity sites) to the contractor named in the report.

16 PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP NEW MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS: ROYAL INTERNATIONAL PAVILION, LLANGOLLEN

Councillor D A J Thomas presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to enter into negotiations with Llangollen Partnership, the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod (LIME) and other potential interested parties to develop options for revised management arrangements for the Royal International Pavilion (RIP), to include possible externalised management arrangements. The options would be focused on outcomes that would enable the facility to be managed sustainably for the benefit of DCC, LIME and Llangollen. In order to facilitate the above, a further proposal to develop a Master Plan Feasibility Study of the site to provide objective advice for future development and redevelopment options would also be progressed.

Members discussed various options for the site and expressed concern regarding the structural condition of the pavilion. Members asked for information on the Authority's contractual obligations and said a detailed business plan and action plan were required which would include details of any external funding. All agreed an encompassing

holistic approach was required. The Head of Tourism, Heritage and Culture detailed current funding and agreed a further report would be provided to Cabinet in early 2009. Members agreed with Councillor H H Evans' suggestion for high level discussions with the Arts Council for Wales.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve DCC entering into discussions with the Llangollen Partnership, LIME and other possible partners, leading to a series of options for the future management of the Royal International Pavilion, Llangollen and note that a formal report will be provided to Cabinet, seeking approval for any arrangements that emerge from the discussions. Members note that business and action plans would be provided.

17 CAPITAL PLAN 2008-2009

Councillor J Thompson Hill presented the report for Members to note the latest position on the 2008/09 element of the Capital Plan.

Councillor Thompson Hill detailed the latest position for various projects and asked for Members' agreement for funding for the former Henllan Training Centre, Telpyn Bridge and Victoria Bridge Refurbishment, Corwen projects.

RESOLVED that Members note the latest position on the 2008-2009 element of the Capital Plan and note the approval by CET under delegated powers of Ruthin One Stop Shop and Foryd Harbour Cycle Bridge design competition. Members approve the request to allocate funding as detailed in the report, from the contingency budgets, to the possible reallocation of staff away from Henllan subject to detailed costing being approved by the Financial Controller; for the design and other works on the Telpyn Bridge scheme and to fund the increase in expenditure on the Victoria Bridge Refurbishment scheme.

The meeting concluded at 5.20 p.m.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR H H Evans, Leader of the Council

DATE: 27 January 2009

SUBJECT: OVERVIEW STATEMENT FOR THE ESTYN INSPECTION – MARCH 2009

1 DECISION SOUGHT

Cabinet is requested to note the work undertaken to date to prepare for the Estyn Inspection and to endorse the overview statement.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.2 A full inspection of the local authority education service fields within Denbighshire will take place between the 16th and 27th March 2009.

The inspection is based around 4 key questions, namely:

- How effective is the authority's strategic planning?
- How effective are services and how does performance compare, including value for money?
- How effective are leadership and strategic management?
- How well do leaders and managers monitor, evaluate and improve services?

Within the second question judgments will be formed on the following services provided:-

- Support for school improvement
- Promoting social inclusion and the wellbeing of learners
- Additional Learning Needs
- Access and School Organisation
- Support services for schools
- Strategic management

The inspection team, following the inspection will make two key judgments about each service namely, how good is the local authority's performance and will the local authority's performance improve?. The local authority's performance will be rated on a four-point scale.

2.3 In advance of the inspection in March 2009, clear documentation will be provided to Estyn to provide an overview statement of progress made in Education since the July 2007 inspection, a comprehensive self evaluation document against the Estyn inspection criteria and a detailed update of progress made against the Estyn Action Plan in response to the recommendations from the July 2007 inspection.

- 2.4 These documents are currently being progressed with a view to the documents being finalised at the end of January. These documents will provide the Estyn Inspection Team with an accurate picture of Education service provision within Denbighshire identifying both good practice and shortcomings as appropriate and provide clarity as to how the authority has responded to previous recommendations made by Estyn. The current version of the overview statement as prepared by the Interim Corporate Director is attached as Appendix 1. Further discussions will take place with the Modernising Education Board, the Lifelong Learning Directorate Management Team and the Head teacher's Federation prior to the finalisation of the documentation for Estyn.
- 2.5 The Estyn Inspection Team will consider the documentation provided by Denbighshire in advance of the pre-inspection meeting to be held with key elected members and officers on the 4th March. This meeting will enable the Inspection Team to discuss current issues with the authority and finalise arrangements for the inspection to take place between the 16th and 27th March. To assist arrangements for the inspection, the Head of Planning and Performance (Lifelong Learning) will undertake the role of nominee and will work with the Estyn Inspection Team throughout the inspection process.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

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

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Cost Implications:

Many of the actions which have been undertaken against the action plan have been 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.

The review of the action plan has identified activities which cannot be delivered within either agreed resources or within agreed timescales. Business Plans for services will need to reflect alternative methods of delivering actions whether it be within amended working practices, or within existing resources and increased timescales.

4.2 Staffing / Accommodation Implications:

The delivery of the action plan has required a change of focus for staff across all Directorates responsible for activities. The need to review the provision of Education accommodation will be considered as part of the wider office accommodation scheduled to be considered by Cabinet as part of its overall work programme.

4.3 IT Implications:

IT support implications for individual schools are currently being considered with schools as part of the fair funding review.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendation/s

Individual risks associated with delivering the action plan are monitored on a regular basis.

5.2 Risks associated with agreeing the recommendation/s

Individual risks associated with delivering the action plan are monitored on a regular basis.

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The Council has responded to the need to deliver the Estyn Action Plan with additional funding being provided for the service. It is anticipated that revamping activities and using existing funding more cost effectively will mean that the need for further resources to deliver the Estyn response will be minimal. The response to the Modernising Education agenda will form part of the budget setting process for 2009/10 and later years.

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The Modernising Education Board considered the draft overview statement at its meeting on the 14th January 2009. The Overview Statement and the Self Evaluation document have been produced in consultation with Heads of Services and Service Managers across the authority.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Assessment of Impact on Corporate Priorities:

The delivery of the Action Plan will support the Council to deliver the corporate priority of Modernising Education.

8.2 Assessment of impact on the Vision, Community Strategy, Equalities and Sustainability:

The prioritisation of Modernising Education will assist the Council to deliver its vision of investing in schools in order to sustain high standards of educational attainment to meet the needs of pupils, the wider community and the economy as outlined in the Council's vision.

9 ACTION PLAN

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / DATE BY WHEN ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	ACTION TO BE REVIEWED & MONITORED BY / DATE TO BE MONITORED
Submission of documentation to Estyn.	J. Walley, Head of Planning and Performance – 4/2/2009	M. Mehmet, Interim Corporate Director – 5/2/2009
To confirm arrangements for interviews / focus groups as part of the Inspection process	J Walley, Head of Planning and Performance - 9/3/2009	M. Mehmet, Interim Corporate Director – 9/3/2009

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the progress achieved to date by the authority in relation to responding to the previous Estyn Inspection of 2007.

That Members endorse the overview statement.



**Denbighshire County
Council**

Overview Statement

For

Estyn Inspection March 2009

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER

1.0	The Local Authority Context	05
2.0	Vision and Strategy for Education	08
2.1	Improving Outcomes for Learners	08
2.2	Aspirations and Plans for Educational Outcomes	10
2.3	Strong Leadership and Management	11
2.4	Management and Organisation	12
2.5	Performance Management and the Estyn Action Plan	13
2.6	Funding for Education	14
3.0	Support for School Improvement	15
3.1	A Strategic Approach to School Improvement	15
3.2	The Partnership Agreement	15
3.3	Effective Use of Data	16
3.4	Initiatives to Raise Standards	17
4.0	Promoting Social Inclusion and the Well-Being of Learners	19
4.1	Inclusion Strategy	19
4.2	Support for Attendance and Behaviour	19
4.3	Safeguarding Children and Young People	21
5.0	Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	23
5.1	Ensuring Resources Meet Needs	23
5.2	Assessment and Evaluation	24
5.3	Multi-Agency Working	24
6.0	Access	26
6.1	Modernising Education	26
6.2	Welsh-Medium Education	27
6.3	Admissions to Schools	28
6.4	Home-to-School Transport	29
6.5	Schools Places	30
6.6	Asset Management Planning	30
7.0	Support Services for Schools	32
7.1	Background	32
7.2	Approach and Consultation	32
7.3	Progress to Date	33
7.4	Areas Still Requiring Attention	34
8.0	Working with Social Services and other partners	36
8.1	Current Arrangements	36
8.2	Future Developments	37

9.0 Use of Resources 39

10.0 Self-Evaluation 43

DRAFT

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S OVERVIEW STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Denbighshire's Education Service was inspected by Estyn in July 2007. That inspection focused on strategic management, school improvement, inclusion and additional learning needs. Inspectors found important shortcomings in all areas and important barriers that were hindering improvement.

In response to the findings of that inspection, the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills has established an Independent Education Recovery Board to monitor progress and to offer advice to the local authority. In addition, Estyn has been undertaking quarterly monitoring of the progress the authority is making against the recommendations of the inspection report. The authority has also benefited significantly from support provided by the Welsh Local Government Association.

Denbighshire Council has responded decisively to the Estyn inspection report. Following the publication of the report, the council moved to replace both the political and the officer leadership of education and placed education at the top of its priorities. This commitment has been maintained since the Estyn inspection and the authority is now able to demonstrate real, rapid and resilient progress in all aspects of education in Denbighshire. The council recognizes that it still has some way to go before it achieves its aspiration for '*all schools to offer a first class education service*' (*Statement of Intent, October 2007*), but it is aware of where it is on the improvement journey and what is still needed to achieve the status of a top performing education service.

The purpose of this statement is to provide a strategic overview of the progress that the authority has made since the inspection in July 2007 and its plans and aspirations for building on these improvements for the future. Each chapter in this Overview Statement is supported by an evidence file.

For a comprehensive understanding of the progress made and prospects for improvement, this Overview Statement should be read alongside the authority's Self-Evaluation document, which provides the details, with further references to evidence, of the authority's evaluation against the four key questions of the Estyn Framework for the Inspection of Local Education Authorities.

1.0 The Local Authority Context

Denbighshire is a mixture of urban and rural communities with over 50% of its population concentrated in the northern coastal area. There is significant variation in the number of Welsh speakers with 60% in some rural areas and 25% in the coastal strip.

In the north of the county there are the traditional seaside resorts of Prestatyn and Rhyl where the Leisure Industry remains a major employer. Bodelwyddan is the home of a district general hospital which is the county's largest employer on one site.

Further south, Denbighshire is predominantly rural in character and agriculture is a key sector. The market towns of Corwen, Denbigh and Ruthin also support local industrial estates and Llangollen, home of the world famous international musical Eisteddfod, is the starting point for a preserved stream railway.

Denbighshire has a growing population of 97,000 residents. 22,600 are under the age of 19 and 20,100 are over the age of 65. The total population of Denbighshire is projected to increase by 18,700 (19.5%) by 2031. This is above the average population growth (14.1%) projected for all of Wales. The number of children within Denbighshire is projected to remain fairly constant until mid-2010, increase between 2010 and 2026 and then remain fairly constant until 2031.

Denbighshire contains significant pockets of deprivation particularly in the west and south west of Rhyl and in Denbigh Upper. 10% of its Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) fall within the 10% most deprived in Wales. 45% of its LSOA fall within 50% most deprived LSOA in Wales.

The pattern of qualifications within Denbighshire's working age population is broadly similar to that of Wales as a whole. 79.7% have an NVQ level 1 or higher, 27% have an NVQ level 4 or higher and 14% have no qualifications. The workforce is diverse. The most prevalent occupational group at 15% is skilled trades and the least at 8% is sales and customer services. Denbighshire has a lower proportion of its workforce in professional occupations than is the case across Wales, but slightly higher percentage of managers and senior officials.

There are 53 primary schools, 25% of which have fewer than 50 pupils and five schools have over 400 pupils. Approximately 40% of primary schools work through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. There are eight secondary schools, five of which are English medium, one Welsh and two bilingual. There are two special schools in the county.

The council recognizes that it needs to work effectively with other public, private and voluntary sector organisations in order to meet the service needs and aspirations of Denbighshire's residents. It has taken the lead in establishing the Local Service Board (LSB). In addition to the LSB, the council leads the following important partnerships:

- Health, Social care and Well-being
- Children and Young People
- Regeneration and Sustainable Development; and
- Community Safety

Following local elections in May 2008, the newly elected members of Denbighshire adopted the following corporate priorities for the coming years:

- Modernising Education
- Responding to Demographic Change
- Regenerating our Communities
- Roads and flood Defences

The council has developed a new Focused Agenda structure with a corporate board for each of the first three priorities, co-ordinated by the Focused Agenda Board to provide leadership and direction for council services and effective co-ordination with the partnership boards.

The recent Wales Audit Office's Corporate Governance Inspection of the council, which took place in the autumn of 2008, was based on the following question:

'Is the council putting in place the necessary corporate governance arrangements to deliver improved outcomes for local people?'

The inspection report reached the following conclusion:

'There are signs of gradual improvement in some of Denbighshire County Council's services, but these are inconsistent and the council's corporate governance arrangements as they stand are not likely to ensure delivery of its challenging agenda for improvement.'

Inspectors arrived at this conclusion because:

- *While political leadership is strong, senior officers are not consistently providing the level of direction and corporate discipline needed to deliver the council's improvement priorities.*
- *The council bases its new priorities on a high-level assessment of need but has not yet defined in sufficient detail what it wants to achieve and so cannot plan effectively.*
- *The council's arrangements are capable of securing incremental improvement but not the transformational change that its strategic objectives require.*

The council has accepted the findings of the inspection report and has taken immediate action to address weaknesses at Corporate Executive Team (CET) level. The council has developed a comprehensive action plan which addressed all the recommendations of the inspection report and has commissioned external support to help strengthen its corporate management capacity. To provide a degree of external challenge to its improvement work, the council is working with the Welsh Assembly Government, the Welsh Audit Office and the Welsh Local Government Association to establish an 'arms-length' board to monitor its response to the recommendations.

While the Corporate Governance Inspection report is generally critical of the council's progress with corporate priorities, it singles out the council's corporate priority for modernising education for praise. The following quotes from the report illustrate the progress that has been made:

'...the council could do more to share the good practice we observed in the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee.' (p9)

' A feature of the Modernising Education programme is its clear and measurable outcomes.' (p12)

' The Modernising Education priority is an area of increasing success...' (p13)

' In driving forward its new priorities, the council wishes to emulate some of the features of the Modernising Education Board.' (p16)

Although the council faces challenges to improve corporate governance, the political and strategic management of Education is strong and increasingly capable of contributing to the corporate issues. There is an emerging long term vision for Denbighshire's education service, supported by a clearly thought through strategy for improvement and planning for delivery.

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2. Vision and Strategy for Education

Denbighshire's vision and strategy for education is set out in three important documents: The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2008-2012, the council's Improvement Plan 2008-2011 and the Lifelong Learning Directorate Business Plan 2008-2012. The CYPP provides a strategic vision for all partners in the county. The agreed collective vision for the Children and Young People's Plan is:

'To make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people in Denbighshire.'

The Plan uses the framework of the Assembly Government's seven Core Aims, which are derived from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Improving educational outcomes for children and young people are at the heart of the Plan and the authority's corporate priority of modernising education is clearly articulated throughout. The purpose of the Plan is to work with partners so that, in three years' time, there will be measurable improvements to the lives of children and young people over and beyond what might have been achieved by agencies working separately.

The second key document is the council's Improvement Plan 2008-2011. This plan sets out the council's four corporate priorities and links these to the county's overall vision for Denbighshire as articulated in the "Vision for Denbighshire". As one of the four corporate priorities modernising education features heavily in the document.

The third key document is the Lifelong Learning Directorate's Business Plan 2008-2011. The Business Plan identifies the Directorate's goals for the next three years under the following headings:

Improve pupil attainment by raising pupil achievement, increasing attendance and reducing exclusions

Improve the leadership and management of education at all levels

Modernise the provision of education

Improve the provision of youth support services

Improve the use of resources

The actions contained within the Directorate's Business Plan are the same actions contained within the Estyn workplans. The specific objectives, actions and responsibilities, together with a risk assessment of all these are set out in the Business Plan. A new structure for the strategic planning of the Directorate is currently being developed which will explicitly link the council's priorities, directorate and service targets and actions, and objectives for individuals.

2.1 Improving outcomes for learners

The Estyn inspection report of the local authority noted that:

'overall performance at key stages 1, 2 and 4 is below the average in Wales. The overall rate of improvement is slower than that achieved nationally. When performance is compared with all 22 authorities across Wales and free school meals entitlement are taken into account, attainment in Denbighshire schools is much lower than might be expected'.

Addressing poor outcomes for learners is at the centre of the authority's improvement strategy. The authority has developed a Partnership Agreement with schools as the tool for raising standards in a strategic and systematic way. The full impact of this approach will take a year or two to embed, but there is encouraging evidence that outcomes for children and young people are improving and that the gap between Denbighshire and Wales is narrowing.

For the academic year 2007/08:-

- all of the Estyn Action Plan targets for attainment, attendance and exclusions, with the exception of Key Stage 1, have been achieved;
- at Key Stage 1, 80.4% of children achieved the CSI which is only 0.3% behind the Wales average;
- at Key Stage 2, 76.5% of children achieved the CSI, which is 1.0% above the Wales average;
- at Key Stage 3, 59.4% of children achieved the CSI, which is just 0.2% below the Wales average;
- at Key Stage 4, the percentage of children who achieved 5 A*-C grades was 50.9%, an improvement of 3.8% from the previous year, compared with the Wales average improvement of only 1.6% This improvement was the 5th best in Wales;
- the percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools was 91.2%, an improvement of 1.3% on the previous year and amongst the top eight in Wales;
- the percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools was 94.1%, an improvement of 0.5% on the previous year (official figures and comparative data for Wales available in February 2009);
- there were 6 permanent exclusions from secondary schools, a rate of 0.9 per 1,000 pupils and 0 from primary school. (Figures are unverified. Official figures and comparative data for Wales available in March 2009)
- Key Stage 1 CSI – 44.6% of schools are in the bottom two quartiles compared with 55% in 2006;
- Key Stage 2 CSI – 52.1% of schools are in the bottom two quartiles compared with 60% in 2006;
- Key Stage 3 CSI – 50% of schools are in the bottom two quartiles compared with 62.5% in 2006.

- Key stage 4 CSI 5A*-C – 50% of schools are in the bottom two quartiles compared with 75% in 2006.

The authority has a number of outstanding services and initiatives, which have delivered excellent outcomes for children and young people over the past 12 months. These include the work in the Foundation Stage, and the innovative work on attendance and exclusion, both of which have been consistently acknowledged by the Estyn monitoring visits since March 2008.

Another example of an innovative approach is the 'Autistic Spectrum Children's Education' which is designed to enable children between the ages of three to five to be supported in a multi-agency way in a mainstream setting. This collaborative approach includes the use of specialist staff from Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn working with parents, support staff and 'mainstream' teachers to ensure early intervention and sustained future placement within mainstream. This approach has been devised by Denbighshire's Educational Psychology Service and is well received by parents and schools.

2.2 Aspirations and plans for educational outcomes

In response to the Estyn inspection report of July 2007, the authority had developed an action plan, which has been acknowledged as clear and comprehensive by the Independent Education Recovery Board. The action plan is driven by an aspiration to improve all pupils' attainment in all key stages, so that within three years, attainment is within the "top 10" performing authorities in Wales. Denbighshire has committed itself to ensuring that key stage results match or exceed the two highest achieving members of its family group by 2012. The council expects school attendance to remain within the top 10 performing authorities in Wales by 2010 and school exclusions to be below the Welsh average by the same date.

The authority's Estyn action plan was submitted to Estyn on 20 December 2007. It contains targets for improving outcomes for children and young people over the next three years, supported by detailed action plans and work plans for each of the inspection report's recommendations. Members and officers are focused on implementing these recommendations and they understand the impact of effective implementations on outcomes. The Partnership Agreement, while still recent, is already providing the structure for effective working relationships between the local authority and schools. At the heart of the Partnership Agreement is a clear approach for supporting and challenging schools, including a transparent process for identifying appropriate levels of intervention where that is necessary.

The council has recognised that improvements in education require schools to change and modernise and, therefore, the authority has developed its Modernising Education Policy Framework which is a comprehensive set of policies informed by Welsh Assembly Government policies and a thorough understanding of the local context. The authority's aspirations for its learners include schools with excellent learning environments, high standards of buildings and modern facilities. The authority wants schools to be well placed to take advantage of new curriculum changes, such as the Foundation Phase, the 14-19 measure and the 'Transforming Education and Training in Wales' agenda, as well as developments in ICT and community use of school buildings.

The Modernising Education Policy Framework has been endorsed by the council and officers are now engaged with implementation. The authority has a good track record of implementing major capital projects in order to address school capacity issues. For example, the authority recently opened Ysgol Clawdd Offa primary in the Prestatyn area. The policy framework will enable the authority to continue addressing its modernisation programme in a more strategic manner by ensuring that there are clear and transparent criteria to guide action by the council.

The local authority has a range of well established and successful cross-border arrangements with its neighbouring authorities. Over the past 12 months the authority has been active in developing these links further on a range of issues, including sharing curriculum and other educational services, school admissions, planning the future provision of schooling and developing joint approaches to nationally driven initiatives, such as the 'Transformation Agenda'. However, the local authority recognises that more can be done to improve collaboration and enhance opportunities for children and young people in the region. Denbighshire aspires to developing much stronger links with neighbouring authorities, including, where appropriate, merger of services and pooling of resources.

The authority's approach to its support services to schools has been transformed from one that appeared to protect the interest of the service to one that is firmly focused on the needs of the learner and the school. The new approach to Fair Funding is underpinned by this philosophy and support services to schools will be provided by those who are best placed to meet their needs, rather than the local authority in all cases. However, it is recognised that embedding this approach across the council and all schools will take more time but in partnership with schools significant progress is expected by March 2010.

2.3 Strong leadership and management

The Estyn report of July 2007 graded strategic management as 4 and noted that:

"...leaders at all levels in the authority, over a long period of time, have not addressed the continual poor performance of schools. The political leadership of education in the authority is ineffective. At both Cabinet level and in the scrutiny committee, the challenges to officers about performance of the education services are not focused enough".

Since the inspection, the council has made education its top priority and has taken radical action to replace both the political and officer leadership of education. These new leaders have transformed the quality of strategic management of education. This improvement has been recognised by the Estyn monitoring visits since the inspection. The Estyn monitoring letter of 16 March 2008 noted that:

"Political leaders are held in high regard by headteachers, officers and other members. These leaders listen well to stakeholders and are increasingly understanding the issues that need to be addressed to improve education, scrutiny and accountability and, as a result, policy making is better informed".

Improvements in leadership were further acknowledged in Estyn's monitoring letter of 9 June 2008, which noted that:

“Since the inspection, senior management of education services has improved significantly. There is a greater purpose and clarity to senior officers’ work. This is communicated effectively to operational staff. As a result, staff have a greater clarity about what they are supposed to be doing. They undertake their work with confidence knowing that they have the support of senior managers”.

The most recent Corporate Governance Inspection, published in November 2008, recognised the transformation that has taken place in the quality of the political leadership of the council, especially in education:

“Leadership at the political level is stronger and more strategically focused than in the past. The Leader of the council has high expectations for improvement”. (p9)

“The Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee is noticeably effective in scrutinising issues relating to education and is now expanding its remit to cover other key areas such as leisure, libraries and youth”. (p9)

2.4 Management and organisation

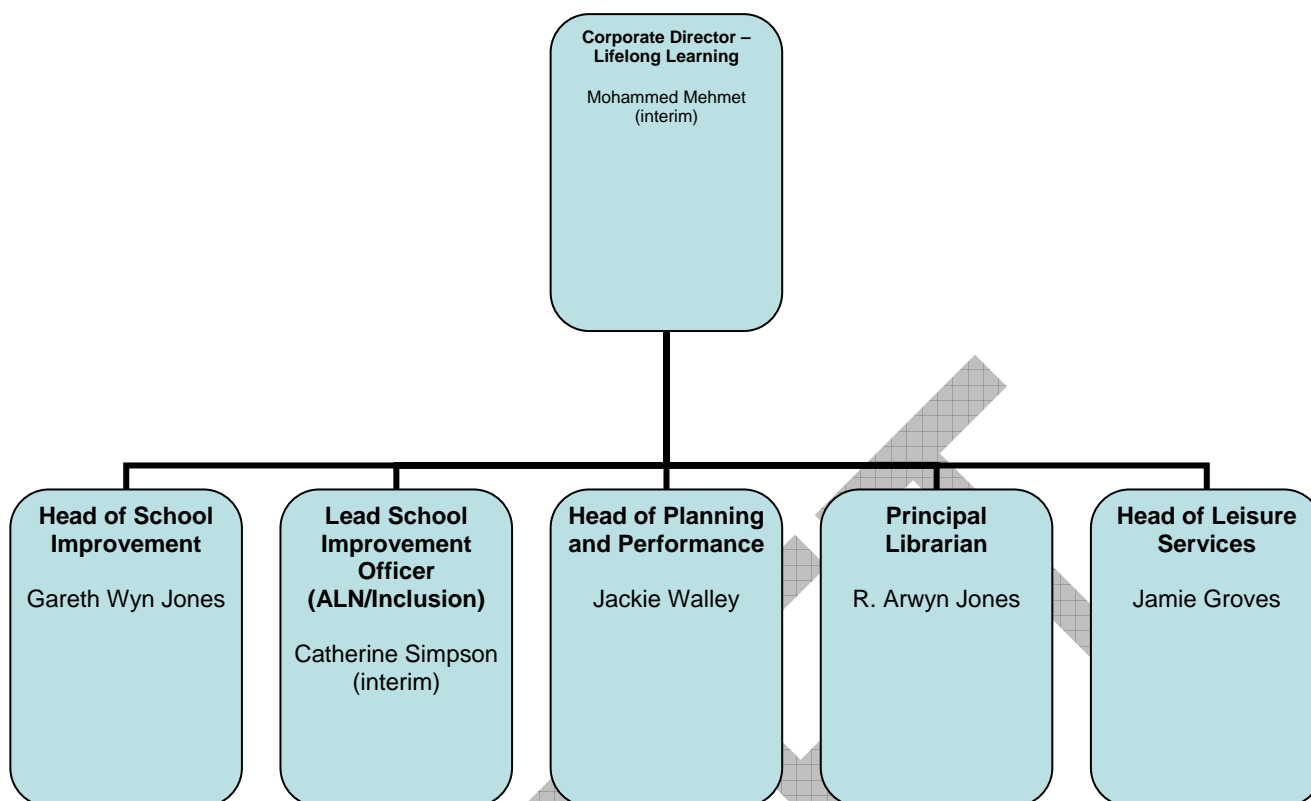
The Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership is chaired by the Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing. The Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning is a member of the CYPSP and also chairs the Extending Entitlement Group, which is responsible for the co-ordination of Youth Support Services.

The Lifelong Learning Directorate currently consists of five service areas:

- School Improvement
- Partnership and Inclusion
- Planning and Performance
- Library Services
- Leisure Services

The corporate director position has been covered by an interim director since November 2007. Another interim manager has acted as Head of School Improvement and, since the permanent Head of School Improvement was recruited, as Head of Partnership and Inclusion. The post of corporate director has now been filled and the new Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning will start in March 2009. The Head of Partnership and Inclusion post has been deleted and a new post Lead School Improvement Officers (ALN/Inclusion) has been established.

All, except the new Lead School Improvement Officer (ALN/Inclusion), senior officer posts in Lifelong Learning are now filled with permanent appointments. Every member of the current Directorate Management Team (DMT), with responsibility for education, has been appointed since the Estyn inspection in 2007. The current senior management structure is as follows:



DMT is responsible for implementing the Business Plan of the Lifelong Learning Directorate and through this contributing to the council’s corporate priorities. Over the past year each service has been following workplans linked to the Estyn recommendations. These plans are monitored by heads of service and also by the MEB and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny. A ‘basket’ of Directorate Performance Indicators which are contained within the Directorate Plan is reported quarterly to Cabinet and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee. A new structure for strategic planning is currently being implemented which will result in a joint plan for all services within Lifelong Learning.

2.5 Performance Management and the Estyn Action Plan

The Estyn inspection report criticised Denbighshire’s ‘...poor track record in managing change and making improvements in education’. In response to this criticism, the council established the Modernising Education Board (MEB), which is chaired by the Leader of the council and responsible for monitoring and overseeing the council’s modernising education programme, including the implementation of the recommendations following Estyn’s inspections of the Education Authority and Youth Support Services.

Progress against the action plans has been monitored on a monthly basis by both the MEB and Cabinet.

Reports to MEB and Cabinet include an assessment of the tasks completed and focus attention on individual elements that are reported as “Red” or “Amber”, or where the monitoring of the council’s risk register identifies threats to improvement plans. MEB has been particularly effective in intervening where management action has been necessary to accelerate improvement, for example by targeting extra resources to pupils predicted “D” grades at GCSE or where solution to problems require a cross-directorate approach, for example, dealing with schools’ concerns about the council’s building maintenance service.

A year on from the Estyn report, the recent Corporate Governance Inspection report in November 2008, noted that:

“two key features of the recovery process that are important drivers for successful turnaround are the programme management approach adopted by the MEB and a set of clear and measurable milestones and outcomes. These features ensure a robust management and monitoring of progress”. (p16)

The authority’s action plan in response to the Estyn inspection of its education services had the effect of changing the priorities and activities within the services and, inevitably, the early focus was on implementing the action plan. However, the action plan has now been embedded within the Lifelong Learning Directorate’s Business Planning process and is reflected in service and team plans and, increasingly, performance appraisal of individual members of staff.

2.6 Funding for education

The council has acknowledged the historic under funding of education in Denbighshire and has taken action to address it. The current year’s revenue funding for education is above the SSA by £470k (0.5%). Elected members have agreed to maintain funding at at least the SSA level for the next year and have expressed their commitment to maintain this into the future.

Schools will be exempt from budget reductions for another year in order to embed the financial growth from this year and plan ahead with greater confidence.

However, there is a real need to increase capital investment in schools and the local authority is working on some ideas for using revenue budgets to generate capital through prudential borrowing. Schools have agreed to explore these ideas with officers.

3. Support for school improvement

3.1 A strategic approach to school improvement

The Council has developed a robust approach to school improvement with greater clarity about the level of challenge and support provided to schools. Key to this strategy is the partnership agreement and school categorisation process and the challenge provided by councillors and officers, supported by improved analysis of data, through groups such as the Modernising Education Board and School Standards Monitoring Group.

As well as developing our local approach to school improvement, the council has fully embraced national policy initiatives. Through the work of the Children and Young People's Partnership, the approach to early years and extending entitlement is being progressed. Denbighshire is one of the few authorities in Wales to have implemented the Foundation Phase successfully with the county demonstrating excellent practice for the support and training it offers. Denbighshire is also promoting innovative and creative solutions to Transforming Education in the 14-19 Phase. This is being achieved through effective engagement with partners and is consistent with the council's approach of engaging effectively before implementing new policy initiatives.

3.2 The partnership agreement

A key element of the improvement strategy is the council's Partnership Agreement with schools. The process of development and subsequent adoption was robust and fully involved all headteachers and chairs of governors. Over a two day period heads were invited to help write the document and discuss the policy and procedures being recommended. It was further refined, thereafter through the Headteachers' Federation. One of the key aspects of the agreement was a Communication and Engagement Strategy, which formulated the cluster arrangements and enabled a more business like approach to support, challenge and communication mechanisms across the council. The agreement provides clear and appropriately differentiated procedures for monitoring, challenge and intervention with a focus on under performing schools, low performing schools and schools operating in challenging circumstances. It also recognises good and very good practice across all aspects of schools across Denbighshire.

The Partnership Agreement enables the provision of a regular cyclical programme of meetings with clusters of schools to discuss a wide range of school performance issues. This Agreement also includes agreed performance targets for the local authority, an improvement and support strategy for schools based on a process of school categorisation and guidance on governor support and training. The Partnership Agreement sets out the respective responsibilities of schools and the authority.

The School Support Team is a key element of the Partnership Agreement in seeking to provide collaborative support to schools from across the council. The team includes officers from a range of departments; school improvement, partnerships and inclusion, policy and performance, environment, internal audit, finance, asset management, procurement and ICT. School improvement officers recognise the needs to review and refine the composition of the school support team. Officers are requested to attend the support team meeting as appropriate dependent upon the issues of concern.

The School Support Team meets on a monthly basis with schools causing concern forming the main item on the agenda. The main issues of concern are discussed thoroughly with future actions outlined. This system ensures that the council is targeting support to meet the area of greatest need in terms of schools requiring additional support.

Over the past year since the Estyn inspection the school improvement service in Denbighshire has been operating under considerable pressure to address critical issues identified in the Estyn inspection. The service is also working to address WAG policy initiatives such as the Partnership Agreement legislation, Foundation Phase developments, implementation of the revised National Curriculum, and the Transforming Education agenda in the 14-19 phase.

The local authority has addressed the capacity issues within the School Improvement Service to respond to the needs of schools through appointing additional school improvement officers and re-engaging the Curriculum Support Service in more focused work in KS4.

3.3 Effective use of data

The use of data by individual schools and by the local authority has become more effective and is being used to support school improvement. Following further development of the school profiles, data provided to schools is now more consistent. Individual school profiles are produced during the autumn term and are distributed to headteachers, chair of governors and the School Improvement Service. The profiles are more comprehensive than previous years, including basic information for the current academic year (school numbers, SEN, free school meals entitlement), a review of the previous year's attainment (national assessments, county assessments and benchmarking position), attendance and exclusions data and financial information. School improvement officers use information from the school profiles as part of their annual local authority report to governors and by doing this raise awareness of and challenge the school's performance with the governing body.

Data is used to support the school self evaluation process. The model used for self evaluation requires consideration of the status of the school against key areas such as the impact on the learner, pupil progress, personal and social development, attendance and teaching. School improvement officers challenge schools to look objectively at their school performance and to consider their benchmark position.

During the autumn term school improvement officers meet with headteachers and senior staff to support schools with target setting. Officers challenge schools where it is considered that the target is unrealistic or not challenging enough. A standard proforma is used for all primary schools to ensure consistency of approach. In addition to the national comparative data, Fischer Family Trust data and NFER results are used to inform the target setting process. Cognitive Ability Tests (CATS) are used to analyse performance in all secondary schools and their use in primary schools has been successfully piloted in the Prestatyn cluster of schools this year. A group has been established to consider and recommend how CATS should be rolled out to all primary schools. A secondary school data group and a primary school data group have also now been set up. The primary group has agreed to initially look at which pupil tracking system schools should use.

The School Standards Monitoring Group (SSMG) has been established to give councillors and senior officers the opportunity to challenge a school's performance and to gain a better

understanding of issues facing schools, with particular focus on school improvement. Data is used as a basis for their discussions with schools. Schools must complete a proforma detailing their financial, attainment and attendance data including benchmarked position and position in relation to the Denbighshire average. Members of SSMG receive training on what an effective school looks like and how to analyse performance information as well as general and specific training on education issues, for example SEN..

3.4 Initiatives for raising standards

The past eighteen months, following the Estyn inspection, has seen many positive developments in the support for school improvement, which have formed part of the school improvement strategy. Some of these initiatives are listed below:

- The development and implementation of the Partnership Agreement resulting in more effective joint team working with Partnership and Inclusion in developing co-ordinated approaches to schools requiring the highest levels of support;
- Improved use of the Curriculum Support Service and consultants from other authorities where necessary
 - to target underperformance in KS4 through a KS4 survey of core subjects (Autumn 2008) and non-core subjects (Spring 2009)
 - to undertake local authority inspections of selected secondary and primary schools
 - to engage heads of departments in termly meetings;
- The establishment of a regular programme of school clusters meetings to improve communication between the local authority and schools and address school improvement issues;
- Development of a leadership and management training programme for leaders at every level in Primary, Secondary and Special schools;
- The use of Cognitive Ability Tests to analyse the performance of all secondary schools, and as a pilot project in the Prestatyn cluster of primary schools, as an instrument to improve the target setting process;
- Use of the LA school improvement matrix as a diagnostic tool to identify aspects of relative performance in each school, celebrate success, and where there is underperformance identify levels of support;
- Improved target setting with Primary and Secondary schools based on the tracking of individual pupils;
- Better targeting of resources to support underperforming schools through the school categorisation process, for example through the targeting of funding to provide additional support to pupils on the C/D borderline in secondary schools.
- Authority wide initiatives to improve the curriculum in the Foundation Phase and in the 14-19 phase and address the Transforming Schools initiative;

- ▀ Specific support for underperforming schools namely Blessed Edward Jones (financial planning issues) Rhyl High School (Special Measures) Denbigh High School (LA inspection Jan 2009);
- ▀ Improved programme of support and training for school governors;
- ▀ Improved accountability for officers through implementation of the council's performance management system;
- ▀ Pre-inspection support for schools including employment of a consultant headteacher to work with the leadership team, commissioning a research project on school effectiveness and provision of exemplar models of school documentation(Rhyl High).
- ▀ Implementation of a local authority moderation process for KS2 English across a sample of schools.
- ▀ School improvement conferences for school leaders focusing on improving teaching and learning and management and using guest speakers of international renown. These have been instrumental in developing innovation support networks of professional practice to support improvement within schools, across schools and across authority boundaries and in promoting excellence in teaching and learning through sharing good practice;
- ▀ The Trent HR system is currently being piloted in a number of schools with a view to it being rolled out eventually to all schools. This software will enable schools to keep accurate, concise records of the training courses teachers attend. It will also enable the schools to have electronic access to the personnel records of all their staff.
- ▀ Use of the School Standards Monitoring Group to meet with headteachers and governors to challenge and support further improvement initiatives;
- ▀ Involvement in the WAG School Effectiveness pilot project;
- ▀ Applications from schools for Better Schools Funding now require an action plan to demonstrate how the funding will be used to promote school improvement. This is linked to a process of evaluation to ensure value for money. There is also targeted use of additional Better Schools Funding to support schools facing inspection;
- ▀ The role of School Improvement Officers has been developed since September 2008 to include responsibility for supporting workforce remodeling;
- ▀ Establishment of a Welsh medium/bilingual working group to address issues of concern by the statutory Welsh Language Board;
- ▀ Conferences on teaching and learning organised for every secondary (Feb 08) and Primary teacher (Feb 09)
- ▀ The capacity of the School Improvement Service has been improved through the appointment of two additional officers and a teacher adviser.

4. Promoting social inclusion and the well-being of learners

4.1 Inclusion Strategy

Whilst it is not a statutory obligation for local authorities to have an Inclusion Strategy, officers and members have decided to develop a comprehensive Inclusion Strategy which would articulate Lifelong Learning's vision and practice with regards to inclusion and support for Special Educational Needs/Additional Learning Needs.

A draft strategy was produced in March 2008, but key stakeholders did not feel they had been as involved in its production as they would have expected, so it was decided to use it as a 'springboard' into the production of a draft multi-agency strategy which will be launched in March 2009.

Progress on the strategy to date has been steady and as part of that lead in towards a multi-agency strategy, the local authority has established bi-monthly senior management team meetings between Partnerships and Inclusion and Children's Social Services.

The strategy will make clear what the key targets are for improvement. It will also articulate the key roles to be played by the local authority and schools and make clear expectations and accountabilities. Part of the strategy will explain our new approach to funding SEN support entitled 'Funding for Inclusion' and explain the developing role of school clusters in managing delegated funding for LSAs, commissioning, monitoring and evaluating outcomes for children and young people and possible local management of 'education' multi disciplinary teams.

A number of important cross-directorate steps have been taken to develop this approach to Inclusion, including for example, the appointment of a Foundation Phase Advisory Teacher to support the Transition of children with Additional Learning Needs from the pre-school Non Maintained Setting into the Nursery Class in schools, effective early identification of Additional Learning Needs and support for children, families and Schools. The Foundation Phase Advisory Teacher for ALN is based in the Foundation Phase School Improvement Team and works very closely with the Partnerships and Inclusion Team, Health Professionals and Social Services.

4.2 Support for Attendance and Behaviour

Considerable improvements have been made in this area in response to the recommendations in the inspection report of July 2007.

- Improving overall attendance figures across the authority
- Reducing permanent and fixed term exclusions
- Improving the amount of provision and support for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

Improving overall attendance figures across the authority

The authority's attendance strategy has had a positive impact on overall attendance levels.

- Attendance has risen in both primary and secondary phases. Primary attendance in 2006-07 was 93.6% and rose to 94.1% in 2007-08. Secondary attendance in 2006-07 was 89.9% and rose to 91.2% in 2007-08.
- Denbighshire has risen nine places in the all Wales table of attendance at secondary schools.
- Closer working with headteachers and senior leadership staff on issues and data related to improving attendance is challenging practice and helping set realistic targets for attendance. There is still work to be done with specific schools to raise attendance levels.
- Developments with our schools and the Local Health Board continue to raise the profile of attendance with parents but impact on improving attendance cannot be evaluated until the systems are more embedded.
- The impact of the realignment of ESW support to areas of greatest need will also be evaluated at the end of this academic year.

Reducing permanent and fixed term exclusions

The authority has worked closely with schools to establish an understanding of the link between behaviour, exclusion and attainment, and created a more questioning environment as to the appropriate use of exclusion as a sanction within a framework of inclusion.

- Permanent exclusions in Denbighshire have reduced from 10 in 2006-07, to 6 in 2007-08.
- There are fewer fixed term exclusions of six days or more and the authority has met its target to reduce days lost to fixed term exclusion to 3.0 days, lower than the Welsh average of 3.5 days lost.
- A successful Managed Transfer policy has helped reduce the number of permanent and fixed term exclusions. In 2007-08, only one out of 17 Managed Transfers failed and the successful 16 pupils are still in mainstream schools.
- Two schools now have On-Site Inclusion Centers and have achieved a drop in the number of exclusions. An evaluation of long-term impact of this development will take place in 2009.
- Closer working with headteachers and senior leadership staff on issues and data related to improving behaviour and reducing exclusions is challenging secondary schools to be innovative with curriculum development in order to meet the needs of young people with challenging behaviour.
- The capacity of the Behaviour Support Service has increased by eight staff and this has allowed for more robust interventions and support from experienced peripatetic staff within mainstream settings. Full evaluation of this support will be available by the end of this academic year.

- ▀ A Task & Finish Group has been established to review the overall behaviour strategy for Denbighshire and ensure that the local authority is meeting the needs of schools and delivering on national and external agendas.

Improving the amount of provision and support for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD)

The authority has responded to this recommendation by improving provision and support for pupils both within mainstream schools and those educated other than at school.

- ▀ The secondary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) has new and more appropriate accommodation
- ▀ In 2006-07 pupils in the Key Stage 4 PRU only received 50-75% of their statutory entitlement. Full-time provision is now offered to all pupils.
- ▀ Increased capacity in the Behaviour Support Service has allowed for more outreach support being given to schools.

4.3 Safeguarding children and young people

A comprehensive review of Child Protection procedures has taken place in Lifelong Learning, in consultation and in partnership with colleagues in Social Services. We have established:

- ▀ A database of training and a process of analysing 'gaps' and challenging schools, to ensure robust approaches in understanding the safeguarding agenda and child protection processes
- ▀ Production of training materials for all schools including a simple 'flow diagram' of channels of communication/action in relation to child protection
- ▀ Review of communication channels after Part IV strategy meetings
- ▀ Attendance at a senior level at Local Safeguarding Board meetings
- ▀ Attendance at a senior level at Corporate Parenting Group

As part of the joint Partnership and Inclusion/ Children's Services Management Team meetings a task and finish group has been established to respond to headteachers' concerns about child protection 'thresholds' and the use of the Common Assessment Framework. It is the intention to hold headteacher/SENCO briefing/training sessions, led by Lifelong Learning and Children's Services staff in order to present a united front to schools but also to ensure clarity of roles and messages.

Ygol Plas Brondyffrn has caused the council concerns in the past months, but issues here have been tackled robustly and this has been acknowledged by CSSIW in its inspection of Gerrdi Glasfryn, the school's 38 week residential provision. All staff in the school have been re-trained in child protection procedures and the new interim headteacher of the school and Head of Care are reviewing policy and procedure across the school.

The Serious Case Review in relation to Baby P has led to a close examination of our child protection procedures within education and a determination to continue to work closely with our colleagues within Social Services to ensure that the welfare of children is a prime concern for all education and school staff. The Safeguarding Officer Education sits on the Local Safeguarding Children Board and has excellent working relationships with senior officers in Children's Services. There is close and effective partnership to ensure that children remain the focus within child protection and this is a key message disseminated to all education staff and schools. The Safeguarding Officer Education is fully aware of the CSSIW message sent to all Directors of Social Services in December 2008 and is working closely with Social Services colleagues to review the council's framework for safeguarding and protecting children to ensure that this is as robust as possible.

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5. Additional learning needs (ALN)

5.1 Ensuring resources meet need

The authority is proposing to delegate some targeted SEN funding to schools and to establish a different model of working in partnership with schools.

During the last twelve months the council has worked jointly with Flintshire to establish criteria for allocating resources. Officers from Lifelong Learning have worked with officers in the authority's Finance Department, headteachers and an Independent Consultant to develop a formula for allocating resources on a much more transparent basis. The new model will enable the council to focus on monitoring and evaluating outcomes for children and young people with SEN. It will identify local training needs and provide an opportunity for sharing good practice. In addition it provides the data needed to work effectively with school improvement officers to assess outcomes and set targets.

It is intended to extend this work to review Special School funding and develop in line with Inclusive practices and the Unlocking Potential remit.

Following consultation with headteachers it has been agreed to delegate the money in September 2009 after a further period of training and moderation of Bands 2 and 3.

In the last twelve months the Learning Development Team has worked with schools to augment current provision and provide extensive training for all school staff. Individual children are now supported by newly trained specialist assistants as well as advisory teachers.

The Learning Development Team and The Educational Psychology Service are developing a new approach to working in partnership with school staff to meet the needs of children with literacy difficulties. This will achieve a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of this group of children. It will promote shared ownership in response to the needs of this group. It is a school improvement initiative in its broadest sense.

Joint training further allows for effective and efficient use of resources across the council and will allow effective evaluation of outcomes.

As a low incidence service the Sensory Team has embraced the "Making the Connexions" agenda and has been instrumental in working across authorities to ensure the Quality Standards are met. The authority has bought into the Wrexham MSI provision. Denbighshire's Mobility Officer has worked for Flintshire, continues to work for Wrexham and has begun to work for Conwy. In addition one of Denbighshire's advisory teachers works two and a half days for Wrexham

The short term provision of 10 week placement behaviour support has been stopped after consultation with headteachers. This has enabled the service to provide additional behaviour support to secondary schools, where there is greater need. This demonstrates the council's partnership approach with schools to allocating resources in direct proportion to need. The new 'outreach' approach enables more teachers to have access to specific specialist approaches rather than a 'placement' approach.

5.2 Assessment and Evaluation

The local authority is guided by the SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002 in carrying out its statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

Formal assessment continues to be initiated by parents or professionals in the local authority or the Health services. This assessment may lead to a statement of SEN which will ensure that a child or young person's needs are addressed and reviewed annually. The number of new Statements of SEN in Denbighshire has reduced from 53 in 2005 to 35 in 2009 and more children and young people now receive additional support without the need for a statement. This support can involve placement in a specialist provision, specialist teaching in a mainstream setting or access to additional adult support through SEN or Behaviour Support Services.

All support to primary aged pupils is reviewed regularly and schools are now being asked to complete detailed information about how that support is being used and what progress has been made. Schools have received training on screening and assessment and requests for assessment from an outside agency have reduced as school staff become more skilled in identifying and addressing need at School Action.

A more comprehensive form of monitoring across all key stages will be developed through the use of the cluster groups.

Data is used to measure progress and plan interventions. Increasingly data from assessments is used to withdraw support when a pupil meets the exit criteria. Joint working with the school improvement team is underway to look at sharing data and target setting for schools.

5.3 Multi – Agency Working

At an operational level multi-agency working continues to be effective.

Multi agency groups, initiated and led by education, already operate effectively in some secondary schools and have been used as models of good practice. In evaluating the impact of existing multi agency groups and the outcomes for pupils, refinements have been made and new groups established in areas of greatest need. A future development is to focus on complex families within a cluster and utilise the expertise of the multi agency panel to address the needs of families common to both primary and secondary schools.

In 2007 following the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Plan a joint Conwy and Denbighshire sub-group was formed to develop a transition protocol. This has helped refine the working of the group and ensure greater sharing of information and better outcomes for young people making the transition into adulthood.

In November 2008 the Terms of Reference for the Autism Steering Group were revised and now reflects more fully the three key partners: education, social services and health, and also the voluntary sector. The purpose of the group is to improve joint working and improve outcomes for children, young people and adults on the Autistic Spectrum.

As part of the WAG Counselling Strategy, a bi-lingual (Welsh) counsellor will work across agencies to ensure that the needs of the secondary school age client group are met.

As part of the Integrated Communication Strategy, eight Communication Forums are well-established and have led to improved speech and language services for children and young people across all Key Stages and educational settings.

Seasons for Growth programme is now fully co-ordinated through the Educational Psychology Service in partnership with Health (CAMHS). Ninety 'Seasons for Growth Companions' have been trained and work with children and young people in a variety of settings.

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6. Access

6.1 Modernising Education

The council is committed to providing a first class education for all children and young people in the county. As part of this commitment, the council has recognised the importance of having school buildings, learning environments and resources that meet the needs of 21st Century Wales.

The council is aware that improvements in education cannot be sustained without changes to the way education is provided. Schools need to be able to provide the best possible learning experience so that children and young people in Denbighshire have the widest opportunities available to them and are able to reach their full potential. In response to this the council has decided to take a strategic approach to school organisation and the modernising agenda. After reviewing the range of data, intelligence and research available it was clear that a number of policies were needed in order to address the current and emerging issues in respect of school provision.

These issues are:

- Uneven distribution of school places (ie surplus in some areas, deficit places in others)
- Increasing demand for Welsh medium education
- Predicted shortage of headteachers
- Condition of school buildings
- New curriculum and policy demands (foundation phase, transformation agenda)
- Parental expectations

The following policies were then drafted and an extensive consultation exercise carried out. It is made clear within the framework how the review process will work. Feedback has indicated that the policies and the approach taken have been welcomed and that there is more confidence that any review of school organization will be transparent and fair.

Policies:

21st Century Primary Schools

21st Century Secondary Schools

Models for Primary School Organisation

Models for Secondary School Organisation

Surplus and Deficit Places

Infant and Junior School Amalgamation

Community Use of Schools

Mobile Accommodation

Promoting Bilingualism

Leadership and Management

Admissions & Transport

Future Use of Surplus Assets

A Member Development Day was held in September 2008 to launch the Draft Modernising Education Policy Framework.

Between September and December 2008 there had been extensive engagement with headteachers, governors and members, including at least 20 workshops and numerous

meetings and discussions with small groups, for example meetings with ward members, governing body meetings, town council meetings and meetings with individuals. There have been a number of presentations to Cabinet, Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Executive Team and the Independent Education Recovery Board. Enormous efforts have been made to ensure that every member of the council is fully briefed and fully understand the implications of implementing the policies. The approach taken in developing the policies has been welcomed by headteachers, governors and councillors.

Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee had established a Task and Finish group to study the policies in depth. The group met during October and November, prior to presenting a report to the Scrutiny Committee on the 20th of November. The Task and Finish group consisted of two elected members and three co-opted members.

Due to a number of requests for more time to consider and respond to the consultation, the deadline was extended to the 12th of January. Following further consultation, the Modernising Education Policy Framework was presented to Cabinet on 27 January 2009. Members adopted the policies and officers are now working on the process for applying it to review the school provision in the county.

6.2 Welsh-medium education

The letter to the Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning from the Welsh Language Board (December 2008) commends the local authority for the good practice in establishing the Welsh Medium and Bi-lingual Provision Working Group. This working group was established in response to a range of emerging issues and the need to develop a coherent response to the growing demand for Welsh medium education across the authority.

The first meeting of the group was held in July 2008 and since then it has already drafted a "promoting bilingualism" policy which is now being consulted on as part of the Modernising Education Policy Framework. The policy clarifies the long term aspiration and, importantly for the planning of school places, sets out a new way to categorise schools based on the expected outcome for the learner. This categorisation will be reflected in the transport and admissions policy of the authority.

The group has drafted a questionnaire for parents of children in nursery, reception, Year 3 and Year 4 to find out what their language choice for primary and secondary education is and the reasons behind that choice. The questionnaire was sent to three schools in January 2008. The group will now consider the results before extending the questionnaire to every school, if deemed appropriate. The intention is for this to be an annual questionnaire, with information from the questionnaire being used to inform the school review process which will start now the Modernising Education Policy Framework has been adopted by the council.

The working group also considered issues raised by the Welsh Language Board. These included the limited progress made in establishing Welsh medium provision in Ysgol Dinas Bran. The Board also has concerns about the deterioration in the provision of Welsh within some comprehensive schools, despite it being a statutory subject. The county assessment of underachievement in Key Stage 4 showed insufficient time was allocated for Welsh in some of these schools.

There is an increase in the demand for Welsh medium and bilingual education in the county. Pupil numbers in all primary schools fell by 321 pupils from January 2005 to January 2008 however pupil numbers in Welsh medium primary schools rose by 119 in the same period. Surplus capacity in Welsh medium schools was 19.82% (385 places) in January 2006 but this percentage fell to 15.94% (306 places) in January 2008. County projections estimate that pupil numbers in Welsh medium education will rise from 1614 in 2008 to 1651 in 2011.

This reflects a pattern across Wales. This also presents specific opportunities and challenges for Denbighshire to develop policies and procedures that respond, in a cost effective manner, to the demand. At present there is lack of sufficient staff with bilingual skills working within schools and Lifelong Learning. The working group has given full consideration to addressing this and has suggested the need for a recruitment policy that underlines the importance of appointing people with bilingual skills.

The Athrawon Bro Service has been recognised as a successful provision in the Estyn Report and the authority is currently using the Better Schools Fund to employ and strengthen staffing capacity within the service. While this provides a solution in the short term there is the challenge of sustainability in the longer term. This strategy also limits the ability of the Athrawon Bro to introduce training courses for teachers and to develop the bilingual capacity of staff in the county.

The authority recognises that more needs to be done to provide curriculum support that is completely bilingual. The authority has worked strategically with education authorities across North Wales to develop a curriculum support service that will be more relevant to the need. It is intended that this working group will present a report which will set out a new service, to be in place by April 2009.

The consultation document on Transforming Education and 14-19 Provision from the WAG makes little reference to developing bilingual provision. The local authority is working to plan and develop provision in the 14-19 phase with other providers through the medium of Welsh.

Denbighshire's approach to introducing the Foundation Phase is amongst the best in Wales, but despite this, and in common with most local authorities across Wales, challenges remain to establish bilingualism and pupils' awareness of Welsh culture within the Foundation Phase.

6.3 Admissions to schools

The authority has reviewed its school admission arrangements to ensure that they are transparent and efficient, comply with legislative requirements and regulations and provide the best available information to contribute to the planning of school places and transport arrangements and support the effective implementation of the authority's Modernising Education Policies.

In Denbighshire, historically school admissions have been administered individually by each school without reference to the local authority. During 2008, the authority launched a review of its school admission arrangements. In response to the review, the admissions process was amended to include the local authority at key stages, and also to ensure that decisions and rationale were logged and the oversubscription criteria was applied, where required. The

revised process was circulated to schools with the revised School's Information Guide in readiness for the 2009 admission round which commenced in October 2008.

A number of other issues were presented by schools during the admission meetings including the sharing of information with transport and transport eligibility, the St Brigid's admission process, the admission arrangements for the new school Clawdd Offa in Prestatyn, transfers outside of the ordinary admission round, oversubscription, Welsh Medium provision and overcapacity and the immersion programme at Ysgol Glan Clwyd.

As a result of the new process the authority now has a much clearer understanding of these issues and officers have developed good working relationships with neighbouring authorities to ensure better consistency of cross-county admission arrangements. In addition, applications for nursery places have been considered against the policy and parents provided with a written response to applications. Relationships with headteachers and staff administering admissions in schools are good, with positive feedback from schools regarding the admission arrangements this year. Information on the appeals process is now routinely sent to parents where first preference school place cannot be met.

The arrangements for late applications, transfers outside of the normal admission times and for the immersion scheme now need to be formalised and will be the focus of work this year.

6.4 Home-to-school transport

Home to School transport is inextricably linked to the school admissions policy and in particular the authority's determination of suitable school and provision of Welsh medium education. Over the past year considerable work has been undertaken to appreciate the extent of the impact of parental choice, language and denominational preference and the authority's determination of suitable school and the impact this may have on transport provision.

The centralisation of the admissions process will ensure that admissions applications can be assessed against the transport policy at the point of application ensuring that parents are informed of their eligibility for free transport at the earliest opportunity and also to enable transport colleagues to better plan transport provision.

Considerable time has been allocated to working with chairs of governors and head teachers to document the 'intended area of coverage' for school, as referenced in the oversubscription criteria, the maps will also be used to identify transport eligibility, particularly for those pupils who attend schools deemed by the authority to be the local community school, although it may not be the nearest geographically. This particularly applies in rural communities.

The information available to parents in the School's Information Guide has been revised to better reflect the policy and provide clearer guidance as to what the authority is obliged to pay for and extensions beyond the statutory minimum the authority will approve.

Focus will now be on ensuring that the transport policy is robustly applied to all applications including those for whom language or religious denominational preference applies and those who do not attend their nearest appropriate school.

6.5 School places

Over the last 12 months schools have been consulted on their revised pupil capacity, based on the Wales Assembly Government Circular No. 09/2006. This revised capacity determines the new Admission Number for the school (previously known as the Standard Number). The Admission Number is based purely on the capacity of the school, unlike the Standard Number which was based on a number of criteria.

There is now closer working between officers dealing with admissions and provision of places to ensure that the demand for pupil places can be addressed appropriately and at an early stage.

In the primary sector the number of places calculated under the revised methodology is 8,279 and the numbers on roll in January 2008, were 7,347 giving an overall surplus of 932 (11.3%). This compares against the number of places in January 2007, (old methodology) of 8,728 with 7,415 pupils on roll i.e. a surplus of 1,313 (15%).

For secondary schools the number of school places under the revised methodology is 8,313 and the number on roll in January, 2008 was 7,682 i.e. a surplus of 631 (7.6%). This compares against the number of places in January 2007, (old methodology) of 8,184 with 7,848 pupils on roll in January 20047, i.e. a surplus of 336 (4.1%).

One of the main areas of growth, over the last few years, has been in Prestatyn. In response to the demand for places the authority has built a new 420 place school in the town (Ysgol Clawdd Offa), which opened in September 2008. This is seen as Phase 1 of providing primary education in Prestatyn in buildings which are fit for purpose, as set out in the authority's Modernising Education Policy Framework. Discussions are currently on-going with the other primary schools to remove mobile classrooms and ensure that those schools are also fit for purpose.

Pupil projections are undertaken each year for secondary schools. Current trends indicate that over the next seven years numbers attending secondary schools will reduce as the falling rolls in the primary sector progress into the secondary sector. The main exception to these falling rolls is at Ysgol Glan Clwyd and this reflects the general demand for Welsh Medium education.

In the primary sector, where it is more difficult to project figures the authority has developed a system for assessing future numbers at individual schools. Officers are currently analysing the accuracy of this data. Once this exercise has been done it is proposed to share the information with schools on an annual basis.

The local authority also assesses data provided by the Health Authority on births broken down into local wards and also housing developments in both in the private and public sector.

6.6 Asset Management Planning

The authority produced its updated Service Asset Management Plan (Schools), in the autumn. This document details the authority's proposals for the development of school buildings/sites and is a vital document in supporting any capital bids, either from the council's

own resources or from external partners such as the Welsh Assembly Government. The adopted SAMP is then fed into the council's Corporate Asset Management Plan.

The three main elements of asset management planning are condition, sufficiency and suitability of buildings and over the last 12/18 months the authority has made significant progress in all three areas:

- Condition Surveys - Updated condition surveys have been carried out on all school buildings. The results indicate a reduction in the building maintenance backlog from £17.4m in 2000 to £15m in 2006/7. The results of the survey will enable building maintenance projects to be programmed on a fair and equitable basis.
- Sufficiency Surveys (Capacity) - As mentioned earlier these have been done using the latest Wales Assembly Government formula for assessing capacity and have been shared with schools. The next annual update will take place in the spring term 2009.
- Suitability Surveys - These are currently taking place. The surveys for primary schools are being done 'in-house' while the secondary schools are being done by consultants. In both cases full consultation is being undertaken with schools and they will receive copies of the final document.

In addition to the above the authority has engaged consultants to produce Strategic Site Masterplans on all eight secondary schools. This exercise is considered to be crucial when determining long-term proposals for each site. The completed Site Masterplans will be available by the end of March. Again schools are fully engaged in the process and will receive copies of the final document.

The developments referred to above will all be fed into the Service Asset Management Plan and the authority's Modernising Education programme.

Over the last 12 months officers within Lifelong Learning have been working closely with colleagues in the Planning Department to draw up a policy statement to enable Section 106 agreements to be imposed on any future housing developments. It is anticipated that this draft policy will be presented to members during 2009 for approval.

7. Support services for schools

7.1 Background

The Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 set out the framework for further delegation of funds to governing bodies and a clearer division of responsibility between local authorities and schools.

In April 2006 the authority delegated funding to schools for ten services as a formal package included within a three year timescale, with catering being slightly different in that it was offered on a continuous timescale. The three year agreements were for:

- ▶ Financial Advice & Support Services
- ▶ Payroll
- ▶ Personnel
- ▶ Property Care
- ▶ ICT Technical Support and Maintenance
- ▶ Pupil Services (Middle Lane)
- ▶ Curriculum Support (CS)
- ▶ Arts in Schools
- ▶ Legal, Health & Safety, Occupational Health
- ▶ Furniture and Equipment – Maintenance and Support

These agreements are due for renewal in April 2009. The authority has used this renewal period as an opportunity for reviewing the current Fair Funding process to change what was an out dated system to a more modern approach that better meets the needs of schools.

The previous approach to Fair Funding lacked a formal consultation process, responsive to the needs and priorities of schools. There was limited scope for schools to shape the provision of the services and there was not a clear understanding between all stakeholders of the context and implications of Fair Funding.

The existing service level agreements were not robust enough to provide schools with clarity about what they were buying into. The information did not provide scope for an external market comparison as detailed costings were not given and there was not enough clarity between what was a statutory or non-statutory function.

7.2 Approach and consultation

The main aim of the current Fair Funded services review is to ensure that services to schools are good quality and value for money. The local authority has used the review to promote a culture that encourages schools and services to challenge the service being provided.

The local authority is now focused on ensuring that support services to schools meet the needs of learners and schools. The authority is working with and encouraging schools to test the market for all support services rather than assume or expect that the local authority will provide all services in the future.

Consultation was undertaken with other local authorities to compare the package of services they offer, the analysis of delegation rates and the changing environment in the way services

are provided. Copies of service level agreements were obtained from these authorities and used as a benchmark for the compilation of Denbighshire's service level agreements.

A timeline of the review process was constructed so that schools were fully aware of the scope of the review and were able to appreciate the extent of the work involved. School cluster meetings were used as the main consultation forum to discuss and disseminate information to schools.

7.3 Progress to date

Repackaging of services

Some services that are currently packaged together were split into individual services to give schools more flexibility and choice as to what they want to buy back. For example Legal, Occupational Health and Health & Safety have previously been offered as one package but currently they are offered as three. Each service manager has increased accountability for the performance of that service.

Service Level Agreements

Using the information provided by service managers and schools through the consultation process, draft service level agreements were written and distributed to schools for consideration in October 2008. The format and content of the current SLA's have been reviewed and a new template has been adopted to improve the transparency of the services being provided and ensure there are robust purchaser and provider links in place.

New versions of the service level agreements include:

- Service objectives
- Detailed service provision – statutory & non-statutory
- Detailed charging basis
- Quality Criteria – service & schools
- Annual review process
- Service contacts
- Termination clauses

Schools are now able to use this information to compare the cost of the same services on the open market if they wish to procure the service from an external supplier. As a result of the early distribution of the draft SLA's in October schools had an initial idea of the cost of the services. The information provided was sufficient to allow schools to begin testing the market and compare what other services could be purchased. Many schools did this particularly in the field of ICT. The final draft SLA's were distributed in December allowing at least two months for further market testing to be carried out.

Annual review process

The Fair Funding process currently has no review mechanism in place to give schools the opportunity to formally address any concerns they may have with the service they have bought into.

Within the new service level agreements there are detailed guidelines on what the annual review process will entail. A review group will be set up with representation from the local authority and schools and will meet annually to monitor the performance and quality of the services provided. Services not meeting the required level of performance will prepare detailed work plans to show the recovery measure that will be put in place to bring the service provision back up to the standard detailed within the SLAs. Where improvements are not made then the authority will re-consider the future of the fair funded service. This process will develop the credibility of services and give schools confidence that they can question the level of service they are receiving. This will also provide a consistent approach to managing and responding to issues as they occur.

Further delegation

In addition to identifying the most appropriate package for the existing services, the authority considered whether any other services that it provides, should be delegated to schools either under a buy back agreement or for schools to manage themselves. It was decided that the priority for Denbighshire is to ensure that the current package of services is meeting schools' needs before considering delegating additional services.

7.4 Areas still requiring attention

During the first round of school cluster meetings headteachers identified building maintenance arrangements and ICT support as being the areas causing most dissatisfaction. This was reinforced with the responses to the questionnaires sent out in advance of the review of the fair funding agreements.

Building Maintenance

Heads expressed frustration at the perceived lack of transparency regarding the commissioning of building maintenance work, poor communication regarding the cost of the work and the lack of notice when contractors would be on site. It was agreed to convene a workshop for officers and headteachers to clarify the existing procedures, identify barriers and agree ways in which all departments could work together to improve the current procedures without breaching health and safety arrangements.

Two working groups have been established; bringing together officers from Lifelong Learning, Health and Safety and Building Services:

- Technical Subgroup – to identify low risk elements of routine maintenance work and develop procedures
- Communications and Support Group – to develop a communication strategy, training package and escalation procedures.

The technical subgroup agreed a draft list of works for the 'Schools Authorised List of Works' and the school representatives who attended the workshop session have contributed a list of works they believe should appear on the list and in principle agree with the new suggested arrangements.

The communications subgroup considered how the provision of information to schools could be improved and a Lotus Notes based Helpdesk system has been investigated by Building Services and Lifelong Learning officers for use by the Building Maintenance helpdesk.

ICT are currently making arrangements for a consultant to design and create a bespoke database to be fully functional by March 2009. This will enable schools to track the progress of their building maintenance requests throughout the process from requisition to payment of contractor invoices.

ICT

Since the inception of Fair Funding all schools have purchased their ICT technical support from the council through its education ICT service.

The three-year Fair Funding contract is due for renewal in April 2009. The service can no longer meet the burgeoning needs of schools without substantial investment. The Cambridge and Estyn reports highlighted the need for the council to improve the quality of the service.

Consultation with schools at cluster meetings took place during the autumn term where three options for an improved service were considered. Two secondary schools subsequently opted out and procured their own ICT managed services. At a special ICT consultation meeting with headteachers in November it was agreed that the authority would tender on behalf of all schools to out source ICT repair and maintenance. This would provide all schools with access to a service that meets the Becta Managed Service provider standards.

An ICT working group has since been formed with representation from schools, lifelong learning finance, Planning and Performance, central ICT and schools ICT. A project manager has been appointed to coordinate the compilation of a tender document that will meet the diverse needs of all schools. It is anticipated that this document will be ready for consideration by April 2009.

The authority also recognise that there needs to be improved arrangements in place to support schools in the interim period. The Denbighshire ICT team are working with Central ICT to identify all tasks that are undertaken for schools in order for a short term SLA to be agreed and the appropriate resource identified.

8.0 Working with Social Services and other partners

This chapter explains the current joint working arrangements between Lifelong Learning and Social Services and the proposed priority areas for further development. It has been written because of the criticisms about the quality of joint working between the two services in the Estyn inspection report 2007 and some of the findings of the Hyfrydle reviews.

8.1 Current arrangements

Joint working between education and social services needs to be effective at a number of levels: between front-line practitioners, between managers at different levels, and between senior managers. This requires sound strategic plans, with linked measurement of impact, and a range of systems, including policies and procedures, joint training and development opportunities and effective working relationships, to ensure joint working works in practice. Joint working should be seen as part of a broader set of partnership arrangements because other services also have a critical impact on the lives of children and families: health, voluntary and community organisations, FE and HE providers, the police.

Social Services and Lifelong Learning currently have a range of arrangements in place to deliver effective joint working. These include the following:

- ▀ Senior managers from the two directorates are leaders of the broader strategic partnerships which are charged to create and implement strategic plans: the CYPSP is chaired by the Director of Social Services and Housing, the Extending Entitlement Group (Young People's Partnership) by the Director of Lifelong Learning, and the Local Safeguarding Children Board strategic group, which is a joint Board with Conwy, is co-chaired by the Head of Children's Services.
- ▀ Staff of the two directorates work together, frequently in multi-agency planning groups, to plan and deliver a range of cross agency services for children, young people and families. Recent examples of working together to improve service delivery include:
 - services for looked after children to help discharge the authority's role as "corporate parents" for example improving the exam results and informal education opportunities of looked after children, enabling them to have free access to leisure facilities, exploring how those involved in "test purchasing" could be accredited for their work
 - services for disabled children/children with SEN/ALN for example considering if a resource to support children with sensory impairment could be shared
 - early years services and play, for example ensuring Flying Start, and pre-school provision reaches "hard to reach" families and those with special needs
 - services to meet children and young people's emotional and mental health needs, for example collaborating with the voluntary sector to better identify and meet the needs of young carers
 - the development of participation opportunities

- initiatives to combat child poverty for example by referrals from the Education Social Work service to the Welfare Rights Unit, or complementary work to increase free school meal take-up
- establishment of multi-agency teams focusing on “high priority” young people in Prestatyn, Glan Clwyd and soon to be piloted in Rhyl
- joint meetings of social services and lifelong learning senior managers (SSEMT). This group, which comprises directors and heads of service from both directorates, meets on approximately a monthly basis. Agenda items are contributed from both directorates and both agree that these arrangements have built trust and proved a resilient way of tackling difficult issues (e.g. recommendations relating to the future of Hyfrydle and arrangements for its closure). These arrangements are also mirrored at the next level down - i.e. between heads of service (Children’s Services and Partnership and Inclusion) and their respective management teams.
- management of joint services, for example the Youth Offending Team
- opportunities for joint training and development routinely include child protection and have included specific joint workshops, for example on corporate parenting
- detailed policies and procedures which set out the responsibilities that front-line staff and managers have in delivering front-line services to individual children and families. For example in sharing information, assessment, planning support services, monitoring and reviewing services for children in need of protection and other vulnerable children. Policies and procedures set out clearly the expectations, roles and responsibilities of different professionals in supporting children and families.
- There is a narrow range of core or statutory Performance Indicators which measure performance at the interface between social services and education services. These include, for example, the proportion of looked after children who have had a change of school placement, school attendance and attainment of looked after children, the number of looked after children with a completed "Personal Education Plan" to a defined timescale, and the proportion of care leavers in education, employment and training

8.2 Future developments

Arising from senior management discussions, including a workshop earlier in 2008, and work to develop the Single Plan, Social Services and Lifelong Learning have agreed that they particularly wish to work together on the following strategic developments to enhance current joint working arrangements and outcomes for children and young people. In doing this, both services are keen to exploit the opportunities presented by the potential co-location of Children's Social Services and the planned "northern satellite" for education services staff in Brighton Road, Rhyl:

- integrating services for disabled children and young people. This is a high priority for disabled children and their families who often experience a fragmented service. It is also a priority in the Single Plan and a priority demographic change issue for the

council, in view of the increasing numbers of disabled children and young people that we expect to have to make provision for. This will be a substantial project across health as well as social services and education. It will include considering existing services and facilities and the development of a timed plan to provide a unified service

- ▀ piloting "locality" working linked to school clusters. The purpose of this is to build a systematic approach to providing support for children and young people who may be causing concern in school, but who may not meet the threshold for social services support. Regular meetings already take place between some schools and Children's Services staff; this work would build on that and experience to date in piloting the "Common Assessment Framework".

All local resources, including the Tiers 2 and 3 services funded under the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, are accessed to support children and young people causing concern. This is a specific priority in the Single Plan linked with improving educational outcomes. Other authorities are also working to make these arrangements work better, using what are sometimes called "Team around the child" approaches.

- ▀ working together, and with health, to develop better "referral pathways" and access to services for children and young people with emotional and mental health problems. Development of a CAMHS Strategy, and improved working to meet needs between front-line and specialist services, are also priorities in the Single Plan
- ▀ continuing to develop safeguarding and child protection practice

While the council has decided, for good service priority reasons, against reorganising its education and social services at this stage, there is clearly a medium term option to consider whether a move towards a Children's Services Directorate would improve outcomes for children and young people. The improved collaboration between the services will help to position the council for structural change, if that is thought to be appropriate, at some stage in the future.

9. Use of Resources

Since 2007 the council has steadily increased the resources available to the education services and schools.

The table below shows the additional funding and comparison to the Welsh Assembly's Standard Spending Assessment for Education:

£000	06/07	07/08	08/09	Increase over 3 years
Education Budget	63,752	66,321	70,151	6,399
WAG SSA	63,715	67,230	69,681	5,966

Over the past three years the council has increased its education budget at a faster rate than the SSA, with the 2008/09 budget now £470k above SSA. The national SSA increase for 2009/10 is 3.2%, with the council's current proposals showing an increase in the education budget of 3.5%.

While additional resources for education are important, the main findings of the original inspection were critical of how resources were used rather than the total budget for the directorate. Further developments to improve the use of resources include:

Targeting priorities	Amount £000
Secondary Schools to bring them up to the average level of funding for Secondary Schools in Wales	290
SEN funding in mainstream schools	70
Appointment of new posts in Planning & Performance	120
Appointment of two School Improvement Officers	120
Appointment of 8 LSA's for managed moves	100
Schools Causing Concern	55
Appoint KS2 Numeracy Officer	50
Youth Service	78
Core fund posts in Tim Data	53
Offset in part ESW overspend	14
Schools KS2, KS4 and Management & Leadership	500
Total additional funding made available in 2008-09	1,450

The impact of the use of the main additional funding projects is as follows:

£290k Secondary Schools to address historic underfunding

The funding was to ensure secondary school budgets were increased to meet the Welsh average. In the main this extra funding has been used to enhance curriculum entitlement.

£120k Appointment of new posts in Planning and Performance

Both the new posts were initially engaged in work on the Estyn Action Plan and made significant progress in moving the plan forward and ensuring tasks were being progressed and evidence was being recorded. One post has now been diverted onto schools' admissions.

£120k Appointment of two School Improvement Officers

One officer has been appointed in School Improvement whose background is providing continuous professional development for headteachers and senior management teams in schools. This officer also has extensive experience of inspecting schools colleges and teacher training colleges.

The remaining funding has been used to fund a headteacher consultant to work with specific schools to develop leadership roles and responsibilities to provide a stronger focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning.

£100k Appointment of 8 Learning Support Assistants (LSA's) for managed moves

As a result of these appointments permanent and fixed term exclusions have reduced and the targets set in the Estyn Action Plan to reduce permanent exclusions by a third are met.

£500k Schools support for Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4 and Leadership & Management:

- £250k KS4 by increasing 5A* - C and 5A* - G and reducing the number of pupils leaving school without a recognised qualification
- £100k raise standards at KS2
- £150k support Leadership & Management

The impact of the funds for KS2 and KS4 will be clearer after this academic year's results are known.

The management and leadership funding was made available to reduce teaching time for heads and deputies to allow them to carry out monitoring of teaching and learning and to set policies and objectives. Some schools use the funds to monitor behaviour.

A number of significant capital investments have been completed including a new primary school in Prestatyn, a new pupil referral unit in Rhyl, and new dining blocks at Brynhyfryd and Dinas Bran. The table below shows the total capital investment in Lifelong Learning:

£000	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10 forecast
External Grants	5,059	7,087	4,898	1,752
Council Funds	5,305	5,938	4,694	3,518
Total	10,364	13,025	9,562	5,270

A comparison, using statistics produced by the Welsh Assembly Government shows that on a per capita basis, Denbighshire was the seventh highest spending council on education capital on 2006/07, first in 2007/08 and fifth in 2008/09. The programme has reduced for 2009/10 because of the reduced funding from Welsh Assembly grants and also because the council has paused to develop robust business cases for investment in its modernising education strategy.

Budget Reporting

Regular budget monitoring reports are now presented to the Lifelong Learning DMT and the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee.

Medium Term Financial Planning

To ensure the Directorate can quantify and challenge the extent of future demand and develop robust efficiency proposals, a medium term financial planning strategy has been implemented to cover a four year planning horizon.

The overall aim of the financial planning process is to provide a framework which:

- recognises ongoing commitments in terms of the provision of core services, including the impact of external cost pressures;
- provides proper consideration to new spending pressures, options for enhanced or new services, scope for efficiency savings and increased income generation and options for service reduction;
- allows change to be managed in a planned way over a number of budgetary cycles, avoiding undesirable and unplanned sudden and dramatic shifts in spending;
- ensures that all policy and expenditure options are appraised in a systematic and consistent way, so that informed policy decisions are made.

The strategy includes the revenue effects of any capital investment, and the outcome of exit strategies for grant funding.

The Directorate has successfully implemented and rolled out the Financial Planning Strategy. The framework for schools is still being considered and will be rolled out in the new financial year. Consultation with the Schools Budget Forum and school clusters has taken place.

All of the lifelong learning services were briefed on the process via training workshops, senior management team meeting and departmental team meetings. Budget holders were given the opportunity to submit savings and pressures that were affecting their services and also to submit supporting business cases giving further background information.

Schools Financial Planning & Procedure Manual

The Schools Financial Planning and Procedure Manual has been designed as a reference document for all those involved in the financial planning and administration of individual

schools' delegated budgets. This includes school governors, head teachers, bursars and other school staff responsible for financial administration.

The manual consists of four sections:

- Section 1 - Financial Leadership and Governance
- Section 2 – Budget Setting, Monitoring and Reporting
- Section 3 – Financial Regulations and Guidance
- Section 4 – Financial Procedures

The manual is intended to be a 'living document' that will be updated as circumstances change as well as taking account of legislative changes.

Headteacher & Governor training

A finance training programme has been developed to provide support to headteachers and governors in understanding Financial Management within their schools.

The training programme covers various elements of finance including the following:

- The wider context – how the Council is funded
- Structure of Funding for Lifelong Learning
- Formula Funding
- Financial Planning & Budget Setting
- Efficiency Savings
- Financial Management in Schools
- Value for Money
- Best Practice & Benchmarking
- Evaluating resources

Best Practice

The Financial Planning Team has been working closely with other authorities, in particular Flintshire, as a neighbouring authority and Neath Port Talbot, as another Welsh authority. To date, work has been undertaken with regards to the Grants review where areas of efficiency from these authorities have been explored.

Bursar Network

The Bursar Network is effective in promoting communication between headteachers and bursars/business managers. It has helped to develop a much more co-operative culture where the secondary bursar/business managers now work collectively to support their cluster rather than just their school.

Grants

A thorough review of the grants process has been undertaken and a new process developed and a grants register has been established. The register contains many financial and non-financial elements including grant conditions, exit strategies, start/end dates, contact details.

The register has a traffic light system that flags areas where further action or information is needed including the status of the exit strategies.

Monthly grants reports will be provided to grant holders and DMT to maintain awareness of emerging issues as well as the ongoing status of all grants. All grants will be allocated and tracked via the Grants register prior to being coded to the relevant service or school.

These revised arrangements will ensure that grant income is not absorbed within individual schools budgets.

The creation of a Grants Team to work in partnership with schools and leisure services will promote open communication, cooperation, and a uniform approach to securing grant funding.

The new team will be responsible for formulation of the goals and objectives of grant funding through the identification of new initiatives or service developments and areas of need as detailed in the school/service development plans. The team will explore funding opportunities based on need rather than simply because funding is available.

Self-Evaluation

As part of the preparation work for the inspection, the council has undertaken an extensive self evaluation exercise against the Estyn Framework.

The process commenced in October 2008 and has involved service managers from all directorates across the authority. To compliment the views of service managers the views of headteachers on services provided by the authority were also sought. This has enabled the authority to take an overall view of the services provided and to provide an assessment of how good the council's performance is and whether the council's performance will improve.

The full self evaluation report consists of two sections. The first section presents a summary of the grade profiles for each key question and provides a commentary on the key points that support the proposed grading for each question. The second, more detailed section, presents a full commentary for each individual key question and the sources of evidence to support the commentary are included in the majority of instances within the main documentation as hyperlinks.

The council will carefully considers the findings from its self-evaluation to inform its ongoing Business Planning Process for 2009-2012.

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT BY: Cllr H H Evans, Leader & Lead Member for Education

DATE: 27th January 2009

SUBJECT: Modernising Education Policy Framework

1 DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 To consider and agree the Modernising Education policy framework
- 1.2 To agree to the formation of a Learning Partnership to transform the provider network in Denbighshire to meet the needs of our learners, employers and communities.
- 1.3 To agree to receive a report at the Cabinet meeting on 17th February on the outline strategic plan for Transforming Education and Training Provision in Denbighshire

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

Modernising Education Policy Framework

- 2.1 Denbighshire County Council is committed to providing a first class education for all children and young people in the County. As part of this commitment, the Council has agreed that one of its priorities is modernising education.
- 2.2 The Council has a responsibility to ensure that our schools are sustainable and fit for purpose and can provide the best possible learning experience so that children and young people in Denbighshire have the widest opportunities available to them and are able to reach their full potential.
- 2.3 In 2005, Estyn carried out an inspection of Denbighshire Local Education Authority Access to Education. The report recommended that the authority “ensure that the criteria for managing school places take sufficient account of education, the condition and suitability of buildings and the need to keep classes to 30 or below” (Estyn, Inspection of Denbighshire Local Education Authority Access to Education, 2005). The Estyn inspection of 2007 highlighted significant issues with schools’ performance in the County, identifying attainment as being lower than might be expected. Following this report, the Council has set itself the target of improving attainment in all key stages so that attainment is within the top 10 performing authorities in Wales.
- 2.4 In March 2007, Estyn published a discussion paper “Transforming schools” which argued that schools and learning environments needed to be transformed in order to raise standards to meet the needs of 21st Century Wales, “There are major challenges in making schools fit for purpose in every sense. Tinkering with an educational model that is the 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.” (Estyn, Transforming Schools, 2007).

- 2.5 Cambridge Education Ltd were engaged to undertake a report into Modernising Education on behalf of the Council. This report recommended that the Council adopt a number of policies that would be needed to move education forward. A framework of policies has now been drafted and is contained in Appendix 1. The policies are needed so that the Council can strategically plan future school provision and does so in a transparent way. The policies cover:
- Models for Primary School Organisation
 - Models for Secondary School Organisation
 - Surplus and Deficit Places
 - Infant and Junior School Amalgamation
 - Community Use of Schools
 - Mobile Accommodation
 - Promoting Bilingualism
 - Management and Leadership
 - School Admissions and Transport Policy
 - Future Use of Surplus Assets
- 2.6 Between September 2008 and January 2009 there has been extensive engagement with headteachers, governors and members, including at least 20 workshops and numerous meetings and discussions with small groups, for example meetings with Councillors, governing bodies, town council meetings and meetings with individuals. Seven policy workshops were held for headteachers between the 22nd and 29th of September. The sessions were attended by 28 primary school headteachers, 7 secondary school headteachers and 2 primary school governors. Following these initial meetings the policies were changed to reflect their feedback.
- 2.7 Between November 3rd and 20th a series of eight policy workshops were held for school governors across the county. During these events officers delivered a presentation and debated the policies with over 100 governors representing twenty-seven primary schools and 6 secondary schools. Officers also attended two primary school governing body meetings and three Town Council meetings. Comments were recorded at all meetings.
- 2.8 Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee set up a Task & Finish group to study the policies in depth. The group met on the 28th October, 4th and 11th of November prior to presenting a report to the Scrutiny Committee on the 20th of November. The Task & Finish group consisted of 2 elected members and 3 co-opted members. There have been a number of presentations to Cabinet, Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Executive Team and the Independent Education Recovery Board. The consultation deadline was extended from December to January 12th to allow for more time for responses. Enormous efforts have been made to ensure that every member of the Council is fully briefed and fully understand the implications of implementing the policies.
- 2.9 All responses received during the consultation exercise are included in Appendix C and D. Where there have been consistent messages, the policy framework has been altered accordingly. The main changes are:

- The wording has been changed so that 420 is the “maximum” rather than “optimum” size of primary school
- It has been made clearer in the document that changes to school provision will only be carried out if the authority is convinced that the review process identifies that the outcome of the change would result in equal or improved educational experience for pupils within the schools affected.
- The wording in the federated schools model has been changed to make clear that this option will only be available if the regulations come into force in Wales
- In the secondary school model the wording has been changed to “reserves the right to review” rather than “will be reviewed” and the upper number reduced from 1800 to 1500.

2.10 Within the policy framework document there is a commitment that any receipts generated will be reinvested in modernising education. This would be a deviation from what currently happens with capital receipts.

2.11 Feedback from the consultation meetings has indicated that the review process must be transparent and consistent in order for there to be confidence in the system. This process will be published so that everyone is clear about the stages involved when a review is carried out.

2.12 The policy framework is due to be discussed at the full Council meeting on the 20th January (after the writing of this report). Comments and recommendations from this meeting will be reported verbally to Cabinet at the meeting on the 27th January.

Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales

2.13 The Department of Children, Education Lifelong Learning and Skills key document *Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales - Delivering the Skills that Work for Wales* (TETP) – Appendix 2 sets out the Assembly’s priority to secure a workforce that is sufficiently skilled to access future high level employment opportunities.

2.14 It is clear that the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to a firm focus on securing more effective provider collaboration (for example between further education institutions, higher education institution and other post 16 providers.) This has led to the development of the proposed Learning and Skills Measure, which seeks to ensure the provision of a wide ranging choice of academic, vocational and skill based programmes and pathways in order to underpin 14-19 entitlement. This will ensure that all learners in this important target group are able to access a wide range of good quality learning programmes, which cannot be achieved by any single education or training provider, and obtain the support needed to maximize the chances of successful outcomes.

2.15 There is no set model proposed to dictate how this happens. This must be determined by a Learning Partnership established to oversee the activities required to implement the proposed model. At a minimum, these partnerships must continue for the time it takes to implement activities and ultimately, it may be deemed necessary for the partnerships to continue in order to manage and coordinate the activities of the new structure/model. The Welsh Assembly

Government are not being prescriptive in terms of what needs to happen and where, and are very focused upon the Learning Partnerships identifying and implementing local solutions for local needs. Therefore decisions and actions decided upon by the Partnership must be evidence based and underpinned by key data. Denbighshire's approach is contained in Appendix 3.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

s28(5) School Standard and Framework Act 1998

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Cost Implications:

Modernising Education policies - Costs for undertaking any reviews resulting from the Modernising Education policies will be contained within the existing Planning and Performance budget. Detailed and costed business cases will be developed through the review process.

Transforming Education and Training Provision - The Welsh Assembly Government will fund the appointment of approved consultants to produce a scoping document and costed options to meet the brief as described in the Strategic Outline Plan submitted on 28th February 2008.

4.2 Staffing / Accommodation Implications:

To be met within existing budgets

4.3 IT Implications:

None

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendation/s:

Failure to agree the Modernising Education policies will mean that the Council will have no strategic approach in place to plan future education provision. Decisions on planning school organization will not be transparent. Failure to provide buildings and facilities fit for the 21st Century will ultimately risk the Council's aim of improving educational attainment.

Failure to set up learning partnerships and to develop a strategic model will risk the ability of the County to ensure that learners are able to access a wide range of good quality learning programmes.

5.2 Risks associated with agreeing the recommendation/s:

None

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The Council provided additional resources to the Education service from 2007 as part of its initial response. The service has been successful in funding service developments from within this additional funding or from within its existing base budget. This is very much in line with part of the thrust of the Estyn report that current resources need to be spent more cost effectively.

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

See paragraph 2.6 – 2.9 and paragraph 2.15

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Consistency With / Support for Corporate Priorities:

Support the Council's priority of Modernising Education and Regeneration.

8.2 Assessment of Impact on the Vision, Community Strategy, Equalities and Sustainability

The Modernising Education policies positively support the Council's wider agendas and have been designed to ensure the sustainability of education provision.

9 ACTION PLAN

ACTION & DATE BY WHEN ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER /	ACTION TO BE REVIEWED & MONITORED BY / DATE TO BE MONITORED
Report on Modernising Education policy framework to Cabinet on the 27 th January	Jackie Walley	Mohammed Mehmet 27 th January
22 nd January ad hoc Transformation Strategy Group meets	John Gambles	Mohammed Mehmet 22 nd January
3 rd February Learning Partnership Stakeholders Planning Group meets	John Gambles	Mohammed Mehmet 3 rd February
11 th February Learning Partnership Stakeholders Planning Group meets	John Gambles	Mohammed Mehmet 11 th February
17 th February Cabinet approves the Strategic Outline Plan	John Gambles	Mohammed Mehmet 17 th February
28 th February Strategic Outline Plan submitted to WAG by Stakeholders	John Gambles	Mohammed Mehmet 28 th February

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To consider and agree the Modernising Education policy framework

10.2 To agree to the formation of a Learning Partnership

10.3 To agree to receive a report on the outline strategic bid on the 17th February 2009.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE – ALAN EVANS

DATE 27 JANUARY 2009

SUBJECT CORPORATE EXECUTIVE TEAM – PERFORMANCE REPORT

1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 That Cabinet consider progress against the Corporate Executive Teams' key actions as provided at Appendix 1 and agree further actions as appropriate.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING A DECISION

2.1 Following receipt of a number of regulatory reports, including the Corporate Governance Report, and the appointment of the Acting Chief Executive, the Corporate Executive Team (CET) worked together to agree some key issues which it was felt required immediate attention. These related to:-

- Staffing, particularly raising staff morale
- Improving the Council's reputation and both its internal and external communications
- Responding effectively to the Corporate Governance Inspection and other regulatory work
- The Council's budget, particularly in the context of longer term financial planning
- Achieving the Council's priorities and supporting the work of the Focused Agenda Board and Improvement Boards
- Ensuring the Authority runs effectively and efficiently

Additionally, Recommendation 1 of the Corporate Governance Inspection report states that the Council should "put in place performance management arrangements that ensure reporting of the collective effectiveness of CET as well as the effectiveness of individuals". This performance report from CET is based on issues which the team have agreed they have collective responsibility for addressing. The actions are currently based on issues which need to be dealt with urgently, but it is recognised that there is a clear need for the report to become more strategic and outcome focused over time.

Members will note that significant progress has been made since the first CET Performance Report was presented to Cabinet in December 2008. The Corporate Executive Team is working effectively together and progress has been made in all areas.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

3.1 Performance management and monitoring is a key element of the Wales Programme for Improvement which is underpinned by the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1999.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Cost Implications

There are cost implications to some of the actions although some actions, such as the support services review, should lead to cashable efficiencies. Individual actions have not yet been costed.

4.2 Staffing / Accommodation Implications

Some actions have significant staffing/accommodation implications.

4.3 I.T. Implications

There maybe I.T. implications which will be identified by the projects associated with each action.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risks associated with NOT agreeing recommendation(s)

There are significant risks associated with not progressing the issues identified by the Corporate Executive Team.

5.2 Risks associated with agreeing recommendation(s)

There are no risks identified.

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

6.1 The cost of recruiting the new Chief Executive should be contained within the budget concerned. The cost of recruiting the new Corporate Director along with other interim management and related costs are reported regularly to Cabinet as part of the budget monitoring report. The costs of Single Status have been reported regularly to members as negotiations have progressed. Any further cost implications from this exercise will need to be identified along with a funding source. Several actions have the potential to deliver efficiency savings in the medium term.

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

7.1 The key issues identified by the Corporate Executive Team have been discussed and agreed with the Leader and the subject of a verbal report to Council by the Acting Chief Executive.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Assessment of Impact on Corporate Priorities

Resolving the key issues identified by the CET will support achievement of the Council's priorities.

8.2 Assessment of impact on the Vision, Community Strategy, Equalities and Sustainability

The actions proposed will have a positive impact and put the Council in a stronger position to deliver the County's Vision and Community Strategy and to take account at a strategic level of equalities and sustainability issues.

9 ACTION PLAN

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / DATE BY WHEN ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	ACTION TO BE REVIEWED & MONITORED BY / DATE TO BE MONITORED
CET to progress actions and provide monthly updates to Cabinet	Acting Chief Executive Monthly	CET Weekly
CET to work with Cabinet Members to progress actions	Corporate Executive Team Ongoing	CET Weekly

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That Cabinet consider progress against the Corporate Executive Teams' key actions as provided at Appendix 1 and agree further actions as appropriate.



Corporate Executive Team (CET) Performance Report

* **Note:** although some Key Actions have an individual lead in terms of delivery, CET has collective responsibility for driving forward all of these Key Actions:

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
1. Staffing Issues	Appointment of New Chief Executive	Alan Evans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Appointment Panel has been formed (membership confirmed by Council on 20th January) and will meet on 26th January 2009 to begin the formal process. Workshop for Members took place on 13th January 2009 to revise the job description and person specification. Final appointment to be made by full Council..
	Appointment of Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning	Mohammed Mehmet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning has been appointed and will start the last week of March. Handover arrangements are currently being finalised.
	Single Status	Sally Ellis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools reassessment process, which has also assimilated implementation of the Workload Agreement and the Foundation Phase, has been completed and costs associated with these and Single Status clarified. Meetings are being held by Personnel Officers and School Improvement Officers in January, with a sample of 10 schools, to validate the reassessment and check finance is available to meet the significant increased cost. Equal Pay Claims: 4 Welsh Authorities chosen as test cases for the "White Book" Case which deals with Rated As Equivalent Equal Pay Claims - where claimants could cite a comparator on the same job evaluated grade, but receiving more money. However, both Unison and (GMB) with draw all their claims in early Dec though they will continue to pursue Equal Value Claims. Equal Pay compensation: Sign up days due to be held in December were delayed, on legal advice. Protection: Under the Single Status package, the authority has made provision for a 3 year protection period which covers those who have lost as the result of bonus, as well as changes to enhancements, allowances and basic pay. Another authority in Wales had National Trade Union Agreement on their package which was later withdrawn by Unison as they would not be

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
			<p>endorsing any package which included a period of pay protection, despite this being a fundamental part of the original Single Status agreement. It is likely that, as the Denbighshire package is similar, it may also be rejected by national trades unions. A meeting with external legal advisors is imminent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on all the above was shared with the Local Joint Consultative Committee (LJCC) in January. Key priority now is to finalise all points above to enable submission of package to national trades unions.
	Developing CET leadership and collective performance	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective responsibility for delivery of a number of corporate challenges has been agreed. Progress against collective challenges reported to Cabinet via quarterly performance reports for Corporate Directors and monthly report on collective CET performance. Second CET Performance Report produced for Cabinet on 27th January. Cabinet and CET Awayday took place on the 10 December 2008 and further sessions have been arranged for the next five months with the next event on the 2 February 2009. Monthly programme agreed to discuss developmental issues – with external facilitators. The first session was held on 14th January 2009, and further monthly sessions have been arranged. CET developing a clear strategic plan to take the Authority forward which is based upon the key theme of ‘bringing the Council closer to the community’, making sure that we focus on service delivery. Strategic and business planning will be revised to reflect this focus. Personal performance appraisals of CET members will include corporate effectiveness by setting strategic objectives as well as individual effectiveness and to be copied to all cabinet members for information. Dates have now been arranged for appraisals. Leader & external adviser to be involved in performance appraisal of Chief Executive, and Lead members in appraisals of Corporate Directors.
	Transition from long term interims in Lifelong Learning to permanent appointees	Mohammed Mehmet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recruitment process for the Lead Officer for Inclusion post was unsuccessful in terms of attracting a suitable candidate. Mohammed Mehmet and the Service are currently looking at options for the future of this post.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
	Review staffing requirements for efficient & effective running of authority	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused Agenda Board's Terms of Reference include modernising the Authority to ensure it can meet future challenges. • In December 2008 information was provided to staff on the Efficiency Programme and staff were invited to send in expressions of interest for Voluntary Redundancy, Flexible Retirement and/or a Reduction in Hours. Expressions of interest have now been received and are being assessed against set criteria of Cost, Performance, Service Area and Efficiency. Once an understanding has been gained as to whether an individual could be released, individual will be contacted to consider whether they want to make a formal application. It is expected that employees will be in a position to make this decision in early March 2009. • Support Services Review – details below.
	Support Services Review	Iwan Prys-Jones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External advisors have been asked to review the current proposals for Support Services and their inter-relationships with other activities, particularly making sure that any re-organisation ensures that Support Services support service delivery.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
2. Communication and reputation	Communicating Current Events to Members and Staff	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Corporate Communication Strategy is well underway and will be finalised by early March 2009 • A staff communications survey is being planned for September 2009 which will test the effectiveness of the strategy • A Reputation Campaign Action Plan has been agreed by CET and is in the process of being implemented • Meetings have been arranged for the end of January between the Leader, Acting Chief Executive, Corporate Communications Manager and the media. This is the first meeting of a quarterly programme • Staff have been very positive about the CET Brief and the Leader's section has now been included. The brief is now also being sent to all Councillors • Members feedback on the Daily 'Press Digest' has been extremely positive. • Staff roadshows with the Leader and Acting Chief Executive are being rearranged to begin in February when clearer messages can be communicated • Media awareness session designed which will be offered to groups of staff. One session delivered
	Customer Service Focus	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff suggestion scheme currently being revamped. • Customer Service Strategy 2008-11 published. • Customer Care Service working with the Performance Managers in each Directorate to gain baseline data on new Corporate Customer Care Standards so achievable corporate targets can be set for 09/10. • Service delivery standards/timescales for the Authority to be created and made available to the public, so customers know when to expect a service to be delivered. Temporary funding allocated (and recruitment process started) for this piece of work. • The authority's complaints policies have now been revised resulting in the amalgamation of the three separate policies. A single document has been created to ensure cohesion and equity. The draft document is out for consultation (external and internal) and is due for implementation in April 2009. All other associated tasks e.g. development of the new database, public information etc. are on target.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
	Building relationships with WAO and other regulators	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings between the Acting CEO and the Wales Audit Office (WAO) have been arranged WAO Relationship Manager is member of External Reference Group (see below)
	Improving External Political Relationships	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Affairs Strategy is being incorporated into the Corporate Communications Strategy, which is well advanced. Acting Chief Executive has met individually with several Directors within the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to help understand how Denbighshire County Council is perceived. External Reference Group established with WAG, WAO & WLGA representation, plus the two external consultants hired by Denbighshire County Council. The first meeting of this group was held on 8th January 2009.
	Improving Relationships with Partners	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings arranged between Leader, Acting CEO and all key partners A high level Conference with partners is being arranged for June 2009 and a group has been set up to take this forward. Key note speakers will be invited to address the Conference which will consider national, regional and local strategic issues.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
3. Responding to the Corporate Governance Inspection and regulatory work	Corporate Governance Action Plan	Alan Evans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft of the Action Plan has been sent to the External Reference Group with an update of progress to date against each of the six recommendations • A report which outlined actions against Recommendation 4 was discussed by the Corporate Governance Committee on the 6 January 2009 where it was agreed that the Committee would monitor progress against the Action Plan monthly • Comments from the special Monthly Management Conference (MMC) meetings have been incorporated into the Action Plan where appropriate. • Package of support has now been agreed with the WLGA.
	Responding to Hyfyrdle Reports	Mohammed Mehmet / Sally Ellis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan agreed by Cabinet on 18th November • Action Plan being monitored by Lead CET members & CET collectively. First progress report is due to be presented to CET on the 2 February 2009 and Cabinet on the 17th February 2009. • The Business Improvement Team are carrying out work to align all key action plans and will be incorporating the Hyfyrdle Action Plan into the Corporate Action Plan.
	Preparing for Estyn re-inspection & Youth Support Services monitoring	Mohammed Mehmet / Sally Ellis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview statement has been completed on progress and distance travelled since previous Estyn inspection. This will be submitted to the inspection team before their visit. • A first draft of the self-evaluation document has been produced and meetings have taken place with the inspection team to discuss arrangements for the inspection. • A self-evaluation is also being prepared for the Youth Support Services
	Responding to other regulatory work	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal process for responding to regulatory reports has been formalised and a Joint Protocol agreed with the Wales Audit Office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MMC to allocate Lead Officer responsible for ensuring progress against recommendations; ○ Corporate Governance Committee to allocate Lead Member responsible for ensuring progress against recommendations; ○ Corporate Governance Committee to allocate Scrutiny Committee responsible for monitoring progress against recommendations. • All new regulatory reports received since November 2008 have followed this

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
			full process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WAO report on Fleet Management; and ○ WAO report on Information Security
	Agree regulatory activity for coming year	Alan Evans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A meeting took place on 15th December 2008 with WAO, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) & Estyn to agree the Joint Risk Assessment (JRA) which the auditors will use to decide which inspections and audits to carry out for the coming year. ● The WAO have now confirmed that they have agreed our JRA document, and we are currently awaiting the WAO Annual Letter which sets out the key messages from work undertaken over the last 12 months and highlights the focus of audit and inspection work for the coming year.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
4. Budget	Budget 2009/10	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service proposals have been to all Scrutiny Committees and the Resources Scrutiny Committee has reviewed all proposals • A Member Seminar on the 12 January 2009 reviewed all proposals • Final budget proposals are being presented to Cabinet on the 27 January for recommending to full Council on the 10th February 2009. • Council Tax will be set by full Council on the 24th February
	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MTFP covers the period 2008/09 to 2011/12 and forms part of the Council's planning process. The purpose of the MTFP is to provide a review of the Council's overall financial position for 2008/09, a clear plan for 2009/10 and an overview of the prospects for 2010/11 and 2011/12. • MTFP will be developed alongside the budget for 2009/10. • A session with officers who lead on finance, strategic partnerships and business planning within Directorates has been organised for 16th January with a view to identifying issues with the current strategic framework which may hinder the development of business plans and the integration of service and financial planning for 09/10. Information from the day will be fed back to Corporate Directors and Heads of Service for comment before being presented for discussion at the Cabinet and Corporate Executive Team Awayday on the 2 February. The information will assist the Cabinet and CET to develop a clear strategic direction which can be reflected in the Council's next Improvement Plan, Directorate and operational plans. Having a clear strategic framework will also be a fundamental requirement for the development of a medium term financial plan.
	Efficiency Strategy	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External support has been sought to develop a challenge process for current service budgets taking account of best practice. This will feed into the review of the Efficiency Strategy which will be completed by July 2009 to feed into the financial and business planning process for 2010/11 • Efficiency savings will be captured and recorded in the Financial Planning Forms and will be regularly monitored via quarterly performance reports.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
5. Focused Agenda Board	Focused Agenda Board	Alan Evans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report updating Cabinet on the work of the Focused Agenda Board was presented in January. • The Focused Agenda Board's Terms of Reference have been revised so that its programmes of work include bringing services closer to the council, modernising the Authority and overseeing progress against priorities. These programmes include driving forward progress against the Corporate Governance Action Plan.
	Modernising Education Board	Mohammed Mehmet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Modernising Education priority has been ongoing for 18 months. The Board meets regularly and there are external updates available from Estyn and the Denbighshire Education Independent Recovery Board. • The outcomes have been clearly defined and will be treated as part of the re-inspection in March 2009. The Authority is also increasingly moving towards the broader modernising phase with Education policies currently being the subject of extensive consultation • The Authority has adopted the good practice of the Modernising Education Improvement Board more widely in its response to the Corporate Governance Report.
	Regeneration Board	Iwan Prys-Jones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regeneration Board has identified the following as being its main aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – to address deprivation in key communities so that people living there can improve their quality of life – growing the local economy for the benefit of the community • Denbighshire has been working on the Rhyl Going Forward agenda since 2003 and now needs to integrate and further develop actions into the recently declared strategic regeneration area. • There is an ongoing need to sustain and support the rural economy and deliver the projects outlined in the Rural Development Plan. • Plans will be further developed when the Area Profiling work is complete, which will help to indicate what action may be required in other localities not covered by the programmes set out above. • There is a meeting with the Deputy Minister for Regeneration on 15th January 2009 and the next Regeneration Board meeting is scheduled for 3rd February 2009.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
	Demographic Change Board	Sally Ellis	<p>Three workstreams have been agreed by the Focused Agenda Board to be prioritised in Phase 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Older People who need Care: Strategic Objective: to undertake detailed modeling and implementation of a 3 - 5 year costed Business Plan for care services for older people ensuring the maximum number of people possible are able to remain independent, supported or cared for within available resources 2. Wellbeing and Communities: Strategic Objective- to deliver some short-term "wins" to reinforce the need, both for council departments and local communities, to redesign activities to take account of the needs of an increasing population of older and disabled people 3. Adults with Learning Disabilities who need care or support: Strategic Objective - to track implementation of the current "transformation" plan (which is a detailed costed Business Plan) particularly focusing on how the Council, corporately, can contribute to containing costs through supporting some of its most vulnerable citizens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft outcomes have been identified for each of these 3 workstreams - to be considered by the Improvement Board in February 2009. A Project Manager has been identified and begun work. • Integrating health and social care; and integrating services for disabled children have been agreed as priorities for a second phase of the Improvement Programme. Other demographic change issues will be considered by other Improvement Boards e.g. addressing issues related to the transient population in Rhyl will be an aspect of the Strategic Regeneration Area under the Regeneration Improvement Board.
	Improve Community Engagement and Develop Area Profiles	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Community Engagement Plan is being developed, and is expected to be completed by May 2009. • Community Forums: 6 held during November, with approximately 150 citizens participating. Anticipated that numbers will increase as the programme of events becomes more established. Also looking at ways of engaging with existing groups. The next meetings are being arranged in consultation with local members for March 2009. • The Council has been recruiting members for a new Denbighshire's Citizens' Panel since September 2008. The first round of recruitment ended on 19th

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
			<p>December and welcome letters were sent out to 236 successful applicants before Christmas. The next round of recruitment will end on 23rd January 2009, and it is hoped membership to the panel will have reached 300. The whole Panel will receive their first survey at the end of January around the idea of 'What matters to you?'. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft of 6 Area Profiles on track to be completed by 23 January. </p>
	Local Service Board (LSB) and thematic Partnerships	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSB priorities will be identified via the Community Strategy development process and the Local Delivery Agreement process. • The statutory timescale meant that the LSB's priorities were not able to direct the current Health Social Care and Well-Being (HSCWB), Children and Young People Partnership (CYPP) and Community Safety (CS) plans. However, this will be remedied in the next planning cycle were strategic partnerships will be able to refer to community strategy priorities when developing their strategies. • The first draft of the LSB's Local Delivery Agreement was discussed at the meeting on 18th December, and will be agreed at the meeting in March. • Meetings with key partners have been arranged with the Leader and Acting Chief Executive. • The strategic partnerships; HSCWB, CYPP and CS continue to work well and clear outcomes for the partnerships are developing. The relationship between the LSB and other strategic partnerships has been strengthened and work on the Local Development Plan is on track.

CET Priorities for Action	Key Actions	Lead for Delivery *	Progress to Date
6. Ensuring the Authority runs effectively and efficiently	To identify and effectively manage the Council's strategic and high risks	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic risks have been identified and CET will ensure these are reflected in the business and financial planning process • A meeting took place on 15th December 2008 with WAO, CSSIW & Estyn to agree the Joint Risk Assessment (JRA) which the auditors will use to decide which inspections and audits to carry out for the coming year. The WAO have now confirmed that they have agreed our JRA document.
	Ensure achievement of the Councils Improvement Agreements	CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation received from the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government that our Improvement Agreement with WAG has been approved, and that the grant will now be paid. • Internal process developed for services to bid for additional funding required to achieve targets within the agreements • Progress against 08/09 milestones will be reported as part of the Quarter 3 Performance Report to Cabinet in February.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR H H EVANS LEADER

DATE: 27 January 2009

SUBJECT: E-Coli Public Inquiry Update

1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 That Members agree to the recommendations of this report following both the Welsh Assembly Government Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) Review of the food poisoning outbreak that occurred in South Wales during 2005 (referred to as the E-Coli 0157 Outbreak) and the release of the 'Note of Emerging Issues' from Professor Hugh Pennington.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) recently recommended that each responsible officer within each Local Authority report to its Cabinet following the release of the 'Note of Emerging Issues' from Prof. Hugh Pennington and in advance of the release of the Public Inquiry Report on the E-Coli 0157 Outbreak.

2.2 September 2005 saw the largest ever outbreak of E-Coli 0157 in Wales and the second largest in the UK. The outbreak affected 157 people, most of whom were children in 44 schools across four local authority areas (Bridgend, Caerphilly, Merthyr and Rhondda-Cynon Taf (RCT). Thirty one people were admitted to hospital and, tragically, five year old Mason Jones died.

2.3 A joint investigation by Bridgend, Caerphilly and RCT councils resulted in William John Tudor (Wholesale butcher supplying cooked meats) pleading guilty to seven food safety related charges. On the 7th of September 2007 he was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, of which he served 12 weeks.

2.4 Following the outbreak, the CMO made a number of recommendations for those involved. A copy of the CMO Review, including recommendations can be obtained from Emlyn Jones (Food and Health & Safety Manager) 01824 708151.

2.5 A public inquiry into the outbreak, chaired by Professor Hugh Pennington, was concluded in June 2008. The inquiry report is due to be published in the near future, however a 'note of emerging issues' was published by Prof Pennington. A copy of this note can be obtained from Emlyn Jones (Food and Health & Safety Manager) 01824 708151. The final report will make important recommendations that should be considered at Cabinet level following the release of the report. A further report will be produced by the Head of Planning and Public Protection at a later date to consider those recommendations.

3.0 CMO's Review Recommendations

3.1 The CMO review recommendations along with comments in relation to Denbighshire County Council position in response to the CMO recommendations can be seen as Appendix 1.

4.0 Pest Control in Schools

4.1 Recent food hygiene inspections of Denbighshire school kitchens by Food Safety Officers have uncovered some pest control problems within school premises. These incidents have varied in severity, with some mouse infestations posing an imminent risk to health. Few schools have pest control contracts in place with either Denbighshire County Council Pest Control Service or external companies. This increases the risk of a pest infestation affecting a school, since some schools only call a pest control company in if they have noticed a problem, when it might be too late.

4.2 The Food and Health & Safety team would strongly recommend that any food related activities within the County employs the services of the pest control team to undertake routine visits to the premises throughout the year. This would also help to form a defence in food safety law of taking reasonable precautions to prevent a problem from occurring.

4.3 The Denbighshire County Council Pest Control Service currently visit some schools on a reactive basis, mostly following a sighting of pests or evidence of pests. There is a need to implement a more thorough and proactive system of work to ensure that the risk of pest infestation within Denbighshire schools is controlled. The Service would be willing to enter into a Service Level Agreement with each individual school within Denbighshire, to provide a programmed pest control service.

5.0 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

5.1 Local Government Act 1972

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Cost Implications:

Potential significant cost implications depending on the outcome of the Public Inquiry report.

6.2 Staffing / Accommodation Implications:

None at this time, pending the outcome of the Public Inquiry report.

6.3 IT Implications:

N/A

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendation/s

If the recommendations of this report are not agreed with, then the Council exposes itself to potential liabilities and claims as a result of not complying with legal requirements and best practice standards.

7.2 Risks associated with agreeing the recommendation/s

None at this time, although significant additional costs could be incurred pending the outcome of the public inquiry report.

8.0 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

8.1 The potential for increased costs for the service will need to be considered during the latter stages of the budget setting process for next financial year. Any new regulations impacting upon Councils should be accompanied by additional funding from WAG. The costs of remedying any failure within schools to comply with current regulations should be funded by the schools concerned.

9.0 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

9.1 Consultation has taken place internally within Planning and Public Protection Services, Lifelong Learning Service and School Meals Service and the proposal has the support of the Head of Service. Issues have also been discussed with Corporate Director Environment and Lead Member Environment who also support the proposed approach.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Assessment of Impact on Corporate Priorities:

Supports the current Council priorities of regeneration and responding to demographic change.

10.2 Assessment of impact on the Vision, Community Strategy, Equalities and Sustainability:

Compliance with the CMO's review recommendations would encourage and contribute to a healthier Denbighshire.

11.0 ACTION PLAN

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / DATE BY WHEN ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	ACTION TO BE REVIEWED & MONITORED BY / DATE TO BE MONITORED
Bring a report to Cabinet following the publication of the Public Inquiry	Emlyn Jones – May 2009	Graham Boase

Report		
Make contact with LifeLong Learning Directorate (LLLD) regarding an SLA with DCC Pest Control Team. Bring a report to Lead Member on this issue.	Emlyn Jones/Bryn Roberts – June 2009	Graham Boase
Make contact with DCC School Meals Service in relation to food procurement. School Meals Service to bring a report to Cabinet on this issue.	Emlyn Jones – June 2009	Graham Boase

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 That Members agree to:

12.2 Note the content of the report and agree in principal to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the CMO review

12.3 Support the introduction of a policy for all Denbighshire County Council departments providing food to ensure that suppliers are operating in compliance with food law.

12.4 Support the introduction of a central monitoring system within Lifelong Learning Directorate to regularly monitor the standards of hygiene within school toilets

12.5 Support the principle of Lifelong Learning entering into a Service Level Agreement with the council's Pest Control Team (Planning and Public Protection Service) to provide a full pest control service, including proactive and preventative inspections.

12.6 Officers prepare a further report to Cabinet once the final Public Inquiry report is published

Appendix 1

The CMO's recommendations are stated below along with comments in relation to the current Denbighshire County Council (DCC) position in response to the CMO recommendations.

1.0 Food Safety Inspections

- 1.1** CMO recommends that *“local authorities should, with the Food Standards Agency (FSA), review their interpretation of guidance for the frequency for food safety inspections”*
- 1.2** DCC food safety officers undertake programmed food safety inspections according to frequencies specified in the current FSA Code of Practice for food law enforcement. This area of work is also reported against a Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Performance Indicator of ‘Inspections to High Risk Food Businesses – PPN/01.
- 1.3** For the year end 2007/08 high risk food premises inspection performance against that planned in Denbighshire was 92% compared to our beginning of year target of 85%. The target for 2008/09 is 90% and projections so far indicate that we will achieve in the region of 95% of high risk food premises inspections. Our recent performance against our targets is summarised in Table 1 below. We also undertake routine inspections of medium & low risk food premises, however due to limited resources, we have prioritized our high risk food premises inspections.

Table 1

Year	Inspection Target	Inspection Performance
2007/08	85%	92%
2006/07	70%	78%
2005/06	65%	71%
2004/05	60%	61%
2003/04	100%	75%

- 1.4** Our priority is to secure an improvement in hygiene standards within our poorly performing food businesses in particular. This often involves undertaking revisits to businesses and enforcement work such as serving warning letters, legal notices and prosecution. This is extremely time consuming and has the potential to have an impact on our ability to meet inspection targets. An example of this was a recent food hygiene prosecution case that took approximately 12 months to complete successfully. The level of current resources does not allow for any significant increase in workload. An important point to note though is that it is the food producer's responsibility to supply safe food, hence the role of the regulator needs to be kept in context.
- 1.5** The new FSA Code of Practice has recently been published and the Inquiry report is due to be published in the spring of 2009. Both could pose resource implications for the Service and will need to be considered by the Head of Service.

- 1.6 CMO recommends that *“local authorities should work closely with the FSA in the introduction of the new EU Food Hygiene Regulations as they relate to butchers premises. In particular Local Authorities should assess the need to ensure their attendance at training sessions and contribute appropriately to the development of enforcement guidance”*
- 1.7 The new EU Food Hygiene Regulations came into force in 2006. All food safety officers have received training in relation to these regulations. A scheme of staff appraisals is undertaken within DCC and training needs for all officers are identified for the year. These training needs are primarily food safety update training for food safety officers. All food safety officers are required to obtain a minimum of 10 hours of continuous professional development (CPD) per year as stated in the Food Law Code of Practice. All officers currently meet this target. Further national training needs could be identified following the publication of the Inquiry report and will need to be considered.

2.0 Food Procurement & Supply

This issue cuts across different areas of responsibility within the Council i.e schools, public protection and the school meals service

- 2.1 CMO recommends that *“local authorities should have proper regard to the standards and procedures established by Value Wales in securing contracts for the provision of food items for people in their care or for whom they have responsibility”*
- 2.2 Food procured by any local authority needs to be subject to a robust procurement system to ensure that public health is protected. Particular attention needs to be given to checking food safety management standards and practices of suppliers and subcontractors throughout the continuation of the contract.
- 2.3 It is a legal requirement that any food supplied in the course of a business complies with food safety requirements. There are defences available to those charged with food safety offences, these being Sections 20 and 21 of the Food Safety Act 1990 (Offences due to the fault of another person and the defence of due diligence).
- 2.4 To claim these defences, DCC would need to prove that they ‘took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence’. This involves active steps to ensure that food supplied is fit for human consumption and safe. These steps would include using reputable suppliers, proactively checking the standards of the suppliers using relevant local authority information or third party checks, establishing whether the supplier has a documented food safety management system in place etc
- 2.5 Denbighshire County Council’s School Meals Service is part of Environmental Services and based within the Environment Directorate.
- 2.6 The service currently supplies food to 65 secondary and primary schools. The Service has a policy of purchasing local produce from local suppliers whenever

possible but is also bound by the Councils commitment to providing Best Value at all times.

- 2.7** Denbighshire County Council and neighbouring authorities (Conwy, Flintshire and Wrexham) utilise the services of SNUPI (The Scottish and Northern Universities Purchasing Initiative). SNUPI offers a service which accredits suppliers to show due diligence using the services of STS Plc (Support, Training and Services). To date contracts with SNUPI are in place for groceries, frozen food, milk and bread.
- 2.8** STS undertake audits of food suppliers. Their audits are against a comprehensive Code of Practice which has been developed over a number of years. The latest version, the STS Code of Practice and Technical Standard for Food Processors and Suppliers to the Public Sector, is currently being externally assessed by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service. All auditors are qualified Environmental Health Officers who have also been trained to register as Lead Assessors of Quality Systems and have considerable food manufacturing experience.
- 2.9** Suppliers are requested to provide documented evidence of a number of requirements as set out in the Code of Practice, which includes evidence of compliance with local authority/Meat Hygiene Service requirements.
- 2.10** The service is supplied with other food products i.e cooked meats, dairy products, by means of a locally agreed contract agreement with local food suppliers. These are three companies based in Denbighshire and Conwy respectively. Meetings are held on a regular basis between one of these companies and the School Meals Service to discuss a variety of matters. Details of food safety compliance for the other 2 companies have now been requested through the Environmental Health Team.
- 2.11** If Denbighshire County Council School Meals Service relies on information provided by STS through SNUPI, then it must satisfy itself that the information is verified on an on-going basis. It must also take active steps to monitor and resolve any complaints or issues that arise during the contract. Clearly, it must also satisfy itself that the food safety procedures and food quality of local suppliers used by the School Meals Service has been evaluated. Similar monitoring procedures should also be implemented.

3.0 Hygiene in School Toilets

- 3.1** CMO recommends that *“local authorities should invite school governing bodies to review their regimes for cleaning school premises and in particular for the provision and operation of sanitary facilities for pupils, any such review should consider access by pupils to toilet paper and soap and hot water”*
- 3.2** The Public Inquiry has raised concerns about the standards of hygiene in school toilets in Wales. Clean toilets and provision of basic hand-washing facilities was seen as a fundamental public health issue.
- 3.3** Denbighshire County Council Lifelong Learning Service advise that they do not have access to information on the hygiene standards of school toilets. The

hygiene standards of toilets at each school is, ultimately the responsibility of the Head Teacher for that school. The Lifelong Learning Service do not currently monitor cleaning and hygiene standards of school toilets centrally.

- 3.4** Denbighshire County Council Building Cleaning Services are responsible for cleaning (including toilets) at four schools within the County. These being, Rhyl High School, Blessed Edward Jones, Ysgol Glan Clwyd and Tir Morfa School. These sites are subject to a strict daily cleaning regime and staff are trained in a colour coding scheme of cleaning as well as the correct use of cleaning chemicals. Building Cleaning Services also undertake inspections of these four schools to assess the standard of hygiene.
- 3.5** The Building Cleaning Services also have agreed Service Level Agreements with 12 other schools within the County. These agreements involve providing health & safety training for the school staff and making recommendations to the schools following routine inspections of the school premises. Any recommendations are entirely down to each individual school to follow.
- 3.6** Both the Lifelong Learning Service and Building Cleaning Service advise that the majority of schools within the County either use the services of the caretaker to clean the toilets or in some cases school staff or pupils. There is no monitoring data to comment on the hygiene standards of these school toilets.
- 3.7** In a recent survey of school toilets within Wales (not including Denbighshire) organised by the Wales Heads of Environmental Health, it was found that hot water, soap and hand drying facilities were absent in a 'serious number of instances'.
- 3.8** The Building Cleaning Service advise that the biggest difficulty they face in providing a high standard of cleaning in our schools is the general poor state of repair of the toilets, abuse during break periods the schools lack of action in repairing broken toilet seats, filling up soap dispensers and toilet roll dispensers.
- 3.9** However, some success has been achieved by the Tir Morfa School recently. They were entered in the 'Loo of the Year' competition and achieved a 5 Star award.
- 3.10** Denbighshire schools also participate in the 'healthy schools' initiative, of which personal hygiene and hand washing is a part of it.
- 3.11** Due to the lack of substantive evidence it is not possible to provide an accurate summary of the hygiene standards within our school toilets. However, this is part of the problem. It is clear that the Life Long Learning Service and the County's schools should review its procedures in maintaining clean and safe school toilets. This review should clearly define roles and responsibilities for all involved in the management and provision of hygienic school toilets.
- 3.12** There is also a clear need to implement a monitoring system for checking the hygiene standards within school toilets and a need for independent auditing and/or enforcement to ensure standards are achieved and maintained.

Consideration should also be given to priorities for capital spending on school toilets.

4.0 Food Poisoning Outbreak Responses

4.1 CMO recommends that *“local authorities should review the resources available to them in respect of major outbreaks of food poisoning or foodborne infections to ensure that they are capable of an adequate response to such emergency situation”*

4.2 The food and health & safety team is capable of responding to an emergency situation such as a major outbreak of food poisoning. This will be in liaison with partners such as the National Public Health Service Wales. However, such a temporary redirection of resources will inevitably lead to a reduced level of programmed food hygiene inspection. Depending on the number of such emergency situations during the year, this will make it difficult to achieve performance targets.

4.3 In the event of such a major outbreak, competent staff resources from other areas of the department and/or from neighbouring local authorities would need to be directed into the team.

5.0 Food Poisoning Outbreak Control Plans

5.1 CMO recommends that *“local authorities should be encouraged to ensure that their outbreak control plans are up to date and incorporate the latest advice from appropriate working groups”*

5.2 The current outbreak control plan used in Denbighshire is based on an All Wales model plan. This All Wales Plan is currently being reviewed by the Directors of Public Protection Wales Food Safety and Communicable Disease Technical Panels. The Food and Health & Safety Manager is reviewing Denbighshire’s outbreak control plan to ensure that it is current and up to date. Any changes made to the All Wales plan will be considered and incorporated into the Denbighshire plan as necessary.

5.3 Out-of-hours working

5.4 CMO recommends that *“local authorities should be encouraged to review their systems for ensuring officers have contracts of employment to guarantee that necessary out-of-hours working can be introduced immediately”*

The Planning and Public Protection Department currently operate a system of contacting the Head of Planning and Public Protection or Assistant Head of Service in an emergency out-of-hours situation. The Food and Health & Safety Manager is also contactable in an emergency situation as an authorised officer under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. Officers within the Planning and Public Protection Department are then contactable out of hours on a ‘goodwill’ basis.

5.5 It is likely that additional resources will be required if the existing informal arrangement is formalised.

REPORT TO CABINET

**CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR D A J THOMAS LEAD MEMBER
ENVIRONMENT: REGENERATION**

DATE: 27 JANUARY 2009

**SUBJECT: DESTINATION MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT IN WALES –
CONSULTATION EXERCISE**

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To approve the attached draft response to the above consultation exercise from DCC to the WAG by 30 January 2009.

The attached draft response will have been considered by the:

- DCC Strategic Tourism Cross Directorate on 16 January – Chair Cllr David Thomas –Lead Member for Regeneration
- Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny – 22 January
- Cabinet – 27 January

The full review paper can be seen on WAG website

<http://wales.gov.uk/depc/publications/tourism/tourismdevelopment/Develop/consultation?lang=en>.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 The WAG are considering a radical review of Tourism Management and Marketing arrangements in Wales that would have a significant impact on the Regeneration priority of DCC's Focused Agenda, the management of the economy of the County, support of small urban and rural businesses as we enter a possible prolonged recession and the revitalisation of failing market towns.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Section 2, Local Government Act 2000 - Power of well-being

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Tourism and the Visitor Economy are vital to the prosperity of Denbighshire. This is highlighted in the county's Economic Growth Strategy and is integral to the new Regeneration Focused Agenda.

The DCC Economic Growth Strategy states:

- Denbighshire needs to reposition and rebrand the County as a destination offering higher quality, premium accommodation and niche attractions.
- One of the key challenges to producing economic growth in the County is to reduce dependency on low value tourism and to invest in cultural tourism, the rural landscape, food sector and higher value leisure activities.

Of the ten identified Denbighshire Economic Growth (DEGs) priorities, Tourism and the Visitor Economy are highlighted under:

DEG 1 – Enhancing the quality of life and local services for residents in order to retain more disposable income spend within the County, retain young people and support the Welsh language and culture.

DEG 2 – Adding value to tourism and related sectors:

- Tourism is identified as a key sector in terms of offering local employment
- Investment is recommended in business support, skills, leisure infrastructure

DEG 3 – Upgrading skills – with tourism singled out as a core sector.

DEG 4 – Driving ahead with Regenerating Rhyl:

- Tourism, the Visitor Economy and its cultural infrastructure are critical to Rhyl. Recognised by the funding by WAG of a Tourism Strategy update for the town in 2009.

DEG 5 – Improving the competitiveness of local businesses in order to offer local employment opportunities.

DEG 10 – Rural Development

- A significant proportion of the Rural Development Fund monies secured by the County are focussed on tourism support.

- 4.2** A recent report (Sep 2008) commissioned by Visit Britain, (The tourism arm of the UK Government Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and carried out by Deloitte, assessed the Economic Case for the Visitor Economy in Britain. It concluded that its direct and indirect contribution amounted to 8 % of GDP, equivalent to around £114 billion. It also concluded that it was vital to 5 core economic areas: Economic Development and Regeneration, Business Efficiency, Investment and Competitiveness, Employment Promotion, Skills Development.

As such Tourism is the 6th largest industry in Britain and supports 8 % of the total workforce.

In Wales the total Tourist expenditure is £1.6 billion. This is just the direct visitor expenditure (2008 figures).

In 2006, spending on coastal tourism in North Wales amounted to £648 million (overnight stays only), nearly 40% of total staying tourism spending in Wales.

- 4.3** The WAG review of Tourism which highlighted the critical role played by Local Authorities in Tourism Destination and Management, concluded that it is of more relevance than the regional dimension and that therefore more National Tourism Resource and Finance should be focussed on the local delivery of tourism, **provided that**, the management of tourism is improved both within Local Authorities as a cross directorate function and that the integration of management

and marketing is improved between County Clusters- the Making the Connections Initiative being cited as an ideal vehicle. Such local arrangements also should be supported by local businesses.

- 4.4** The WAG Review specifically points out that although Local Authority Boundaries should not, in themselves, drive Tourism Destination Arrangements for Marketing and Management, the effective delivery of such arrangements is considerably enhanced by co terminus local authority areas. This suggests that DCC should give thought to how its plans for future Making the Connections links with neighbouring Local Authorities might influence its preferences for new arrangements for its management and marketing of its tourism areas.

For example there are already very tangible evidence of closer links with Conwy through the Joint HOS for Highways, collaboration over the marketing and management of the Hiraethog Tourism Area with Conwy and the recent designation by WAG of Rhyl and Colwyn Bay as a new Strategic Regeneration Area, a very successful collaboration with Flintshire over the management of the AONB area and close collaboration with Wrexham over the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Llangollen River and Canal Area as a UK nominated World Heritage Site.

This dimension has been factored into the draft response

4.5 Staffing implications:

- Currently DCC work closely with Wrexham and Flintshire as part of North Wales Borderlands and we share with Flintshire tourism posts relating to the AONB area (funded by the RDP).
- The proposed new arrangements could see much closer collaboration with neighbouring Local Authorities including one Authority taking the Tourism Lead on behalf of shared destinations or the setting up of a single cross LA Tourism Team or an enhancement and strengthening of existing arrangements.

4.6 Cost Implications:

The current total expenditure on Tourism (2008/9) by the TCC Service of DCC is Coastal Facilities = £378k, Clwyd Leisure = £134k (50% of total cost shared with Leisure Services), Tourism Unit = £380k. A total of £892k.

It is perceived in CITFA and SSA terms as high in Wales LA Comparisons but this is skewed significantly due to the need to regenerate the deprived coastal area and mainly due to the cost of maintaining the coastal leisure and tourism portfolio of Clwyd Leisure and the direct running of leisure assets in Rhyl. The proportion of tourism spend relating to the rural and market town areas is more in line with the rest of Wales. This situation will be improved by the new WAG Strategic Designation of Rhyl and consequent enhanced support which will enable more national investment of the county's Rhyl and Prestatyn CLL Portfolio which will trigger much needed further private sector investment. The real concern, as we enter a recession, is to support and develop the other rural and urban areas of the county that are reliant on Tourism but will receive much less of the WAG regeneration pot than in past years.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendation/s

The Tourism Economy of Wales is seen as a high risk by WAG as we enter the recession, the Minister for Heritage has recently chaired two Emergency Tourism Summits in South and North Wales.

5.2 Risks associated with agreeing the recommendation/s

The Tourism Alliance, acknowledged by DCMS as the voice of over 200,000 small and large businesses, has recently called for more government investment in Tourism as the falling value of the pound gives Britain a unique opportunity currently to grow an industry sector through more international visitors and more stay at home domestic visitors.

The Wales Tourism Alliance have expressed similar views with respect to the Welsh Assembly Government.

5.3 DCC is currently working with all other LAs in North Wales and the Tourism Partnership North Wales to update the North Wales Tourism Strategy which will dovetail with the recommendations of the WAG Review.

5.4 Tourism is integral to the Regeneration priority of the Focused Agenda so it is vital that DCC express a clear view to WAG as to the arrangements for managing and marketing the county. The review document is very clear that:

- Local Authorities are key players in destination management
- Local resources are under pressure so support needed from the national level
- WAG needs to put more resources into raising the appreciation and support of tourism at a LA level, at both the political and executive level, and in particular spelling out the beneficial links of quality place making for residents and visitors alike.

5.5 The Tourism Alliance point out that although Tourism is well positioned to be one of the few industry sectors capable of job and economy growth in recessionary times, it will not deliver unless it receives more support at national and local level. Over the last 10 years, despite its importance to the UK economy, it has consistently underperformed due to reductions year on year in its public sector support, with the tourism deficit spiraling from £5billion to £20billion per annum, the UK's share of global tourism receipts falling by 20% and revenue from domestic tourism falling by more than 25%.

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The report doesn't identify any cost implications resulting directly from this matter.

It is increasingly the case that the Council is having to redirect funding from within service base budgets to respond to pressures as they occur. This scenario is almost certainly going to be the case for delivering improvements in the Councils agreed priority areas including providing match funding for external financial support.

A process of reviewing services existing resources and identifying opportunities to invest in priorities as well as funding emerging pressures will be considered by CET in the near future.

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

7.1 The consultants have carried out:

A review of the Tourism Growth Areas (TGA) programme drawing on monitoring reports, discussions with participants and a survey of the TGA project officers.

A review of existing research material held by Visit Wales and analysis of statistics relating to marketing and marketing areas.

Research into destination marketing and management practices elsewhere in the UK and in selected countries in Europe and further afield. This involved telephone interviews, an analysis of websites and a review of recent EU and UNWTO publications on the subject.

A web-based survey of all local authorities in Wales seeking information on their attitudes to marketing areas and destination marketing. Some twenty responses were received.

Interviews, both face to face and by telephone, with a range of individuals and organisations across Wales with an interest in destination marketing and management.

Qualitative research amongst consumers to explore attitudes to Wales and how people choose holidays. This consisted of four focus groups in London and Birmingham.

Quantitative research into how people select holidays in Wales based on a postal survey sent to a sample drawn from the Visit Wales holiday enquiry database.

7.2 The DCC Tourism Team has participated in the Review web survey and attended a NW LA Discussion Group and a special NW Borderlands and Coastal Area discussion Group.

7.3 The Head of Service and Lead Member for Regeneration attend the TPNW Board of Management who have met with the Consultants and discussed the review regularly.

7.4 The issue has been debated by the DCC Tourism Strategy Cross Directorate Group, Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny in addition to Cabinet. Verbal updates can be provided to Cabinet on issues raised at these forums.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Assessment of Impact on Corporate Priorities:

Integral to the Regeneration Agenda.

Integral to the commercial success of the County's Heritage and Cultural assets portfolio.

Integral to maintaining the local distinctiveness and sense of place of Denbighshire communities.

8.2 Assessment of impact on the Vision, Community Strategy, Equalities and Sustainability:

Tourism is integral to the County Vision, to supporting local economies in a sustainable fashion.

9 ACTION PLAN

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / DATE BY WHEN ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	ACTION TO BE REVIEWED & MONITORED BY / DATE TO BE MONITORED
DCC to respond to WAG Review consultation	Paul Murphy/30 January 09	Spring 09

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Strategy Group/Scrutiny/Cabinet endorses the attached draft response (Appendix 1) as the official response of DCC and further considers the full summary of cross Wales responses in due course.

DRAFT RESPONSE BY DCC TO THE WAG REVIEW OF “DESTINATION MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT IN WALES “

Local Authorities have been asked to respond to aspects of the document. These are:

DESTINATION MARKETING ISSUES
DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ISSUES
GUIDELINES FOR THE FUTURE

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

- A NATIONAL AND LOCAL FOCUS
- DO WE NEED A REGIONAL LAYER
- WHAT THIS MIGHT MEAN ON THE GROUND
- MARKETING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

DCC is very pleased that the WAG is carrying out this review.

Tourism and the Visitor Economy are recognised as key elements of the County economy and vital to the regeneration and further development of our urban and rural communities.

We are pleased that WAG recognises the vital role that Local Authorities play in managing and marketing the Welsh Tourism and Visitor Economy.

It is also useful that WAG recognises the need to support the LA sector in carrying out this role by the potential provision of additional financial support to local public/private destination management arrangements.

In addition to the response to the review contained herein, DCC would also refer you to the detailed response that it made to the WAG review of the Regional Tourism Partnerships in Autumn 2006. In this response we made reference to the regional role being ill defined and not strategic enough. We were disappointed that our input did not appear to be acted upon at that time. We do support a role for a Regional Body but this should very much be a support role for the more local public/private destination management and marketing set ups, should not be dominated by the private sector and should aim to be strategic in its activity and support. This is not to say that there is not a need for NW wide themed marketing activity and this needs to be an area given more thought.

The response is a DCC Authority response and does not reflect the views of neighbouring local authorities, although these will now be sought. We do recognise the need to work closely, as indeed we do, with our neighbours and would wish to continue to do so where destination areas involve more than one county area. We are however supportive of the consultants view that the process of Destination Marketing and Management will work better if the destination areas are co terminus with single authority areas (or areas where there is considerable integration of cross boundary policies) and

have factored in this aspect into our response which aims to combine professional and market led demand for tourism information and management with pragmatic trends in Local Government Arrangements and initiatives like Making the Connections.

We will be sharing this response with our LA neighbours in Conwy, Flintshire and Wrexham along with the TPNW.

DESTINATION MARKETING ISSUES

1 and 2 What are your views on the criteria outlined and should there be other criteria:

In general we feel that the criteria outlined are cogent and well described.

However in order for full support for Marketing Areas to be forthcoming from Local Authority Executive and members, there needs to be some recognition of local identity and defined areas. One way of securing full local buy in to the concept of Marketing Areas would be to ensure that recognition and support is forthcoming for the promotion of local distinctiveness within the Marketing Area Branding. A very simple way to achieve this would be to recognise a unique local role in terms of promoting and building the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market, which seems to account generally for about 20% of most tourism and visitor economies but has never been seriously tackled strategically by the UK – Wales with its enhanced sense of identity and culture is ideally placed to lead the way in this area. Denbighshire has just secured a further phase of Interreg funding for its Cantata Sustainable Tourism Initiative and the VFR market will be a clear focus for the initiative

Re Marketing Areas, DCC feels that there is change needed in terms of the 2 areas that currently cover the County, North Wales Borderlands (NWB) and the Coastal East Area covering Rhyl and Prestatyn. Full details are provided of the recommended changes and options further on in the report

Private sector engagement should be stronger in Denbighshire and we currently have plans to set up a county wide Tourism Forum to advise and lead the public/private response to the new North Wales Tourism Strategy and new WAG proposals. However the private sector respond best to clearly defined marketing destination branding so we do not wish to set up new arrangements until the new Marketing Area Arrangements have been finalised.

We do feel strongly that private sector engagement is best harnessed at local level and strongly support the proposed diluting of current regional private sector membership arrangements which we feel are counter productive to generating strong local branding.

On line marketing is key and we feel that Wales is very weak in this area and that locally we are not being given good strategic leadership in this area at neither a regional or national level. There is a Convergence Visit Wales led initiative in this area but we feel it has not been given the support it deserves. Wales, in our view, is already well behind the UK in this critical area of Destination Management and Marketing.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3 and 4 What are your views on the criteria and should there be others?

Again, in general we feel that the arguments adopted are cogent and would support them.

Local Authorities are critical to Destination Management and are responsible for many of the core functions the report describes under the headings of Planning and Development, Marketing and Information and Visitor and Resource Management.

In Denbighshire we have now grouped all of these functions into one Directorate – The Environment Directorate and it is a key priority of the Lead Member for Regeneration to better integrate internally these functions. Once we have secured better internal deployment of resources we will be better equipped to fully engage and support our external private and public partners. It is not always well understood by Local Authority Executives and Members how Tourism and the Visitor Economy link strategically into Regeneration, Economic Development, Land Use, Community Development, Social Inclusion and Lifelong Learning.

We support the view that in Wales, the natural Destination Management Organisation is the Local Authority but accept that there is much work to be done to convince the private sector that Local Government fully understand and embrace the agenda of small tourism businesses and support in this area from the National Body would be useful.

More weight should be given to the importance of the cultural dimension in the management and product development areas in the Wales tourism brand. An excellent national Cultural Tourism Strategy and action plan has been allowed to wither and an attempt to revive and re-launch the strategy seems to have stalled at WAG. Wales has a rich heritage and culture which in many areas like Denbighshire, forms the backbone of the tourism product and yet the links between the Tourism, Arts, Creative Media and Heritage sectors are weak. Wales is the featured Arts Destination at the prestigious Smithsonian Show in the USA in 2009 and host the Ryder Cup in 2010 and yet does not have a National Cultural Legacy programme to take advantage of such once in a lifetime opportunities.

We are aware of the intention to impose a Duty of Culture on Local Authorities in the near future which will impact on the local delivery of Tourism but are frustrated at the lack of consultation re, and any detail, of the proposals.

We feel, as evidenced in our submission to the review of the RTPS in 2006, that TPNW has not operated sufficiently as a strategic body interfacing with other critical regional areas like Economic Development, the Arts, Transport Planning, Skills development, Social Inclusion and Lifelong Learning but has focussed too much on tactical issues and marketing under an umbrella agenda overly influenced by small businesses.

We support the view that the continuation of Regional Tourism Companies have confused the tourism sector and created duplication and diluted the potential impact at a local level of joint public and private tourism funding. At the very least there needs to be

investment in approving communications relating to roles and responsibilities within tourism in Wales. It is however important to point out that as members of North Wales Tourism in our own right DCC have been happy with our outputs.

We strongly support the integration of the marketing and management function at a destination level and we are happy, as a council, to look at more cost efficient approaches to this area.

One particular area of tourism management that we are struggling to find the right answer to, on our limited resources, is the right level, and role of, Tourist Information Centres. We feel this issue could have received more attention in the Report.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FUTURE

5 and 6 Views on Criteria and other suggestions

DCC welcome in general the proposed guidelines for shaping the future approach to destination management and marketing in Wales.

We note the comments about the importance of dedicated project officers in making a difference and the importance of dedicated funding to pump prime capital projects and in support of softer revenue initiatives.

We also note the observation that it is often more practical and efficient to work within established local authority boundaries and structures.

We welcome the observation that strengthening public/private partnerships at a local rather than regional level is the way forward and note the links made with the Making the Connections initiative around strengthening local sub regional partnerships.

We support the review's 6 point model for successful new models of destination management and welcome the pivotal role that this gives for Local Authorities.

We particularly support the need for local flexibility as (see next section) we do have views on options for management structures in NE Wales.

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

7 What are our views on the proposal to focus destination marketing and management at 2 levels – National and Local?

We strongly support this view.

8 What do we think of the proposals to establish Tourism Areas and Tourism Area Partnerships?

We support these proposals and would seek to engage locally in discussion with private and public sector partners as to which of the 4 models to adopt in due course.

9 What should be the roles of the regional bodies (RTPS and RTCs) in destination marketing and management?

We agree with the proposals that there is a need for regional intervention and agree also that this should be constituted in such a way as not to need an independent and separate trade RTP Board with its own trade representatives. The suggestion of absorbing such a role into the VW structure is noted as a potential sensible way forward.

The suggestion that the RTC membership form the basis of new stronger local public/private arrangements is welcomed although we would express caution about the setting up of formalised local paying membership bodies as an assumed model of best practice, sometimes flexible public/private arrangements work better.

10 How Should Tourism Areas be Defined?

We would suggest a number of options in no particular order.

N.B. all views below are those of Denbighshire County Council and have not been discussed with any other Local Authority.

1. North Wales Borderlands (NWB) – Status Quo

DCC, although it enjoys an excellent working relationship with NWB partners, Flintshire and Wrexham, has concerns about the NWB brand. It does not seem to be embraced by all areas and businesses within the sub region and concern continues about its brand reach and understanding. It is generally accepted that the brand has not developed any significant market penetration and has not developed strong brand values. It could, however, be seen as the 'least worst' option available. Some operators in Prestatyn have expressed an interest in joining the campaign.

Within the NWB brand, Denbighshire enjoys strong sub brands with perhaps the Dee Valley being the strongest but also encompassing the Vale of Clwyd which links to the AONB. The Hiraethog area is beginning to achieve recognition as an area of distinctive appeal.

Llangollen and the Dee Valley area, in particular, appear to see little empathy with the NWB Brand but may welcome a tighter more defined version of this tourism area (see below 2).

The Clwydian Range AONB has developed its own sustainable tourism strategy and recognises that on its own it cannot sustain an individual brand. This is also the case with the Vale of Clwyd.

2. An amended NW Borderlands area which would include only the Corwen and Llangollen area of the County

• THE WELSH DEE VALLEY

It is generally recognised that either through an enhanced Making the Connections programme or through actual Local Government Review that the Local Government Landscape in NE and NW Wales may change significantly over the next few years during the span of the proposed move to new Destination Management Arrangements

Denbighshire, for example, has already moved towards a joint Head of Service post for Highways with Conwy and already manages the Flintshire side of the AONB for that county.

The possibility of developing a new Tourism Area focusing on the Dee Valley area which runs from Chester through all 3 counties of Flintshire, Wrexham and Denbighshire was mooted (and received support from a number of private and public partners) during some of the focus groups led by the Review and it has much to commend it. Denbighshire has already created a Dee Valley Tourism Approach, is working closely with Wrexham on the probable UNESCO 2009 nomination of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and the Llangollen Dee River as a World Heritage Site and is home to the iconic Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod. It has a culture and sense of place and drama and is framed by the river valley in geographical terms. It perhaps offers the ideal vehicle for the growth and development of the Llangollen and Corwen economies.

This proposed new area perhaps to go under the working title of the Welsh Dee Valley or remain as NWB – at the very least deserves further consideration, and thorough discussion with Flintshire and Wrexham.

3. If 2 were to be adopted we believe there is a case to look at a new tourism area focusing on the Clwydian Range AONB, Vale of Clwyd, Hiraethog and Conwy Valley

With regard to the rest of the NWB area, there is a growing interest in the creation of a gentle, quality, distinctively Welsh rural, activity based destination comprising the AONB, Vale of Clwyd and the Hiraethog and Conwy rural hinterland. In effect, if one accepts the pre eminence of the Snowdonia brand, a 'Snowdonia Light' alternative that covers the landscape from the English border through to Snowdonia. This concept would be enhanced by the closer links that Denbighshire is developing with Conwy.

The area already offers quality walking, cycling, gentle climbing, fishing in a dramatic landscape with a complementary cultural tourism offer led by the Ruthin Craft Centre, the North Wales International Music Festival and a town acknowledged as potentially one of Wales' hidden heritage gems, Denbigh. It has the potential to sympathetically develop its landscape for tourism in a sustainable fashion.

4. One North Wales Coastal Tourism Area

Rhyl and Prestatyn are uneasy destination partners as their tourism products have innate differences, targeted markets do not match and both are also at different stages of the product life cycle-Prestatyn's infrastructure being much further developed than that of Rhyl's. On the other hand Rhyl probably has the stronger innate tourism brand although it is a brand that has been tarnished in recent decades.

Rhyl has recently been designated by WAG, together with Colwyn Bay, as a new Priority Regeneration Hub which bodes well for its continued regeneration in the long term.

Prestatyn identifies itself, in resort terms, much more with, for example, Llandudno and Conwy generally and aspires to be seen as a coastal town with strong links to its rural

hinterland of wonderful walking and active countryside. If NWB were to continue in a similar vein it would seek to become an engaged partner.

DCC feel strongly that the North Wales Resorts should work much more closely together in management, development and social cohesion terms. It is now very well established that UK Coastal Towns have their own particular social, economic and environmental concerns and challenges-This has been recognised in England with the set up of the Sea Change project and there is a lobby developing (led by Denbighshire and supported by the LA Tourism representative body, BRADA) to extend this to Wales.

We feel that the Coastal Resorts East and West Areas should become one area with an overarching management steering group and an agreed policy towards marketing. It would seem to make sense to develop at least 2 individual North Wales Resorts sub brands with for example Llandudno, Conwy and Prestatyn working together to target a more up market audience and Rhyl, Colwyn Bay and Abergele to work together on a campaign targeting the volume budget market.

In developmental terms, it is entirely feasible that over time, Rhyl could build on its unique brand, build on its superb natural setting and location and aspire to become a higher quality destination in its own right.

This would make great sense considering the close links that are being developed by the 2 counties involved Denbighshire and Conwy.

This would potentially mean the maintenance of 3 Tourism areas as per the current set up but via 3 new but cogent destinations that work better both in market led terms and Local Government Organisation terms and probably, as a result, offer more chance of engaging private sector businesses and local communities.

11 What are our views on the proposed marketing roles and responsibilities?

We welcome the proposals and agree with the proposed National and Local roles and the proposed support and non direct marketing role for the region level although we do support the concept of themed NW wide campaigns where appropriate and regionally based expertise in research, strategic investment and links etc.

We welcome the focus on developing digital appropriate Destination Management Systems and note the comment that the fully centralised prototypes mainly developed in England now appear discredited. This offers an opportunity to Wales but would urge caution re the implicit assumption that Wales might benefit from its disengagement to date with these systems. We feel that other UK destinations will have developed local expertise in these areas that Wales have not and will therefore also be well positioned to move on quickly.

12 What are our views on proposed destination management roles and responsibilities?

We welcome the idea of formal terms of reference and charters for Tourism Areas. The Head of Service for Tourism in Denbighshire is also the representative for Wales on the Tourism Management Institute (TMI) Full Council and has pointed out that the institute has recently pioneered a charter for Local Authorities across the UK and an online

Destination Management Handbook that has been endorsed by Visit Britain. The Tourism Alliance has also produced very useful guidelines for Local Authority Planners that could be better promoted across Wales to the Planning Sector.

We would also support the concept of Integrated Quality Management (IQM) and note that Wrexham have pioneered this approach with their tourism team.

CONCLUSION

We commend this response to Visit Wales as the formal response of DCC. The response has been endorsed by the DCC Tourism Cross Directorate Strategy Group (See Appendix 2) and the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and by the Full Cabinet.

DCC is happy to be publicly identified as the author of the report and looks forward to receiving a summary of the responses to the document.

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TOURISM STRATEGY CROSS DIRECTORATE GROUP

FULL LIST OF MEMBERS (AND THEIR, EMPLOYERS, PORTFOLIOS OR CONSTITUENT GROUPS)

Alan Evans, Acting Chief Executive, DCC
Angharad Wynne, Consultant on Cultural Tourism
Cllr Hugh Evans, Leader, DCC
Cllr Eryl Williams, Lead Member for Environment and Sustainable Development, DCC
Cllr David Thomas, Lead Member for Regeneration, DCC
Dewi Davies, Regional Strategy Director, TPNW
Gareth Evans, Head of Development Services, DCC
Iwan Prys-Jones, Corporate Director – Environment, DCC
Janette Williams, Head of Strategic Policy, DCC
Huw Rees, Countryside Services Manager, DCC
Wyn Roberts, Senior Regeneration Manager, WAG
Sian Morgan Jones, Acting Manager, Cadwyn Clwyd
Ruth Williams, Manager Tourism Operations, DCC
Kevin Potts, Director of Hospitality, Business & Tourism, Llandrillo College
P Lavin, Owner Nant Hall, Prestatyn, BHA Representative North Wales
Mark Dixon, Principal Regeneration Manager, DCC
Paul Murphy, Head of Tourism, Culture and Countryside, DCC

REPORT TO CABINET

**CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR E W Williams, Lead Member Environment:
Sustainable Development**

DATE: 27th January 2009

SUBJECT: PARKING CHARGES 2009/10

1 DECISION SOUGHT

Cabinet is requested to consider the recommendations of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Working Group and agree changes to parking tariffs for 2009/10.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The Environment Directorate budget proposals for 2009/10 include additional income from parking of £250,000. An Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Working Group met on 12th January 2009 to debate the possible options for achieving this increase. The report presented to the group is appended (appendix 1) to give members an understanding of each of the options discussed.

The members of the working group agreed to recommend the following:

- i) Parking permits be increased from the current daily charge of 18p to 27p, increasing the annual charge to £100 (see section 5.2.2 of the appended report). This would generate additional income of £33,000.
- ii) Parking charges be simplified and unified for all car parks (see section 5.3.3 b) of the appended report). The charges for general car parks were agreed as:

10 pence for the first 20 minutes
50 pence for up to 1 hour
£1 for up to 3 hours
£3.50 for over 3 hours in long stay car parks only

Tariffs for the remaining car parks would also be amended to reflect the new tariff structure. These car parks are: Underground and Skytower car parks in Rhyl; Seasonal/Beach car parks in Rhyl and Prestatyn, and on-street parking on the promenade in Rhyl. The complete proposed tariff for all car parking is attached as appendix 2.

The change in charges would increase car parking income by approximately £200,000.

- iii) Up to 3 free parking days per annum are made available, upon application, to town or community councils (section 6.3 of the appended report).

- iv) That the possibility of introducing charges in the remaining, small number of free car parks in the County should be reviewed.
- v) That officers investigate the option of introducing charges for the use of Council office car parks by employees and Councillors (section 6.2 of the appended report).

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 3.1** The Council has powers under Section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to provide off-street parking places for the purpose of relieving or preventing congestion. Section 35(1)(iii) of the Act permits the local authority to make provision as to the charges to be paid in connection with the use of off-street parking facilities.
- 3.2** The Council has powers under sections 32, 35, 45, 46, 46a and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended and Section 43 and Schedule 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1991 to charge for the use of on-street parking facilities.
- 3.3** The approval of fees and charges is a responsibility delegated by the Cabinet to the Chief Executive although Cabinet is requested to determine the policy for car parking charges.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Cost Implications:

The implementation of the working group's recommendations would result in additional income of approximately £233,000.

There would be a relatively small cost for the provision of the free parking days but this could be offset when further work is undertaken on council office parking and the review of the remaining free car parks.

There is also a small cost associated with advertising the change to the tariffs.

4.2 Staffing / Accommodation Implications:

There are minor staffing implications from the physical change required to each of the pay and display machines. There are no accommodation implications.

4.3 IT Implications:

There are no IT implications.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendation/s

The increase in parking income is a significant element of the efficiency proposals for the 2009/10 budget. Failure to achieve the increase will require alternative proposals as part of the budget setting process.

5.2 Risks associated with agreeing the recommendation/s

The effect of increasing charges has been calculated after assuming some resistance to change. If there is a significant variance from these assumptions this would impact on the amount of additional income achieved.

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The delivery of increased Car Parking income is part of the budget proposal for the next financial year.

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Working Group

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Assessment of Impact on Corporate Priorities:

Corporate Policy: Fees and Charges

The Council's Corporate Policy on the Setting of Fees and Charges states that the Authority will in principle levy a fee or charge for all services that it provides where it has the legal power to do so.

The Corporate Policy maintains that fees and charges will be consistent across the County, but may be varied by rebates and reductions to reflect local conditions.

8.2 Assessment of impact on the Vision, Community Strategy, Equalities and Sustainability:

Denbighshire's Vision includes the following elements:

We will improve access by developing **better transport links** for journeys within Denbighshire, between rural areas and the main towns, and between Denbighshire and other areas.

Our diverse county will attract **more visitors** throughout the year who will experience Denbighshire's outstanding natural and built environment, culture and wide range of outdoor activities.

Denbighshire's Community Strategy refers to adequate and secure parking facilities.

9 ACTION PLAN

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / DATE BY WHEN ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	ACTION TO BE REVIEWED & MONITORED BY / DATE TO BE MONITORED
Advertising changes to the order	Parking Services Manager/ February 2009	Head of Finance and Performance/ 28 February 2009
Operational changes to pay and display machines	Parking Services Manager/ March 2009	Head of Finance and Performance/ 27 March 2009

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

- 10.1 consider the recommendations of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Working Group and approve the changes to the tariff structure.
- 10.2 approve the principle of 5 free parking days to be allocated in agreement with the town or community councils, noting that this is an increase over the figure agreed by the working group.
- 10.3 note that officers will investigate the introduction of charges for staff at Council offices and the possible withdrawal of the free parking permit currently provided to Councillors. A further paper will be presented in due course.

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Working Group
12th January 2009

Report by the Head of Finance and Performance

CAR PARKING CHARGES 2009/10

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To outline options to provide a significant amount of additional income from car parking charges in 2009/10.

2. **Executive Summary**

There are numerous options for increasing parking income and some of these are outlined in this report. Further work will be needed to refine the options that members feel most appropriate. The following table summarises the possible outcomes and members are requested to select options from the list to achieve an increase in income of £320k, sufficient to provide for the budget requirement of £250k plus the probable ongoing overspend of £70k:

Paragraph	Option	Increased Income £
	Parking Permits	
5.2.1	Parking permits increase to £130	62,000
5.2.2	Parking permits increase to £100	33,000
	Parking Charges	
5.3.1	Percentage increase across all tariffs	
	7%	95,000
	10%	115,000
	12%	125,000
	15%	150,000
5.3.2	Flat rate increase of 10p on all tariffs	85,000
5.3.3	Simplify and rationalise charges	
	a) 50p base rate	340,000
	b) 10p, 50p, £1, £3.50	200,000
	c) differential – 60p, 50p, 30p base rates	130,000
5.3.4	Rationalise all charges at tariff A	120,000
5.3.5	Rationalise all charges outside Rhyl at tariff B	70,000

3. Working Group Outcomes

Following a debate on the options Members are requested to make recommendations to Cabinet on 27 January 2009.

4. Recommendations

That members review the proposals and offer advice to Cabinet in framing the budget proposals.

5. Background

5.1 Current Charges

5.1.1 The current proposals for savings for the 2009/10 budget include a requirement to achieve an additional £250,000 through increased parking fees.

5.1.2 Parking income at end November 2008 is £55,000 less than the previous financial year and the latest projection for the current financial year is that income will be approximately £100,000 below the target for 2008/09 of £1,483k (including penalty charge notice income).

5.1.3 The current tariff levels were agreed in December 2006 following an extensive consultation exercise undertaken during November 2006.

5.1.4 The current tariff is based on the following charging levels:

5.1.4.1 Parking Permits

Permit Type	Charge
Quarterly	£21.25
Half-yearly	£37.50
Annually	£65.00
2 year	£120.00
Over 60s	£35.00

5.1.4.2 Parking Charges

Tariff A – Rhyl

Short Stay	
Up to 1 hr	50p
Up to 2 hrs	80p
Up to 3 hrs	£1.10
Up to 4 hrs	£2.00
Over 4 hrs	£7.00

Long stay	
Up to 1 hrs	50p
Up to 2 hrs	80p
Up to 4 hrs	£1.50
Over 4 hrs	£2.20

Tariff B – Prestatyn and Llangollen

Short Stay	
Up to 1 hr	40p
Up to 2 hrs	70p
Up to 3 hrs	90p
Up to 4 hrs	£1.80
Over 4 hrs	£6.80

Long stay	
Up to 1 hrs	40p
Up to 2 hrs	70p
Up to 4 hrs	£1.10
Over 4 hrs	£2.00

Tariff C – Denbigh, Ruthin, St.Asaph, Rhuddlan, and Corwen

Short Stay	
Up to 1 hr	20p
Up to 2 hrs	40p
Up to 3 hrs	60p
Up to 4 hrs	80p
Over 4 hrs	£5.00

Long stay	
Up to 1 hr	20p
Up to 2 hrs	40p
Up to 3 hrs	60p
Up to 4 hrs	80p
Over 4 hrs	£2.00

Seasonal Car Parks – Rhyl and Prestatyn

Low Season	
All day	£1.60

High Season	
Up to 1 hr	£1.50
Over 1 hr	£2.60

Rhyl Pay & Display Promenade

Low Season	
Up to 4 hrs	£1.00
All day	£2.00

High Season	
Up to 1 hr	£1.00
Up to 4 hrs	£2.00
All day	£4.00

Skytower and Underground

Low Season	
All day	£1.60

High Season	
Up to 2 hrs	£1.50
Up to 3 hrs	£2.00
Over 3 hrs	£4.00

There are minor variations to the rates detailed above, for example there is an evening charge for the Underground and Sky Tower car parks.

5.2 Parking Permits

The Council issued 1,619 permits during 2007/08 which generated income of £62,000. The current charges are significantly lower than other North Wales Authorities and, at the annual rate of £65, equates to approximately 18p per day. Other local authorities charge between £80 and £700 and often have differential charging levels for residents, non-residents, and businesses. Initial analysis of permits issued in Denbighshire shows that less than 6% were issued to non-residents/businesses. There are numerous options to vary the permit charges and the following are proposed as they are considered viable:

5.2.1 Doubling the charge to the annual equivalent of £130.

This is the equivalent of 36p per day and would generate an additional £62,000. It is not known whether this increase would affect the numbers of permits issued but it is thought unlikely.

5.2.2 An increase of £35 to the annual equivalent to £100.

Equivalent to less than 27p per day, this level of charge would generate an additional £33,000 per annum.

5.2.3 Other options have been considered e.g. 5 day short stay permits, variable rates for business and non-residents, but all are considered unviable for various reasons.

5.3 Parking Charges

Following a budget meeting with Lead Members it was agreed that a number of proposals should be reviewed and presented to Members for consideration. These proposals are:

- Percentage increase across all tariffs
- Flat rate increase of 10p on all tariffs
- Simplify and rationalise charges
- Rationalise all charges at tariff A
- Rationalise short and long stay charges outside Rhyl at tariff B

5.3.1 Percentage increase across all tariffs

The income from all ticket sales is estimated this year to be £956,000. Therefore, if we assume some resistance to the increase at say 10% (may increase as the percentage increases), each percent increase would generate approximately £8,600. However, any increases would need to be to the nearest 10p for operational reasons. This would, in effect increase charges at the lower tariffs by much more than the percentage applied and would also have the effect of reducing differential levels.

Increases of up to 5% would generate approximately the same level of additional income, £85,000, as the flat rate increase of 10p as virtually all increases would be rounded to that level.

Once above 5% the levels of some charges exceeds 10p and the following additional incomes could be expected:

at 7% approximately £95,000
at 10% approximately £115,000
at 12% approximately £125,000
at 15% approximately £150,000

Denbighshire has not inflated prices since 2005/06. During that period inflation has increased prices generally by 12%. The Council has increased budgeted income levels by 5.5% during this period.

5.3.2 Flat rate increase of 10p on all tariffs

As stated in 5.3.1 this would have the effect of reducing differentials between tariffs and pricing levels. An increase of 10p on all prices would increase income by approximately £85,000.

5.3.3 Simplify, rationalise, and increase charges

Denbighshire has the most complicated tariff system in North Wales. There are three tariffs, A, B, and C and each has a long stay and short stay tariff with up to 5 levels of charge.

A neighbouring Authority has a very simple system of 50p for the first hour, £1.50 up to 3 hours and over 3 hours costing £3.50 in long stay only.

a) Denbighshire could implement exactly the same tariff level across all car parks. This would reduce the number of pricing levels in short stay car parks to two: 50p for up to 1 hour and £1.50 for up to 3 hours. Long stay car parks would have a further charge of £3.50 for over 3 hours. This is, in effect, a significant increase in charges for all tariffs especially B and C. Whilst this is based on a number of assumptions about customer behaviour, it is anticipated that income would increase by £340,000.

b) An alternative unified pricing structure could be to introduce a charge of 10p for the first 15 minutes, 50p for up to 1 hour, £1.00 for up to 3 hours, and £3.50 for over 3 hours in long stay only. There are a number of benefits of this option including the ability to pay with single coins in short stay. It is anticipated that charging at this level will increase income by approximately £200,000.

c) A further option in simplifying the charging system is to continue with the existing three tariff structure, A, B, and C but introduce the reduced number of pricing levels as described above. For example, tariff A could be based on 60p for up to 1 hour, £1.20 up to 3 hours and £2.50 for over 3 hours. Rates in tariff B car parks would be 50p, £1.00 and £2.30 and in tariff C 30p, 80p, and £2.20 respectively. This change could generate additional income of approximately £130,000.

All of the tariffs detailed above in a), b), and c) would also require appropriate amendments to the charges on the promenade, skytower, and underground car parks in order to simplify those pricing structures.

5.3.4 Rationalise all charges at tariff A

It was agreed in December 2006 that Denbighshire would implement a three tariff system. Tariffs A, B, and C are detailed earlier in this report.

Removing all differentials and charging all car parking at tariff A would generate additional income of £120,000 after allowing for resistance to the change.

5.3.5 Rationalise all charges outside Rhyl at tariff B

The initial proposal in the December 2006 report was for two levels of charging at tariffs A and B. Tariff A would apply to Rhyl and B to all other areas.

Removal of tariff C and charging of all car parks outside Rhyl at the tariff B level would create additional income of £70,000 after allowing a 10% reduction for resistance to the change.

6. **Other Options**

The following options are suggested for discussion by the working group.

6.1 On-street parking in Town Centres

The working group may wish to consider the possibility of exploring opportunities for charging for on-street parking in town centres and working in partnership with Town Councils on a profit sharing basis.

6.2 Council Offices

There are 700 spaces at Council offices across the county where members may wish to consider the possibilities for charging staff and councillors.

6.3 Free parking days

Requests are being received from Town Councils for occasional free parking days for particular events. Members may wish to consider offering a set maximum number of days to each town council, possibly linked to an on-street parking partnership.

7. **Consultation Carried Out**

Corporate Director, Environment
Parking Services Manager
Lead Members

Contact Officer: Mike Hitchings, Head of Finance and Performance - 01824 706980

Parking Tariff Proposals 2009/10

Short Stay			Long Stay	
Up to 20 mins	10p		Up to 20 mins	10p
Up to 1 hour	50p		Up to 1 hour	50p
Up to 3 hours	£1.00		Up to 3 hours	£1.00
Over 3 hours	£7.00		Over 3 hours	£3.50
Seasonal/Beach Car Parks, Rhyl Underground and Skytower Car Parks, and On-street parking on Rhyl Promenade				
Summer			Winter	
Up to 1 hour	£1.00		Up to 1 hour	50p
Up to 3 hours	£2.00		Up to 3 hours	£1.00
Over 3 hours	£4.50		Over 3 hours	£3.50
Parking Permits				
Quarterly	£30		Annual - Beaches	£55
Half-yearly	£55		Annual Over 60's - Beach	£30
Annually	£100			
2 Year	£185			
Over 60's	£55			

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor P A Dobb, Lead Member for Health, Social Care & Wellbeing

DATE: 27th January 2009

SUBJECT: Housing Revenue Account Budget & Capital Plan Update Report 2008 / 2009

1 DECISION SOUGHT

Members note the forecast outturn position of the Housing Revenue Account (H.R.A.) and Housing Capital Plan for 2008/09.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

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

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Housing Act 1985 Part II.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Cost Implications - Housing Revenue Budget 2008/09

- The latest forecast for the HRA shows that an in-year revenue surplus of £287k should be generated by the end of the financial year, which is £144k less than forecast in the original budget set in February 2008.
- There has been an increase of £65k in revenue expenditure since the end of November. The main cause of the increase is the inclusion of Right to Buy administration costs. In previous years it has been possible to offset these costs against capital receipts.
- Right to Buy sales estimates have been reduced to the one completed sale so far. No further sales are expected this financial year.
- The latest rent income forecast has changed only slightly from last month based on actual rents received so far. Overall, rent income is forecast to be £22k higher than planned. Interest on balances will be higher than the budget but less than the £150k forecast earlier in the year because of the drop in interest rates.

4.2 Cost Implications - Housing Stock Business Plan (HSBP)

- The HSBP is kept under regular review. While the reduction in sales causes some concern in the long term, it should be compensated by other areas of the Plan exceeding expectations. If for example the increases in management and maintenance allowances in the housing subsidy settlement are similar to previous years, it would more than compensate for the fall in sales.
- Draft details of next year's subsidy settlement were received in December and appear favourable. The Plan will be fully updated and presented to Cabinet in February.

4.3 Cost Implications Housing Capital Plan

- As previously reported, the windows and heating contracts have both now completed. The major refurbishment contract is continuing with 712 properties now completed (686 last month). This means that in total, 964 properties have had major improvements completed. This is of course in addition to the recently completed windows and heating contracts.
- The plan has been amended from the original budget forecast to account for contract stage payments and retention payments that have been made in 2008/09, rather than 2007-08.
- The council is still on target to achieve the Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2012.
- Along with the HSBP, the capital plan will be fully reviewed as part of the 2009/10 budget setting exercise once the final subsidy determination is received from the Assembly.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendation

There would be a reduction in financial control and ability to influence the current HRA budget and the longer term future of the Housing Stock Business Plan.

5.2 Risks associated with agreeing the recommendation

No risk in agreeing the recommendation however there are risks involved with the delivery of the Housing Stock Business Plan (sales, capital costs, etc.) that must be continually reviewed.

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The forecast HRA outturn for 2008/09 will ensure that balances are in-line with Housing Stock Business Plan expectations. The Housing Stock Business Plan and capital plan should be reviewed in January. The implications of next year's subsidy settlement will have a significant impact on the long term viability of the Business Plan.

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Cabinet agreed the HRA capital and revenue budget in February 2008.

8 IMPLICATIONS – COUNCIL PRIORITIES & 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.

9 ACTION PLAN

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

10 RECOMMENDATION

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

Housing Revenue Account ~ 2008/09 Budget

<u>2007/08</u> Actual Outturn £	<u>Period 9 - December 2008</u>	Original Budget £	<u>2008/9</u> Forecast Out-turn £	Variance to Budget £
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
1,609,150	Supervision & Management - General	1,563,283	1,641,001	-77,718
251,603	Supervision & Management - Special	268,573	270,218	-1,645
0	RTB Costs	0	80,000	-80,000
145,498	Welfare Services	142,552	142,087	465
306,194	Homelessness - Leased Properties	402,000	383,234	18,766
0	Rents	0	0	0
2,576,310	Repairs and Maintenance	2,640,199	2,611,464	28,735
4,888,755	Total Housing Management	5,016,607	5,128,004	-111,397
0	Rent Rebates	0	0	0
1,448,188	Item 8 Capital Charges	1,881,000	1,995,370	-114,370
0	CERA	3,500,000	3,000,000	500,000
0	Rent Rebate Subsidy Limitation	140,000	125,000	15,000
2,826,904	Subsidy	2,413,000	2,894,299	-481,299
12,513	Provision for Bad Debts	25,000	25,000	0
9,176,360	Total Expenditure	12,975,607	13,167,673	-192,066
<u>INCOME</u>				
9,570,607	Rents (net of voids)	9,924,222	9,952,697	28,475
189,918	Leased Rents	236,808	241,464	4,656
143,453	Garages	150,952	139,493	-11,459
199,587	Interest on Balances & Other Income	95,000	121,430	26,430
10,103,565	Total Income	10,406,982	10,455,083	48,101
Surplus / Deficit (-) for the Year				
927,205	General Balances	931,375	287,410	-643,966
0	Earmarked Balances	-3,500,000	-3,000,000	500,000
2,779,531	Balance as at start of year ~ General	3,706,736	3,706,736	0
3,706,736	Balance as at end of year ~ General	1,138,111	994,146	-143,966

Appendix 2

HRA Capital Plan Update 2008/09				
<u>Month 9</u>				
Actual 2007/08 £	Description	Approved Schemes £	Actual at End Dec £	Forecast Outturn £
363,377	Environmental Improvement Works	440,000	230,588	235,000
56,654	2005/06 Major Improvements – All Groups	0	60,184	112,000
5,660,688	2006/07 Major Improvements – All Groups	6,735,000	5,664,688	6,960,656
2,552,468	Windows Replacement	100,000	202,075	205,000
831,900	Central Heating Contract	100,000	384,067	422,000
550,040	DFG - Council Properties *	400,000	381,552	500,000
10,015,127	Total	7,890,000	6,923,154	8,434,656
2007/08 £	HRA Capital Plan Financed By:	Original £		Forecast £
2,400,000	Major Repairs Allowance Grant	2,400,000		2,400,000
483,000	Useable Capital Receipts	297,000		112,000
7,132,127	Prudential Borrowing	1,693,000		2,922,656
0	CERA	3,500,000		3,000,000
10,015,127	Total	7,890,000		8,434,656

AGENDA ITEM NO: 10

REPORT TO CABINET

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

DATE: 27 January 2009

SUBJECT: Revenue Budget and Summary Capital Plan 2008/09

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 To note the latest projected outturn figures for the current financial year as detailed in the attached Appendix 1.
- 1.2 To also note the summary capital plan performance for the 2008/09 financial year as detailed in the attached Appendices 2 and 3.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- 2.1 To advise Members of the latest estimated position on the budget performance for the year. together with an update of the Council's cash investments on the Money Market. In view of the very poor Assembly settlements that will be received over the next few financial years there is a pressing need to deliver the Council's agreed budget strategy for the current financial year and avoid reducing already inadequate reserves.

3. POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 3.1 Local Authorities are required under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of their finances.

4. COST IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report details Service's latest projections for the current financial year. Appendix 1 details a forecast overall overspend of £429k, excluding the schools' delegated budgets. This figure is £40k more than the figure reported for last month. The sum is made up of pressures within the Lifelong Learning directorate partly offset by savings in, Social Services and Corporate areas.

***j) Lifelong Learning** is forecasting an increased over spend position of £907k mainly due to the changed position on the Mentro Allan project:*

- a) it was reported to members in the summer that the Mentro Allan grant aided project had not been well managed. It was likely the Lottery fund would seek to clawback funding. At the time it was hoped that compensating savings could be found within the Leisure Department, however this is now proving unlikely. Work is continuing to identify savings within the directorate and officers from Leisure and Finance are also due to meet representatives of the Big Lottery Fund and Sports Council for Wales to examine options.

- b) the costs associated with the operation and closure of the Hyfrydle Childrens Home on the Plas Brondyffryn school site are £374k,
- c) the assumed cost associated with the current interim management arrangements, including the interim director and chief officer and other additional costs, are £220k.
- d) the increasing losses incurred by the School Meals service above the £150k provided for within the budget could reach £101k, however further options for delivery are being considered and will be presented to members shortly. If accepted these should reduce the current overspend level in the future.

The financial position of Blessed Edward Jones High School formerly in special measures will also require careful monitoring. The Council's rules on school's operating with negative balances on their delegated budget require the school to produce a recovery plan that shows the position improving over no more than the following 2 years. The school is revising its previously submitted plan following review by officers.

*ii) **Social Services & Housing** directorate is forecasting an underspend of £120k. This is an improvement of £46k on last month, mainly due to reductions in placements and improved income, net of an increase in the cost of implementing the PARIS software system. .*

*iii) **Environment** directorate is forecasting an underspend of £8k. This is a reduction of £74k from last month and is mainly due to;*

- a) further reductions are apparent in the income generated from the Car Parking, Building Control, Land Charges and Development Control functions. This is offset by the slippage in the spend on residual waste collaborative scheme with other N Wales Councils.

4.2 All services are experiencing cost pressures resulting from the recent increases in energy costs. Recent significant falls in the cost of crude oil are now reflected at the pumps. This should ease the pressure on school transport and highway maintenance contractors to a degree. Premises costs are expected to rise during the winter period as energy cost increases impact.

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

4.4 Capital expenditure at the end of October is £22.8m against a plan of £36m.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendations

Risk of service overspends not being contained within the overall Council budget with the resulting reduction to Reserves & Balances and pressure continuing into

future years.

5.2 Risks associated with agreeing the recommendations

Potential for impact upon service levels and quality with possibility of negative impact upon the Council's public image.

6. FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

- 6.1 Directorates need to exercise tight control over their revenue expenditure to ensure they are able to remain within their budgets. The first call on underspends brought forward from last financial year together with underspends in the current year, will of course be any pressures in the current year.
- 6.2 The closure of the residential unit Hyfrydle, on the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn site will cap the Council's liabilities this year and in the future. Action is currently being considered to ensure the facilities are brought into alternate use in the medium term.
- 6.3 Blessed Edward Jones High School governors have produced a recovery plan for consideration by the Council's officers. The plan will need to be revisited as it doesn't demonstrate that the school can operate within the delegated budget over a maximum of the next 2 financial years.
- 6.4 A continuing area for concern is the worsening financial position of the school meals service where the agreed level of temporary additional subsidy, £150k, will be inadequate in the current financial year. A proposal to address this should be presented to members shortly.
- 6.6 The grant clawback on the Mentro Allan project at £120k will not now be covered from savings within the service but spend within other service areas in the directorate is being restricted to produce an offsetting saving. Work is in hand to identify the likely level of savings that can be delivered.
- 6.7 Officers are involved in detailed negotiations with the Health Service to ensure that the Council receives a fair share of the additional W.A.G. Continuing Health Care funding for the current year that were finally announced earlier this month. The position for the next financial year remains unclear as the Assembly have not given any clear indications of funding levels.

6.8 MONEY MARKET INVESTMENTS UPDATE

The Council is continuing to take steps to protect itself in the current economic crisis:

- Further opportunities for debt repayment are being monitored closely but the premiums which the Council would have to pay to repay debt have been too excessive to date to justify such action.

- The Council is investing short term cash with the HM Treasury deposit account on a regular basis in order to ensure the security of its investment funds.

The Council still has investments with foreign-owned banks, but as these mature in September 2009, they will be redirected into UK or HM Treasury investments. These actions will reduce the risk to the Council but cannot entirely remove them.

On 8 January, the Bank of England announced a 0.5% cut in base rates from 2.0% to 1.5%. Forecasts suggest rates may drop by a further 1.0% during 09/10. This has had a significant impact on the investment return the Council will be able to achieve on its remaining investments. A 1.0% reduction represents about a £400k loss of interest in a full year. This is on top of the move to less risky, lower interest investments that was already underway. However, the Council has invested £7.5m for 1 year at an average rate of 4.0% with highly credit rated UK banks in an attempt to fix a proportion of its investments at a higher rate during the dip in interest rates.

Realistically, the Council is facing a reduction in investment income of at least £1m for 09/10. While officers will attempt to mitigate this, it is unlikely it can now be fully contained within existing budgets. The interest to be received on the VAT refund reported last month will help reduce the impact in the short term.

7. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 7.1 Lead Cabinet members need to consult with Heads of Service during the financial year to agree necessary remedial actions to contain pressures as they occur.

8. IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS

The Vision

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

Other Policy Areas Including Corporate

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

9. ACTION PLAN

- 9.1 All departments undertake regular budget monitoring to identify savings and efficiencies.
- 9.2 Officers within Lifelong Learning and Finance directorates are working to reduce the level of pressures and identify other offsetting savings to bring overall spend more in line with the directorate budget.

10. RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 To note the projected outturn figures for 2008/09 as detailed in the attached Appendix 1.
- 10.2 To also note the summary capital plan performance figures for 2008/09 financial year as detailed in the attached Appendices 2 and 3.

APPENDIX 1

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END December 2008

Directorate	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Variance
	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s	Previous report £000s
Lifelong Learning (excluding schools delegated)	20,668	-6,955	13,713	21,575	-6,955	14,620	907	0	907	695
Environment	51,741	-21,696	30,045	51,312	-21,275	30,037	-429	421	-8	-82
Social Services & Housing	55,733	-17,014	38,719	58,620	-20,021	38,599	2,887	-3,007	-120	-74
County Clerk	1,975	-403	1,572	1,975	-403	1,572	0	0	0	0
Resources	10,817	-3,121	7,696	10,817	-3,121	7,696	0	0	0	0
Corporate, Miscellaneous & Benefits	31,101	-26,046	5,055	31,151	-26,046	5,105	50	0	50	50
Total All Services	172,035	-75,235	96,800	175,450	-77,821	97,629	3,415	-2,586	829	589
Capital Financing Charges savings & additional Investment Income net of contributions to specific provisions			10,649			10,249			-400	-200
Precepts & Levies			4,347			4,347			0	0
Contribution to balances/reserves			570			570			0	0
			112,366			112,795			429	389

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 2008/09
LIFELONG LEARNING
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END December 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	58,105	-5,443	52,662	61,964	-8,479	53,485	3,859	-3,036	823	736
Partnership & Inclusion	9,847	-5,421	4,426	10,433	-5,421	5,012	586	0	586	374
School Development	6,978	-1,292	5,686	6,978	-1,292	5,686	0	0	0	0
Policy & Performance	1,407	-85	1,322	1,728	-85	1,643	321	0	321	321
Libraries	2,436	-157	2,279	2,436	-157	2,279	0	0	0	0
Total excluding schools	20,668	-6,955	13,713	21,575	-6,955	14,620	907	0	907	695

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE

	Current Month £000s	Previous Month £000s
<u>INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS BUDGET</u>		
Following updates during November, projections would indicate that school balances of £1,953k as at 31.03.08 will reduce to £1,130k during 2008/2009. This is an increase in expenditure of £87k since the last report in November. The main cause for this change is due to an increase in expenditure at four Schools: Ysgol Llandrillo, Christchurch, Rhyl High & Plas Brondyffryn. Plas Brondyffryn is now showing an estimated overspend in excess of £100k, a meeting has been arranged with the School to discuss means of managing this overspend & indeed reducing it in 2009/10 financial year. The estimated balance figure for St Brigid's has been amended to zero as the school budget is topped up from other internal funds within the school. However, if this funding was not available then currently the cumulative deficit for the Primary school would be £19k and for the Secondary £21k.		
	823	736
<u>POLICY & PERFORMANCE</u>		
Costs associated with the Interim Management arrangements	220	220
School Meals Subsidy	101	101
<u>PARTNERSHIPS & INCLUSION</u>		
Costs associated with the closure of Hyfrydle Children's Home.	374	374
Mentro Allan Grant Clawback	212	0
TOTAL excluding schools	907	695

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE**

Progress with delivery of savings assumptions built into 2008/9 Budget

1. Savings targets agreed, (see report to Council 12 February for details)

	£000
a) Efficiency savings	167
b) Other savings	79
c) Vacancy control	92 (see separate sheet for details of position to date)

2. Progress with delivery of savings.

All savings are on target to be delivered apart from the following:

a) Efficiency savings. **£000** Alternative savings identified

b) Other savings

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END December 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 (see note 1)	9,018	-5,103	3,915	9,074	-5,085	3,989	56	18	74	36
TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE (see note 2)	13,845	-4,448	9,397	13,844	-4,374	9,470	-1	74	73	60
PLANNING & PUBLIC PROTECTION (see notes 2&3)	4,272	-1,867	2,405	4,164	-1,531	2,633	-108	336	228	168
DIRECTOR & SUPPORT (see note 4)	1,358	-237	1,121	1,218	-237	981	-140	0	-140	-130
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (see note 5)	17,322	-7,404	9,918	17,099	-7,404	9,695	-223	0	-223	-223
TOURISM, CULTURE & COUNTRYSIDE (see note 6)	5,926	-2,637	3,289	5,913	-2,644	3,269	-13	-7	-20	7
Total Environment	51,741	-21,696	30,045	51,312	-21,275	30,037	-429	421	-8	-82

Potential Pressures

- 1 Pressures on the Agricultural Estates, Allotments and Health and Safety budgets within the Building Group.
- 2 The income generated from the Car Parking, Building Control, Land Charges and Development Control functions continue to fall alarmingly. Based upon current year end projections the budget pressure is £280K on Development Control, £134K on Building Control, £81K on Car Parks and £43K on Land Charges.
- 3 If the recent severe weather continues during the remaining months it is likely that the winter maintenance budget will be insufficient to cover the costs although there is a winter maintenance reserve that can be utilised if necessary.
- 4 The animal welfare case in Llandegla is estimated to create a £42K pressure on the Trading Standards budget in 08/09. The total cost of the case over 2 financial years is projected to cost circa £100K.
- 5 All savings on staffing from delays in filling vacant posts have been removed from services and accumulated in a central budget controlled by the Director. These savings will be required to offset pressures as they arise during the year.
- 6 An additional £300K budget in 08/09 was given to Environmental Services to finance DCC's share of the procurement costs of a residual waste disposal facility. Latest events indicate that the procurement process will slip and that only £73K will be spent in the current financial year. Clearly any underspend in 08/09 will need to be utilised towards offsetting the significant income pressures as detailed in 2 above. The resultant additional waste procurement costs to be incurred in 09/10 will need to be funded from the Sustainable Waste Management Reserve.

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
ENVIRONMENT - EFFICIENCY SAVINGS
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END December 2008**

Progress with delivery of savings assumptions built into 2008/9 Budget

1. Savings targets agreed, (see report to Council 12 February for details)

	£000
a) Efficiency savings	359
b) Other savings	92
c) Vacancy control	178

2. Progress with delivery of savings.

All savings are on target to be delivered apart from the following:

a) Efficiency savings.

- i) Street Lighting - stop night time inspections (£7k). Subsequently agreed not desirable from H & S viewpoint. Will be replaced by other efficiencies within Street Lighting budget.
- ii) Rhyl Pavilion Theatre - reduced funding and changes in programming policy (£45k). The Theatre manager has achieved most of the required efficiency savings. Work is on-going to ensure that in 08/09 the balance will be found from alternative savings from within the overall theatre budget.

b) Other savings

- i) Public Conveniences - closure of old Golf Rd toilets (£5k) - unlikely to achieve this so replaced by an alternative saving within PC budget.
- ii) Reduced Beach Lifeguard service (£25k) - only partly achieved. Will need to be accommodated within existing budget.
- iii) Historic Houses of Denbighshire £5k - will need to be replaced by an alternative saving.

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END December 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	9,061	-529	8,532	10,681	-1,999	8,682	1,620	-1,470	150	99
Underspend b/f					-150	-150	0	-150	-150	-150
Adult Services	36,278	-8,680	27,598	37,332	-9,481	27,851	1,054	-801	253	388
Underspend b/f					-615	-615	0	-615	-615	-615
Business Support & Development	2,773	-504	2,269	3,051	-620	2,431	278	-116	162	128
Cymorth Grant	1,673	-1,611	62	1,673	-1,611	62	0	0	0	0
Supporting People Grant	4,363	-4,350	13	4,363	-4,350	13	0	0	0	0
Sub Total Social Services	54,148	-15,674	38,474	57,100	-18,826	38,274	2,952	-3,152	-200	-150
Non HRA Housing	1,585	-1,340	245	1,520	-1,195	325	-65	145	80	76
Underspend Brought Forward	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Directorate Total	55,733	-17,014	38,719	58,620	-20,021	38,599	2,887	-3,007	-120	-74

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING

<u>Comments</u>	Current Month £000s	Previous Month £000s
<u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u>		
CHILDREN'S SERVICES		
The main pressure area is the specialist placement budget which is expected to over spend by £378k. This has increased this month due to a new Specialist Foster Placement (£25k). The overspend on the specialist placement budget is partially offset by the in-house fostering service (under spend £196k).	150	99
Under spend Brought Forward 2007/08	-150	-150
ADULT SERVICES		
Learning Disabilities		
The growth in actual demand has exceeded projections in recent years. The main pressure area is residential placements (£250k). Work is continuing to ensure the maximisation of joint funding from the NHS. The main reason for the reduction in the over spend is due to reduction in spend around the community living schemes (£71k).	336	385
Mental Illness		
The main budget pressures remain in Residential, Nursing and Home care.	244	253
Older People		
Provider - The Outturn has improved to by £81k . This is because the Intermediate Care SLA transfer previously in dispute is now expected to happen in full, and the Residential Homes budget is now expected to be under spent.	-458	-334
Purchasing - The final position for the service is expected to be £218k under spent which is an increase in the under spend of £43k from the previous month. The main factors being a reduction in clients within Preserved Rights and further slippage in the RARS budget.		
PDSI		
Community Care spend is the main budget pressure (£290k over).	343	307
Performance Management & Commissioning		
A combined under spend of £247k is predicted due to various factors, including additional receivership income of £80k (this is the assumed minimum and could improve). The remainder is due to vacancy control on staffing budgets and additional grant income.	-247	-237
Other Adult Services		
Previous outturn forecasts have assumed that the income from WAG re the Fairer Charging Grant continues at the same level as 2007/08, but this could now be £33k higher based on the first half year claim. The remaining charging policy income is based on ability to pay and can be volatile, but with 9 months bills having been raised to date, it is hoped that this income will exceed budget by circa £52k. This may improve further before the end of the year.	-77	-98
Joint Working & Older People Strategy		
This consists solely of grant funding which is planned to be fully spent. The £2k under spend relates to the budget provision which will remain unspent.	-2	-2
Cefndy Healthcare		
Cefndy is under increasing pressure from raw material suppliers with the costs expected to equate to around 55% of sales for 2008/09. However, the 08/09 outturn is expected to show an improvement of £100k on the final position in 07/08.	114	114
Under spend Brought Forward 2007/08	-615	-615
TOTAL ADULT SERVICES	-362	-227
Business Support & Development		
The increase in the predicted over spend of £34k is mainly due to additional costs associated with PARIS. Both the PARIS/MIS budgets equate to nearly 45% of the over spend within Business Support & Development.	162	128
	162	128
Cymorth Grant		
All expenditure relating to the Cymorth grant has to be spent in year.	0	0
	0	0
Supporting People		
It is assumed that all the recurrent SP under spend will be taken to reserves. The balance of the reserve is currently £1.9m. The SP strategy is currently being revised as the latest proposals around the future of the grant are being considered. Still awaiting confirmation of 2008/09 grant amounts.	0	0
HOUSING		
The Housing budget is estimated to be £80k overspent in 08/09. Positive budget management has resulted in the budget pressure being almost halved from the original position reported in May but the budget remains a constant pressure - particularly the volatile homelessness budget.	80	76
TOTAL HOUSING	80	76
TOTAL SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING	-120	-74

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING**

Progress with delivery of savings assumptions built into 2008/9 Budget

1. Savings targets agreed, (see report to Council 12 February for details)

	£000
a) Efficiency savings	567
b) Other savings	108
c) Reduced travel costs	25
d) Vacancy control	125 (see separate sheet)

2. Progress with delivery of savings.

All savings are on target to be delivered apart from the following:

a) Efficiency savings.	£000	Alternative savings identified
i) Restructure of day care provision	37	Restructure of day care provision not achievable Alternative savings to be identified, work ongoing
ii) Telecare savings,	68	Telecare savings problematic in achieving £68k Will achieve £35k - £50k for the year Shortfall to be identified, work ongoing
iii) Reduction in costs of placements for children	78	Reduction in costs of placements for children not achievable Alternative savings to be found in reduction of agency staff Work ongoing

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09
RESOURCES, COUNTY CLERK, CORPORATE & MISCELLANEOUS
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END December 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	1,864	-403	1,461	1,814	-403	1,411	-50	0	-50	-50	2
Translation	111	0	111	161	0	161	50	0	50	50	3
Resources Directorate											
Finance	5,194	-2,125	3,069	5,194	-2,125	3,069	0	0	0	0	
Policy Unit	391	0	391	391	0	391	0	0	0	0	
Audit	460	-103	357	460	-103	357	0	0	0	0	
I.T	2,304	-439	1,865	2,304	-439	1,865	0	0	0	0	
Personnel	1,565	-284	1,281	1,565	-284	1,281	0	0	0	0	
Project Management	75	0	75	75	0	75	0	0	0	0	
Customer Care	828	-170	658	828	-170	658	0	0	0	0	
						0	0	0	0	0	
Total	10,817	-3,121	7,696	10,817	-3,121	7,696	0	0	0	0	
Corporate and Miscellaneous	6,207	-1,115	5,092	6,257	-1,115	5,142	50	0	50	50	1
Benefits	24,894	-24,931	-37	24,894	-24,931	-37	0	0	0	0	
Total	43,893	-29,570	14,323			14,373	50	0	50	50	
Capital Fin Charges	10,649		10,649	10,249	0	10,249	-400	0	-400	-200	4
			0			0	0	0	0	0	
Contribution to balances/reserves	570		570	570		570	0	0	0	0	

1 Corporate Costs - Pension costs from LGR and later efficiency exercises running ahead of budget. +£50k

2 Planned savings in salary costs due to delays in staff recruitment & maternity leave cover

3 Underlying pressure - increased demand for this service

4 Latest estimate of borrowinmg costs net of investment income.

**RESOURCES DIRECTORATE, COUNTY CLERK & CORPORATE SAVINGS
SUMMARY POSITION AS AT END December 2008**

Progress with delivery of savings assumptions built into 2008/9 Budget

1. Savings targets agreed, (see report to Council 12 February for details)

£000

a) Efficiency savings	180
b) Other savings	34
c) Vacancy control	241

2. Progress with delivery of savings.

All savings are on target to be delivered

Capital Expenditure By Directorate

	2008/9	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
	Spend to December	Estimated programme	Estimated programme	Estimated programme
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Environment	15,742	26,082	2,261	544
Lifelong Learning	6,147	8,146	2,206	180
Resources	388	1,066	0	0
Social Services and Housing	590	884	169	250
Total	22,867	36,178	4,636	974

Capital Expenditure by Council Priority

	2008/9	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
	Spend to December	Estimated programme	Estimated programme	Estimated programme
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Modernising Education	2,500	7,018	2,026	0
Roads and Flood Defence	1,487	6,831	0	0
Regeneration	1,470	3,216	662	0
Responding to Demographic Change				
Total	5,457	17,065	2,688	0

As part of the 08/09 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

	2008/09	2008/09
	Spend to December	Estimated programme
	£000	£000
Highways	2,000	2,000
Total	2,000	2,000

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

APPENDIX 3

		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Capital Funding:					
1	General Funding:				
	Unhypothcated Supported Borrowing	8,957	5,906	5,884	5,884
	General Capital Grant	1,436	2,431	2,017	1,961
	General Capital Receipts	0	523		
	Earmarked Capital Receipts	1,859	0	0	0
		12,252	8,860	7,901	7,845
2	Prudential Borrowing	5,956	695	0	0
3	Reserves and Contributions	1,617	175	0	0
4	Specific Grants	17,051	1,908	488	0
	Total Finance	36,876	11,638	8,389	7,845
	Total Estimated Payments	-36,178	-4,636	-974	0
	Contingency	-698	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
	Unallocated Reserve	0	0	0	0
	Surplus/ -Insufficient Resources	0	6,002	6,415	6,845

REPORT TO CABINET

**CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR J THOMPSON-HILL,
LEAD MEMBER FOR FINANCE**

DATE: 27 JANUARY 2009

SUBJECT: BUDGET PROPOSALS 2009/10

1 DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 That Members support the budget proposals for 2009/10 as shown in the appendices after taking into account the views of Scrutiny Committee members together with the views expressed by those members that attended the Budget Seminar and recommend accordingly to full Council.
- 1.2 That members recommend the resulting 3% increase in the level of Council Tax for 2009-10 to full Council.
- 1.4 That Members note the need for significant further efficiency savings and cost reductions in future financial years, as a result of the likely poor settlements from the Welsh Assembly Government.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 Background

Members were advised of the final WAG settlement details for next financial year in December. The level of increase in support is 3.6%.

2.2 Pressures.

The budget proposals currently allow for the following budget pressures;

1. Final year of phased increase in the delegated secondary school budgets	290
2. Landfill Tax increase	250
3. Impact of demographic pressures on Social Services	500
4. ICT developments to improve overall authority performance	200
5. Increased capacity of Legal Services	50
6. Prudential Borrowing costs to fund £4m of capital spend on Highways and Flood Defence improvements	350
7. Additional funds agreed for Single Status pay review costs	300

(Items 1, 3, & 6 all support the Council's agreed priorities)

Modernising Education costs - see paragraph 2.5.

Further pressures

Several further issues are currently emerging as follows;

a) referrals to Children's Services have increased. This pressure on capacity together with any recommended changes to practice from recent cases may result in increased spending requirements.

b) the Assembly has brought forward some capital spending plans and may increase capital resources for Councils to provide a stimulus to the building sector. This may have an impact upon capacity to deliver with resulting revenue implications.

c) Members have been advised in a Part 2 report of potential costs for the Council resulting from Section 106 and other issues at the former North Wales hospital.

d) the budgeted level of income from fees and charges is likely to come under pressure from the current recession, as is the budgeted level of spend on Homelessness.

e) there are ongoing issues for the Education service from Rhyl High School and Blessed Edward Jones School, the increased level of losses on the school meals service and the residual costs of the Hyfrydle facility.

It is not possible to quantify these pressures at the present time and therefore a contingency sum of £880k has been allowed within the current proposals. It is unlikely this sum would fully fund the resulting pressures and action will be needed within the services concerned to minimise the impact.

2.3 Inflation assumptions built into the figures are based on tight criteria, namely 3% overall, and will require services to exercise great care with spending proposals to ensure pressures are minimised.

2.4 Savings proposals

Savings proposals have been reviewed over several months, the current detail can be found in Appendix 2. A summary of the position is as follows;

	£k
Lifelong Learning excluding school budgets	315
Environment	631
Social Services and Housing	601
Corporate, Resources & County Clerk	642
TOTAL	2,189

Scrutiny Committees have been invited to review the appropriateness of these proposals and to comment accordingly. Members comments are as follows:

a) Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee

The Committee discussed schools, education and youth service finances and the recent investment made by the Council into those areas. Members of the Committee endorsed these actions and supported similar levels of continued investment over future years.

In taking account of the Council's overall budgetary position and the desired level of Council Tax increase, the Scrutiny Committee endorsed the savings proposals for 2009 / 2010 as shown in appendix 1 of the report to the Committee, with the following recommended amendments:

That the withdrawal of the mobile library service be brought forward to 2009 thereby releasing the proposed 2010 / 2011 savings of £32,000 into the 2009 / 2010 financial year.

That production of County Voice be reduced to 4 issues per year on a 1 year trial basis within a budget of £40,000, resulting in savings of £102,000.

That the Resources Scrutiny Committee working group's review of County Voice's contents, format and distribution be endorsed.

That the Council maintains a presence at the Denbigh and Flintshire show, but seeks to achieve the £3,000 proposed savings through facility-sharing collaboration with a neighbouring authority and partner organisations.

b) Environment Scrutiny Committee

The Committee reviewed the savings proposals within the Environment Directorate amounting to £691,000. The Committee also reviewed potential areas for additional savings. It was agreed that further information on the proposals for public conveniences and street cleansing would be circulated to members of the Committee and observers present.

In light of the requirement for the Council to set a deliverable budget and contain the level of Council Tax increase, the Scrutiny Committee endorsed the savings proposals for 2009 / 2010 as shown in appendix 1 of the report to the Committee.

An Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Working Group also considered options for setting car parking charges for 2009 / 2010. These are included in the report elsewhere on the agenda.

c) Social Services & Housing Scrutiny Committee

The Committee noted and accepted with some reservations, the savings proposals for the Directorate. It was also noted that the anticipated savings in both the current and next financial year on Supporting People schemes resulting from reviewing of services provided would be used to dampen any additional service demands over and above the allocation of additional resources built into the budget proposals.

d) Resources Scrutiny Committee

At their meeting on 8 January Members felt that, County Voice was an effective way of providing information to the general public on the Council's frontline services and good news stories, Cabinet should be requested to re-consider its recommendation to cease its production and to consider the publication should be retained with the number of editions per year reducing from 12 to 4.

During the ensuing debate Members also made the following points –

- a) That Cabinet should consider setting a 0% Council tax increase by identifying the statutory elements of the local authority's services that were required to be funded, together with those of a non statutory nature, in order to determine the amount of savings that could be achieved. Cabinet should also, with a view to realising efficiencies, consider more imaginative ways of delivering the non statutory services.
- b) That consideration should be given to disinvesting in some of the Authority's internal services and obtaining those services from the private sector.
- c) If the essential car user allowance was removed that the rate paid to casual users per mile, after 8,500 miles, should be protected.
- d) Where practical, officers attending the same meeting should share transport.

Members resolved that –

- (a) *the savings proposals for 2009/10 for the Resources Directorate, the County Clerk's Department and the Corporate budget areas, as detailed in the appendix to the report, be noted; and*
- (b) *Cabinet be recommended to re-consider cessation of County Voice and to take note of Members' comments in respect of the savings proposals for the Resources Directorate, the County Clerk's Department and the Corporate budget areas"*

e) Special Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting 19.01.09

Members noted the Lifelong Learning Directorate's savings proposals for 2009/10 and the recommendations to withdraw the mobile library service from 2009 to enable the release of £32K of savings into the 2009/10 financial year; to endorse the Resources Scrutiny Committee's review of County Voice, reducing the number of issues per year to 4 and that the cost of the publication should be contained within a budget of £40K, resulting in a saving of £102K for a trial period of 1 year; and that the Council should maintain its presence at the Denbighshire and Flintshire Show, but should seek to realise the £3 proposed savings through facility-sharing collaboration with a neighbouring authority and partner organisations.

- noted the Social Services and Housing Directorate's Savings Proposals for 2009/10 and the proposal to use underspends in the current year to dampen service pressures in 2009/10 - see above.
- noted the Environment Directorate's Savings Proposals for 2009/10 and the Scrutiny Committee's endorsement of the savings proposals with specific questions to be raised with officers.

Car parking charges: the Committee welcomed the proposal from the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Working Group to introduce a unified car parking charging policy across the County and reluctantly accepted the proposal to increase the cost of the annual parking permit to £100 on the understanding that a reduced fee would be available to people aged 60 and over. The Committee also supported the proposal that up to 3 free parking days per annum be made available upon application by the local town or community council. The Committee also requested that Cabinet consider extending the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's proposal to charge 10p for the first 20 minutes to 30 minutes and then accept the further tariffs as shown in the report elsewhere on this agenda. It also requested that the Directorate explore the feasibility of collaborating with neighbouring (North Wales) authorities with a view to providing a North Wales parking permit which would enable permit holders to park their cars in all towns throughout the area for a set fee per year.

2.5 Schools

The Schools Budget Forum was asked to consider the schools' budget position for next year with a view to considering the potential for schools to deliver sufficient efficiency savings to fund a programme of capital works, funded through prudential borrowing, to begin the process of delivering the Modernising Education agenda. A further meeting will receive a report back from a meeting of all school heads with their proposals. It is likely that any savings proposals will be offered on a phased basis over 3 years. This would fit with the likely capital spend profile for the investment needed to deliver the initial stages.

2.6 Council tax

The final level of Council Tax increase will be a major concern for Members especially as Denbighshire already levies the highest level of Council Tax of all the North Wales authorities despite receiving the second highest level of Assembly funding per head of population. Current proposals suggest an increase of 3% for next year which would be below the current level of inflation although this is expected to fall and also below the likely level of increase in retirement pension. This 3% assumption may have to rise if the target level of savings cannot be delivered. The Assembly has reserve powers to cap any increase at 5%.

2.7 Future years

As reported previously the position on the indicative settlement figures for 2010/11 is even tighter than for next year. The indicative level of increase in WAG support for revenue purposes has been advised as 1.8% against an All Wales average of 2.2%. The actual settlement for 2010/11 will take account of a number of factors making a reasonable assessment of the final position extremely difficult. The indicative increase of 1.8% has been assumed currently, together with £425k of funding moving into the settlement from specific grants. **This produces a minimum likely target saving for 2010/11 of nearly £3.5m at an assumed Council Tax increase of 3% when taking account of assumed levels of service pressures.** This sort of level of savings requirement is likely to continue for several years. It is proposed that as part of the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2009 – 2012 that services will need to justify actual bids for additional resources and demonstrate where within their directorate disinvestment will occur to fund the proposals.

2.8 Prudential Borrowing

Provision has been made in the proposals for the costs of about £4m of further Prudential Borrowing. The Capital Strategy Group has made recommendations on the use of this sum in a separate report elsewhere on the agenda: the bulk would go to fund highways works.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 3.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972
Local Government Act 1992
Part 1 of Local Government Act 2003

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Appendix 1 shows the detail of the budget proposals for 2009/10 and also incorporates information for 2010/11. Members need to be fully aware of the extremely difficult financial position for this and later years. Robust implementation of the Council's Efficiency Strategy is essential.
- 4.2 Appendix 2 details savings proposals to date. **These have been amended to reflect proposed changes to the Environment and Lifelong Learning original proposals. Scrutiny Committee recommendations can be debated on the day.**
- 4.3 For 2008/9 a sum of £313k from the Performance Incentive grant funds was used to dampen the increase in Council Tax. For 2009/10 it is assumed that this sum will be needed to fund actions to be taken to deliver the agreed outcomes within the Improvement Agreement. Services have bid for funding for increased activity but the total of bids submitted exceed the £313k available. A review has been carried out of the content of the bids and a recommended level of support for each bid, within the sum available, is shown in Appendix 3. Details of the individual bids are also included in the Appendix. Members are requested to approve the reduced levels of support suggested.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER (Section 151 Officer) STATEMENT

- 5.1 During the review of savings proposals any savings/cuts that are deleted or reduced, and any additional allocation of resources, will result in an increase in Council Tax next year and/or an alternative saving needing to be identified.
- 5.2 It is important to stress that the assumptions built into the Budget for next year must be robust and deliverable. This is particularly so for savings proposals. The final level of Council Tax next year must be based on proposals that the Council can have reasonable confidence in delivering.
- 5.3 The figures in Appendix 1 demonstrate that the proposals to deliver a Council Tax of 3% are potentially robust at this stage.

5.4 Funding for agreed Priority areas.

The proposals detailed in this report take account of the Assembly settlement, inflation, pressures (including thus far uncosted additional pressures) and savings proposals. It has not been possible to provide resources to develop the Council's agreed Priorities within a proposed Council Tax increase of 3%.

The Council has yet to define clearly the outcomes that are to be delivered in 2009/10 for these priorities. A process to clarify these outcomes will need to be put in place as a matter of urgency to enable work to commence on costing the resulting outcomes and identifying the disinvestment in other services that will deliver the necessary funding. One option to deliver the agreed outcomes through greater consultation with the public would be for a sum to be agreed for each member to suggest investment in the focused priority outcomes that deliver results based on the data from the 6 Area Profiles.

A report will be brought to Cabinet in the early summer recommending the necessary revisions to the finally agreed budget for 2009/10 to reflect the funding requirement for developing Priorities, the disinvestment in other services and the allocation of the Contingency for additional pressures as shown in paragraph 2.2.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 6.1 2 rounds of Directorate meetings with Lead Members have been held to review savings proposals and bids for additional resources.
- 6.2 CET has considered the position.
- 6.3 The budget proposals have been considered by all Scrutiny Committees and their comments were recorded in paragraph 2.4.
- 6.4 A seminar for all members was also held on the 12 January to update Members on the overall position to date.

7. IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

- 7.1 The level of resources available and the cost effectiveness of service delivery, impacts upon all the services of the Council.

8 ACTION PLAN

- 8.1 Cabinet recommendations to Full Council on 10 February.

Council to set Council Tax resulting from above programme 24 February.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Members agree the budget proposals for 2008/09 after taking into account the views of Scrutiny Committees as shown in 2.4 above and recommend accordingly to full Council.
- 9.2 That Members recommend the resulting 3% increase in Council Tax for 2009-10.
- 9.3 That Members note the need for significant further efficiency savings and cost reductions/cuts in future financial years, in the light of the poor settlement from the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 9.4 That Members note the procedure necessary to develop the Council's agreed priorities as detailed in paragraph 5.4.
- 9.5 That Members agree the allocation of Improvement Agreement funding as detailed in Appendix 3.

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL			APPENDIX 1						
Budget 2009/10 to 2010/11			2009/10						
	-1-	-2-	-3-	-4-	-5-	-6-	-7-		
	Net		Committed	Service	Target	Projected	%		
	Budget	Inflation	Changes	Pressure	Savings	Budget	Increase		
	2008/9	2009/10	2009/10	2009/10	2009/10	2009/10			
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	%	
Lifelong Learning - Schools budgets	52,662	1,477		290 (1)	tba	54,429	3.36		
- Other Education	13,778	447		153 (2&3)	-38	14,340	4.08		
- Libraries & Leisure	4,630	138	-20		-135	4,613	-0.37		
- Corporate services	359	5			-142	222	-38.16		
Environment	22,335	664	-98	250 (4)	-611	22,540	0.92		
- Culture, tourism & heritage	2,704	65			-20	2,749	1.66		
Social Services & Housing	38,718	1,175		500 (5)	-601	39,792	2.77		
Resources	7,482	220	-50	200 (6)	-204	7,648	2.22		
County Clerk	1,774	37		50 (7)		1,861	4.90		
	144,442	4,228	-168	1,443	-1,751	148,194	2.60		
Corporate	3,760	274	-80		-378	3,576	-4.89		
- Corp Performance grant	-313	0	313			0			
Fire/Sea Fisheries levies	4,347	160	0			4,507	3.68		
Capital Finance/Interest received	10,649	0		350 (8)	-60	10,939	2.72		
Contingency for Single Status *	1,573	0		300 (9)		1,873	19.07		
CONTINGENCY for Further Pressures	0			880 (10)		880			
Contribution to Reserves	570	0	0			570	0.00		
Further Efficiency Savings *							0.00		
	165,028	4,662	65	2,973	-2,189	170,539	3.34		
2. Level of Funding									
W A G funding	129,125	4,550		153		133,828	3.64		
Deprivation grant	169	0				169	0.00		
Use of reserves	50					50	0.00		
LABGI	248		-248			0	-100.00		
	129,592	4,550	-248	153	0	134,047			
Council Tax yield	35,436	112	313	2,820	-2,189	36,492	2.98		
	165,028	4,662	65	2,973	-2,189	170,539	3.34		
* Note : to be apportioned over service budgets	ASSUMPTIONS/IMPACTS								
	Increased Council Tax collection requirement						2.98%		
	Revenue Support Grant						3.64%		
	Business Rate						3.64%		
							£k		
	1. Final year of phased increase for Secondary Schools						290		
	2. Impact of Cambridge review (inc Prud Borrowing)						tba		
	3. Change in School Transport criteria (WA) (WAG funded)						153		
	4. Landfill Tax increase						250		
	5. Demographic pressures						500		
	6. ITC services pressures (inc Prud Borrowing)						200		
	7. Increase Legal services capacity						50		
	8. Prudential Borrowing for Highways & Flood Defence.						350		
	9. Increased provision for Single Status						300		
	10. Contingency for Further Pressures						880		

			2010/11				
	-1-	-2-	-3-	-4-	-5-	-6-	
	Projected	Inflation	Committed	Service	Projected	%	
	Budget	3%	Changes	Pressure	Budget	Increase	
	2009/10	2010/11	2010/11	& Growth	2010/11		
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	%
Lifelong Learning - Schools budgets	54,429	1,633	384 (6)	0	56,446	3.71	
- Other Education	14,340	430		tba (1)	14,770	3.00	
- Culture & Leisure	4,613	138			4,751	3.00	
- Corporate services	222	7			229	3.00	
Environment	22,540	676		500 (2)	23,716	5.22	
- Culture, tourism & heritage	2,749	82			2,831	3.00	
Social Services & Housing	39,792	1,194	41 (6)	850 (3)	41,877	5.24	
Resources	7,648	229			7,877	3.00	
County Clerk	1,861	56		50 (4)	1,967	5.69	
	148,194	4,446	425	1,400	154,465	4.23	
Corporate	3,576	107			3,683	3.00	
Fire/Sea Fisheries levies	4,507	180			4,687	4.00	
Capital Finance/Interest received	10,939	0		350 (5)	11,289	3.20	
Contingency for Single Status *	1,873	0	0		1,873	0.00	
CONTINGENCY for Further Pressures	880				880		
Contribution to Reserves	570	0			570	0.00	
Further Efficiency Savings *			0		0	0.00	
	170,539	4,732	425	1,750	177,448	4.05	
2. Level of Funding							
W A G funding	133,828	2,401	425		136,654	2.11	
Deprivation grant	169				169	0.00	
Use of reserves	50				50	0.00	
LABGI	0				0	0.00	
	134,047	2,401	425	0	136,873	2.11	
Council Tax yield	36,492	2,331	0	1,750	40,573	11.18	
	170,539	4,732	425	1,750	177,448	4.05	
ASSUMPTIONS/IMPACTS							
Increased Council Tax collection requirement					11.18%		
Revenue Support Grant					2.11%		
Business Rate					2.11%		
					£k		
1. Impact of Cambridge review (inc Prud Borrowing)					tba		
2 a) . Landfill Tax increase					250		
2. b). Waste Management					250		
3 a). Reduced Supporting People grant					350		
3. b) Demographic pressures					500		
4. Increase Legal services capacity					50		
5. Prudential Borrowing for Highways & Flood Defence.					350		
6. Transfer of resources from Specific Grants					425		
SAVINGS TARGETS TO DELIVER LOWER COUNCIL TAX							
					£k		
2% Increase in C/Tax					3,860		
2.5% increase					3,680		
3% increase					3,500		
3.5% increase					3,325		
4% increase					3,150		
4.5% increase					2,970		
5% increase i.e. CAP					2,780		

APPENDIX 2

LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE - SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2009/10

Proposal	Effective date	2009/10 savings	2010/11 additional savings	2011/12 additional savings	Set up costs	Lead Manager
		£k	£k		£k	
Library service review		0	65		0	Arwyn Jones
Withdrawal of Mobile Library Service		12	32		0	Arwyn Jones
Early retirement costs to cease		6	6		0	Arwyn Jones
One Stop Shop review		0	22		0	Arwyn Jones
General Administrative Efficiency Leisure Services		30	0		0	Catherine Simpson
Closure of Cae Ddol Paddling Pool		7	0		0	Dave Lloyd
Reduction of planting at Botanical Gardens		5	0		0	Dave Lloyd
Relocation expenses to cease -School Development		7	0		0	Julian Malloy
Relocation expenses to cease -Policy and Performance		22	0		0	Jackie Walley
Remove presence from Denbigh and Flint Show		3	0		0	Jackie Walley
Discontinue the production of County Voice	Apr-09	142	0		0	Gareth Watson
Leisure Services review of management & support		42	147	144	0	Catherine Simpson
Additional efficiency savings to be identified prior to meeting of full Council		39	0			
Total		315	272	144	0	

ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE - SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2009/10

Proposal	Effective date	09/10 savings	10/11 additional savings	Set up costs	Lead Manager
		£k	£k	£k	
Car parking income - see separate report on agenda.	Apr-09	250	50	0	M Hitchings
Post 16 education related transport. Policy agreed by Council, implementation deferred.	Sep-09	0	125	30	LLL/Peter Daniels
Property rationalisation - savings to be made from Worksmart project in conjunction with office accommodation review. Half year savings in 09/10 from Henllan. Possible savings from May 2010 from Middle Lane, Nant Hall Road and Ty Nant/Fronfraith	Oct-09	10 (H)	100 from ML, H 60 from NHR, TN/F		Mike Hitchings/Gareth Evans
Reduce level of funding for Environmental Services non statutory services :					Steve Parker
i) Close 1 public convenience during the winter and reduce operation of further PC to summer	Apr-09	6	0	0	Steve Parker
ii) Reduce sand clearance from September to April	Apr-09	20	0	0	Steve Parker
iii) Reduce verge cutting allowing verges to revert back to nature where safe	Apr-09	20			Steve Parker
vii) Remove winter bedding plants (including staff costs)	Apr-09	30		0	Steve Parker
viii) Stop hanging baskets, planters & watering	Apr-09	25		0	Steve Parker
Heritage assets:					Paul Murphy
i) Bodelwyddan Trust - review current arrangements and consider alternative heritage trust arrangements.	Apr-09	Under review			Paul Murphy

ii) Identify savings in the Culture and Heritage portfolio - it is possible that it will not be financially viable to retain all current facilities. Phased approach to be developed	Apr-09	Under review			Paul Murphy
Reduce Arts service to sustainable levels by reviewing provision following a full review	Apr-09	20			Paul Murphy
Clwyd Leisure arrangements.	Apr-09	Under review			Paul Murphy
Contaminated Land - reduction in operational element of budget	Apr-09	20			Graham Boase
Stop weedspraying - non-statutory function	Apr-09	29			Tim Towers
Reduce verge grasscutting from two cuts to one per annum - non-statutory function	Apr-09	59			Tim Towers
Further staffing reductions	Apr-09	135			
Review of structures and staffing in Development Services arising from changes in externally funded projects	Apr-09	17			Gareth Eavns
TOTAL		631	175	30	

SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2009/10 & BEYOND.

Proposal	Effective date	09/10 savings	10/11 additional savings	Set up costs	Lead Manager
		£k	£k	£k	
SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING					
Review of residential care provision alongside extra care housing developments	Apr-09	0	150	0	NA
Reconfigure day care provision of north of the county in conjunction with extra care housing developments	Apr-09	50	100	20	NA
NHS collaboration - achieve efficiencies from the collaborative approach using CHC funding with combination of some care costs being transferred to health and also the development of preventative schemes to prevent pressure growing further	Apr-09	200	200	0	NA
NHS collaboration - use of CHC funding in Childrens Services. The Council's contribution to specialist placement package costs should be reduced and replaced by CHC funding	Apr-09	200	200	0	NF
Voluntary sector - do not inflate grants in 09.10	Apr-09	21	0		NA
Learning Disabilities - work opportunities Review of current position and explore greater role for private sector/social enterprise funding and more regional collaboration		30	50		NA/RH
Adult Care - looking for £400k savings in staffing at present by changing how things are done, against a backdrop of increased demand for services	Apr-09	100	100	0	NA
Learning disabilities - close Henllan and develop facility with RSL and the NHS	Apr-09	0	30	0	NA/RH
Total		601	830	20	

SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2009/10 & BEYOND.

Proposal	Effective date	09/10 savings	10/11 additional savings	Set up costs	Lead Manager
		£k	£k	£k	
CORPORATE					
Procurement savings emerging from the North Wales Procurement Partnership particularly in relation to £200m of spend on social care and highways & property maintenance. Service managers involved in preparation of spec. tender details & evaluation etc.		200	250	0	RP
Review of Support Services - Personnel, Policy Units, Performance Management, Complaints, etc as per Support Services proposals through FAB. To include impact on Office Accom. & ICT.	Apr-09	0	Subject to results of current job reduction exercises		AE
Review provision of cash offices through introduction of cash payment kiosks etc	Apr-09	20	20		AE
Amalgamation of financial assessment teams and Welfare Rights into Benefits	Apr-09	20	20		RP KJ
Review terms and conditions of employment eg mileage allowances	Apr-10	0	Subject to negotiation		Linda Atkin
Agency staffing procurement project	Apr-09	100	0		Linda Atkin
Annual spend on Investigations - cheaper to employ own member of staff	Apr-09	40			Linda Atkin
Staff restructuring in Accountancy - one less and one retirement	Apr-09	40	0		Paul McGrady
Pay salaries at end of month - offers cash flow savings		60			Linda Atkin
Internal Audit - one less member of staff	Apr-09	35	0	30	Ivan Butler
Remove voice megastream lines	Oct-08	52	0		Peter Wickes
Savings on voice calls from contract renegotiation	Oct-08	30	0		Peter Wickes
HR restructure		45		40	Linda Atkin
		642	290	30	

APPENDIX 3

Bids for additional resources for delivering Improvement Agreement targets 2009/10.

Balance of Improvement Agreement funding available : £313k.

Agreement area.	Bid £k	Recommended additional funding £k
1. Supporting Local Businesses	100	80
2. Reducing Carbon Footprint	60	50
3. Improving Educational Attainment – raising attendance in schools	45	45
4. Provision of Care – services to Children	43	20
5. Improving Educ. Attainment & Learning Pathways	35	35
6. Learning Pathways – widening oportunities - WITHDRAWN	83	0
7. Housing matters	60	55
8. Help to live in the Community	43	20
9. Provision of facilities in the homes of disabled people	8	8
TOTAL	477	313



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 1: Supporting local business
Lead Officer:	Head of Development Services
Total amount of bid:	£ 100,000
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	<p>It would not be possible to continue employing an officer to deliver the business action plan priorities for Prestatyn agreed with the town council and business community or to secure an officer to deliver the similarly agreed business action plan priorities for Denbigh within existing budgets in 2009/10. This is because this activity was previously funded through the LABGI scheme and there are inadequate resources from this source to sustain this activity in 2008/09 and there is considerable uncertainty about its availability in future years.</p> <p>There is no funding for shop front schemes in either town.</p> <p>If there were no funding for this activity in 2009/10, it would not be possible to comply with the Improvement Agreement for Supporting Local Businesses made with Assembly Government with the approval of the Wales Audit Office.</p>

Name of Agreement:

Bid 1: Supporting local business

How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?

1 no. Grade 7 incl employment costs & 2009 pay award	£34,300
1 no. Grade 8* incl employment costs & 2009 pay award	£37,300
Travel	£ 4,800
Voice & data	£ 1,200
Office rental, NNDR and service charges	£ 2,400
Shop front and marketing schemes	£ 20,000

Total	£100,000

*Higher grade reflects responsibility for capital project management in Prestatyn



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 2: Reducing our carbon footprint
Lead Officer:	Robert Jones
Total amount of bid:	£60,000
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	<p>The delivery of the improvement agreement beyond March 2009 will be entirely dependant on the additional funds made available. There has been no identified budget for the future delivery of these actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To have a fully operational performance management system for carbon emissions data across all council owned buildings. The structure of the framework will be designed as part of year 1; however the larger task of organising the data flow through the framework, for each of the 200+ buildings, to provide valuable carbon management information still needs to take place. (Core action to the delivery of the agreement).▪ Identifying any reduction in carbon emissions will be in jeopardy if there is a lack of data available to make management decisions. Therefore the action to show a demonstrable reduction in emissions from the baseline year will be at risk without additional financial resource. (Subsequent action dependant on core action outlined above).

How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?

- In order to prepare for the carbon reduction commitment imposed on us through UK legislation we need to have an established process for carbon data/information management by March 2010.

Note: Not having adequate and fully tested systems in place by this date will leave the authority in a highly vulnerable position. This is a high risk area as the financial penalties imposed on the authority will be large if detailed information cannot be made available for reporting to the Environment Agency Wales. **(Subsequent action dependant on core action outlined above).**

The additional funding would be used to gain an additional 2 human resources for a fixed term period of 1 year. The reasons behind this are:

- There is currently no additional capacity available to undertake the extensive task of redeveloping the energy and water data management across the council estate. Due to the large number of buildings encompassed by the Improvement Agreement (and Climate Change Bill) (200+) it will be a time consuming task and require the dedicated input of 2 members of staff.
- To provide the required capacity to organise and deliver the energy and water data management necessary to enable much more sophisticated carbon management information available for decision making.

Note: *The availability of this data will allow for much clearer identification and targeting of energy efficiency works and a more accurate quantification of costs associated with our carbon emissions. This is highly likely to identify and create financial savings for the authority if adequate time and resources are made available.*

- To establish the data collection procedures and reporting procedures as guided by the carbon management performance framework.
- To train key members of staff in the collection of energy and water data as determined by the use of the new method of reporting.
- The specific requirements of the additional members of staff will be detailed in the job specification/description and an appropriate salary band will be identified. It is anticipated that this will fit the expected range of £18 – 20k.

Note: The expected cost of £60,000 was identified from the following:

Staff costs (2)	£40k (£20k per person)
On-cost to Authority	£12k (£6k per person)
Travel budget	£3k
Training budget	£2k
IT	£2k
Sub Total	£59k
Contingency	£1k
Total	£60k

If we take no action we will be subject to severe financial penalties which are estimated to be in the range of £350k (lowest possible estimate). It is highly likely that additional penalties would be applied.

This estimate is based on the following:

Estimated carbon emissions cost (if prepared)	13,780 tonnes at £12 per tonne £165,360 per annum
Estimated carbon emissions cost (if not prepared)	13,780 tonnes at £25 per tonne £344,500 penalty £165,360 for emissions (lowest possible estimate)



CET CRC 06.10.08

Additional info -



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 3: Improving Educational Attainment - raising attendance in schools
Lead Officer:	Sheila Breeze
Total amount of bid:	£45,000
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	To appoint Attendance Support Assistants in two areas of most need and raise the profile of attendance with pupils and families in those areas
How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?	<p>The additional funding will be used to target poor attendance in the Rhyl and Prestatyn clusters. Attendance in Denbighshire has risen from 89% to 91% since the Estyn inspection in 2007 and the LA has risen nine places in the all Wales table for secondary schools. The link between attainment and attendance is crucial and we have worked closely with our schools to aid this improvement in attendance. The LA attendance target for 2008-09 is 93% and the individual pupil baseline for intervention from an Education Social Worker is 85%. The sheer volume of work in the Rhyl and Prestatyn areas prevents involvement before this point but we need to have a system for earlier intervention if we are to continue to raise our attendance levels.</p>

Name of Agreement:

Bid 3: Improving Educational Attainment - raising attendance in schools

The funding will be used to employ Attendance Support Assistants (ASA) to operate in each of the two identified clusters supporting attendance across primary and secondary phases. The role of the ASA will be to:

- Work closely with the designated Education Social Worker in the cluster to target pupils whose attendance drops below 80%
- Conduct register checks and monitor the punctuality and attendance of identified pupils / families
- Home visits
- Provide escort to school
- Transition work with identified pupils from year 6 into year 7
- Group and individual work in schools
- Encourage a wide range of strategies in schools to raise the profile of good attendance
- Encourage school staff to utilise the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to identify alternative mechanisms of support for identified pupils and families



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 4: Provision of Care: Services to Children
Lead Officer:	Nicola Francis
Total amount of bid:	£43,030.
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	<p>The CSSIW have identified core areas of service provision and activity which, if not addressed, can combine and lead to the conditions which amount to serious concern arising in children's social services. The CSSIW have set challenging performance targets for these 'core areas' against which Authorities are being tasked with ensuring compliance. The indicators have informed the development of this Policy Agreement and relevant targets. The targets that measure timescales measure activity from referral to the point the activity has been authorised by a Manager (this is the prescribed methodology for the PI). This will bring challenges with the implementation of PARIS. This is because the social worker will need to carry out their activity, record their work on PARIS, and then submit their work to their manager for authorisation. Once authorisation has been provided the clock stops and performance is captured and calculated. Currently Care.comm does not allow Practitioners to record their assessments and care plans electronically so they hand write their work and submit this for authorisation. Feedback from Practitioners is that they will initially find that it takes them longer to record their work electronically as opposed to manually. Once work has been recorded on PARIS there is functionality for the</p>

Name of Agreement:

Bid 4: Provision of Care: Services to Children

work to be copied and updated. This will create significant advantages in processing information when a case is re-referred, reviewed or if there are sibling groups where the same information can be entered once and applied across the whole sibling group. As assessments and care plans are not loaded on Care.com it is not possible to electronically migrate this data. This means that social workers will need to write up assessments and care plans on PARIS from afresh. Once the data has been entered up the information can then be copied forward and amended to reflect the situation at that point in time. There is no budget to update existing cases on PARIS with manual data held on file and therefore reduce the amount of time social workers will take to record initial and core assessments on PARIS and this will impact on targets for timeliness. Having more data available electronically, and therefore a more comprehensive understanding of the history of a case, will also assist with the timeliness of decisions on referrals which forms part of the Improvement

How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?

It is proposed that 2 scale 3 (or equivalent) peripatetic admin are employed to load manual information onto PARIS on all existing cases. The scale reflects that the admin will need to specific access rights to process the historic information on PARIS and the process is not straight forward typing – there is a system administrator element to their role. The outcome of the work will mean that social workers can then copy the information entered and update the record. This will reduce the amount of time social workers need to spend on entering information and as a consequence the timeliness of processing. The post holders will also have a role in supporting social workers in the operation of PARIS with a view to ensuring that process indicators are met. This is a one off cost as all new cases coming on stream will be loaded onto PARIS as the case builds. The loading of historic information is a defined one off task. There are currently 597 open cases to children's services. The number of assessments and care plans and the volume of information contained in the documents is large and will take a significant amount of time to enter onto PARIS



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 5: This bid applies to two improvement agreements: Improving Educational Attainment & 14 – 19 Learning Pathways
Lead Officer:	Gareth Wyn Jones
Total amount of bid:	£ 34,800
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	Working with children in secondary schools who are in danger of becoming NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training to boost attendance, engagement, motivation and attainment, thus contributing to attendance targets and the targets related to NEET numbers in the Learning Pathways agreements. Reducing NEET numbers is an important target for the Council and for the Council priority of Modernising Education. Attainment and attendance are also focus areas and working with young people in danger of becoming NEET would have a positive impact on these two areas.
How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?	This money would be used to pay for the secondment of a full time KIT (Keeping in Touch) worker from Careers Wales to deliver programmes in school. This would build on successful pilots in Flintshire and Wrexham schools in 2007 which impacted extremely positively on attendance, participation and attainment. KIT is aimed at vulnerable young people who are in danger of not continuing with education, employment on training and is a recognised way to support young people identified as being at risk of becoming NEET. The KIT worker would support young people who are not planning on following traditional learning pathways.



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 6: Learning Pathways – widening opportunities and increasing the participation of 14-19 year olds in education and training
Lead Officer:	John Gambles
Total amount of bid:	£83,000
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	Developing a VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) for learners in Denbighshire. This is, and will continue to be, partially funded by the 14 – 19 Network. However the level of funding provided by the 14-19 network is not enough to deliver a coherent and easily accessible ‘Moodle’ learning platform. The ‘Moodle’ will provide learning programmes for young people who are not registered at any school or college and who attract no core funding. Having a VLE will increase the options and learning programmes available for young people and will contribute to the target of increasing participation in learning and training for 14-19 year olds.
How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Funding (£60,000) would pay for secondment of a Moodle ‘champion’ with skills in teaching and learning, and for the necessary technical support. This would help to support the access of young people to the wide range of options outlined in the agreement and would add a significant learner support element through the materials developed for the VLE. This development would help to achieve Performance indicators 1 to 4 of the Agreement as well as contributing to the Improving Educational Attainment improvement Agreement.

Name of Agreement:

Bid 6: Learning Pathways – widening opportunities and increasing the participation of 14-19 year olds in education and training

2. The funding (£23,000) would buy in appropriate college courses for up to 10 unregistered young people at Llandrillo College Rhyl, Coleg Ilysfasi or with North Wales Training.

This development would help to achieve PI 5, 6 and 7 of the Agreement.



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 7: Housing Matters
Lead Officer:	Paul Quirk, Head of Housing Services
Total amount of bid:	Existing Funding of £136,634 plus inflation at 3% = £140,733, plus new funding of £60,000.
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	Homelessness budget is overspent despite existing PIG funding and best efforts to achieve efficiencies and maximise Housing Benefit and other income. Concentrating on prevention rather than reacting to formal homelessness applications is advantageous both socially and financially but costs still cannot be contained within budget.
How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?	Methods of working will concentrate on the Prevention Agenda, and on specific items relating to the Improvement Agreement measures.



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 8: Helped to Live in the Community
Lead Officer:	Neil Ayling
Total amount of bid:	£43,030.
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	<p>The focus of the PI's for this agreement is the number of people helped to live at home. In order to calculate performance detailed information about service users needs to be recorded on PARIS which includes the specific range of services they receive. This information needs to be kept accurate and up to date so that performance is accurate and auditable. Currently Care.comm does not allow Practitioners to record their assessments and care plans electronically so they hand write their work. Feedback from Practitioners is that they will initially find that it takes them longer to record their work electronically as opposed to manually. Once work has been recorded on PARIS there is functionality for the work to be copied and updated. This will create significant advantages in processing information when a case is reviewed (there is a requirement that all care packages are reviewed within 12 weeks of being established and then at least annually). As assessments and care plans are not loaded on Care.comm it is not possible to electronically migrate this data. This means that social workers will need to write up assessments and care plans on PARIS from afresh. Once the data has been entered up the information can then be copied forward and amended to reflect the situation at that point in time. There is no budget to update existing cases on PARIS with manual data held on file and therefore reduce the amount of time social workers will take to record assessments on PARIS. If the data is not accurate and timely then this will impact on performance and place achievement of targets at risk.</p>

Name of Agreement:

Bid 8: Helped to Live in the Community

How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?

It is proposed that 2 scale 3 (or equivalent) peripatetic admin are employed to load manual information onto PARIS on all existing cases. The scale reflects that the admin will need to specific access rights to process the historic information on PARIS and the process is not straight forward typing – there is a system administrator element to their role. The outcome of the work will mean that social workers can then copy the information entered and update the record. This will reduce the amount of time social workers need to spend on entering information and as a consequence ensure that service information is accurate, comprehensive and timely. The post holders will also have a role in supporting social workers in the operation of PARIS with a view to ensuring that process indicators are met. This is a one off cost as all new cases coming on stream will be loaded onto PARIS as the case builds. The loading of historic information is a defined one off task. There are currently over 5500 open cases to adult services. The documentation that would need to be loaded is the unified assessment document as this will populate the care plan and service information on PARIS.



Denbighshire County Council Improvement Agreements

Pro-forma for additional funding

Name of Agreement:	Bid 9: Provision of facilities at home
Lead Officer:	Gareth Roberts
Total amount of bid:	£8,000
Elements of actions / targets that cannot be achieved within existing budget	<p>We would need to carry out a body of work to look at available options to speed up the tender process for Disabled Facilities Grants</p> <p>Development of such a project to would not be possible with existing limited staff resources.</p>
How will the additional money be used to achieve those elements of actions / targets described above?	<p>The project requires the services of a consultant to prepare a report with recommendations. This would then need an implementation to set up transparent internal process to speed up tender procedures.</p> <p>National core indicators should improve because of the shortened time for tendering works.</p>

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR R W HUGHES, LEAD MEMBER FOR PERSONNEL AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

DATE: 27th January 2009

SUBJECT: ROUTINE REPORTING ON PERSONNEL

1 DECISION SOUGHT

For Members to note the enclosed report on Personnel Statistics

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1. **Personnel Statistics** - In December 08 the number of actual staff employed has decreased to 4564 this equates to 3860 full time equivalents (FTE) which is a decrease from the previous month. In December there were 12 new starters to DCC, across all Directorates. There were 34 leavers spread across all Directorates, 9 of which left for positions outside of DCC, with 2 declining to specify why they had left, other reasons included personal reasons, end of fixed term contracts, Retirement and two ill health terminations/dismissals.

		Number of staff	FTEs
Jan	2008	4582	3793
Feb		4581	3790
Mar		4563	3777
April		4540	3769
May		4525	3769
June		4476	3786
July		4490	3806
August		4398	3730
September		4607	3907
October		4610	3916
November		4596	3890
December		4564	3860

It should be noted that the number of staff and the number of starters and leavers will never correlate this is because starters and leavers equate to number of employments rather than actual people. It should also be noted that the data is only accurate on the day the report is run as new data is added to the system on a daily basis.

2.2 **Sickness Absence** – Graphs showing the corporate sickness absence position since April 2007 are contained within appendix a. There has been an increase in sickness levels this month, with the average number of days lost per employee at 1.4 which remains higher than for the same period last year and is well above the target of 0.92 days lost per employee. This month Resources, County Clerks & Chief Executives and LLL (Schools only) recorded lower levels of sickness than the required target, with Environment and LLL (excl Schools) recording higher levels and Social Services recording levels significantly above target, although Environment levels are lower than they recorded for the same period last year.

Monthly (December 08)	Days Lost Per Employee	Target
DCC	1.4	0.92
CE	1.41	0.92
RES	0.99	0.92
ENV	1.26	0.92
SS	1.68	0.92
LLL	1.42	0.92
LLL excl schools	1.64	0.92
Schools Only	1.38	0.92

Cumulative (April - Dec 08)	Days Lost Per Employee	Target
DCC	9.14	8.28
CE	5.14	8.28
RES	7.27	8.28
ENV	9.50	8.28
SS	12.83	8.28
LLL	8.08	8.28
LLL excl schools	9.25	8.28
Schools Only	7.84	8.28

2.3 **Efficiency Programme** – In December 2008 information was provided to staff on the Efficiency Programme and staff were invited to send in expressions of interest for Voluntary Redundancy, Flexible Retirement and/or a Reduction in Hours. 211 expressions of interest have been received to date. Those are now being processed and will be assessed against set criteria of Cost, Performance, Service Area and Efficiency, this will be undertaken in conjunction with Heads of Service and payroll. Employees who meet the set criteria will be issued with figures on how their application would affect them financially and then given the opportunity to formally apply for their chosen option. Formal applications will not be received until late February early March 09

2.4 **MASS Agency Project** – The MASS Agency Project is nearing implementation, scheduled for Monday 26 January 2009.

A considerable effort across each of the Directorates has been given in obtaining relevant data to provide to Matrix-SCM who have been able to provide DCC with a forecasted saving projection based on historical agency worker usage.

Based on a Gain share model, our forecast savings would be circa 4.6% which equates financially to £4112 per week or £213,848 per annum.

ICT and Finance have also worked very closely with each other to ensure that upon implementation, we will have a fully automated transaction process, which also means that we will have a considerable reduction in back office processes in handling excess volumes of creditor invoices from each of our individual agency suppliers.

There are some pockets of business which still require additional investigation to consider the impact of Matrix on their service to ensure we can achieve positive effect, these areas are Major Projects Group within Environment. Schools within Lifelong Learning and also Adult Social Care within Social Services. Each of these areas are not unique and are still out with scope across both Flintshire and Wrexham authorities.

2.5 Agency figures are included in Appendix B.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

3.1. Section III of the Local Government Act 1972

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 **Cost Implications:** There are no significant cost implications associated with the preparation of this information.

4.2 **Staffing / Accommodation Implications:** There are no direct staffing implications however sickness levels do impact on the ability to provide services.

4.3 **IT Implications:** There are no IT implications associated with the preparation of this information.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 **Risks associated with not agreeing the recommendation/s** N/A

5.2 **Risks associated with agreeing the recommendation/s** N/A

6 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

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

7 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

7.1. The headcount information has been prepared by the Central Personnel team directly from the HR system.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Assessment of Impact on Corporate Priorities: N/A

8.2 Assessment of impact on the Vision, Community Strategy, Equalities and Sustainability: N/A

9 ACTION PLAN – Performance Appraisal Review

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / DATE BY WHEN ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	ACTION TO BE REVIEWED & MONITORED BY / DATE TO BE MONITORED
Introduction of quality assurance programme	G Humphreys	30.09.2008
First report	G Humphreys	31.10.2008
Review of current Performance Appraisal form to identify possible simpler approach	G Humphreys	30.09.2008
Review of overall Performance Appraisal methodology	L Atkin	31.03.2009

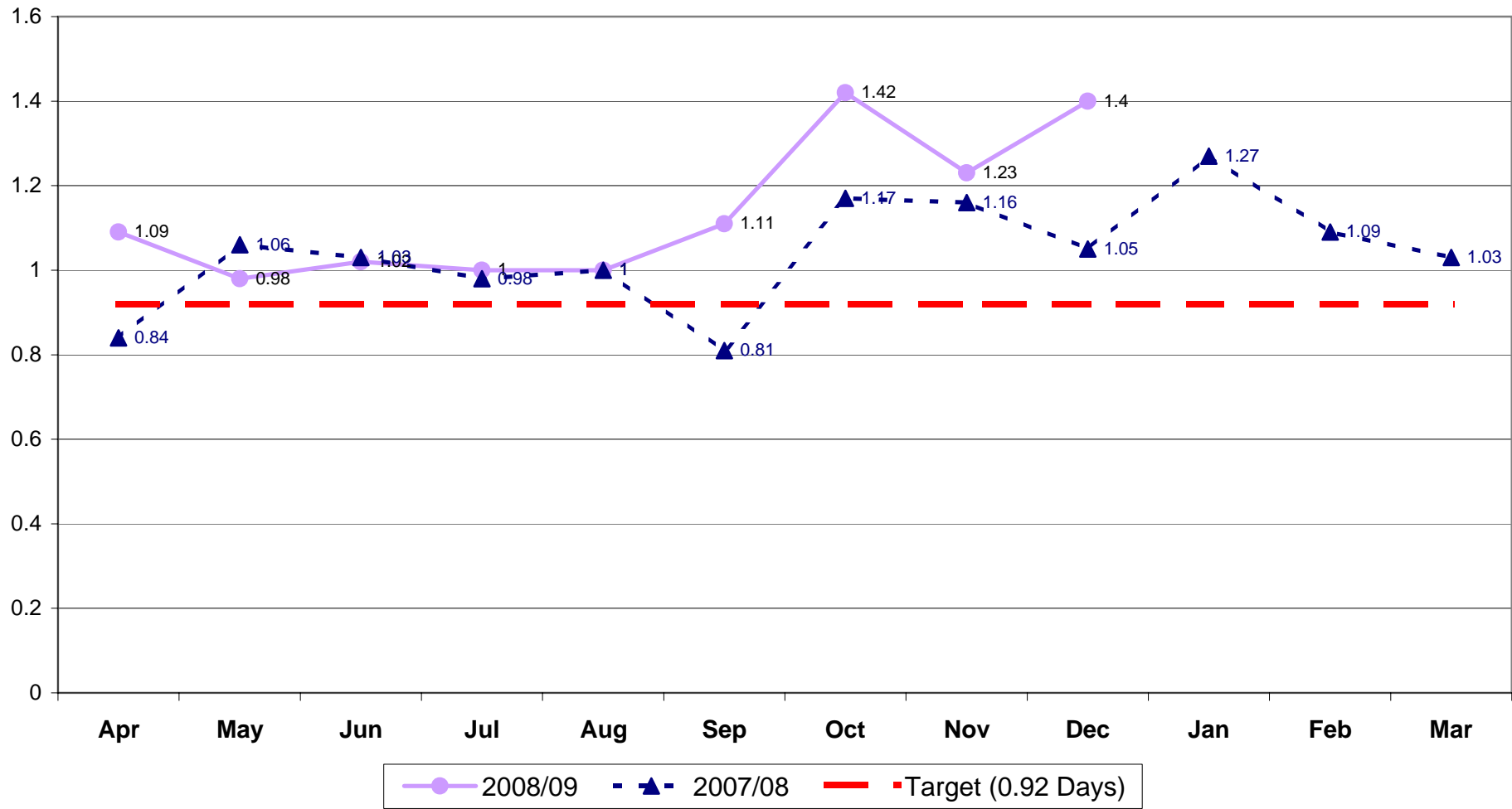
Update on the Action Plan

- Existing forms streamlined
- New 6 level rating/scoring system created
- Choice of two new simplified forms created for people who work few hours or in less skilled roles
- Consultation on new forms & rating system carried out with specific staff in Environment, Personnel Policy Feedback & Idea's Group, Trade Unions and MMC
- QA process written for personnel
- Feb 2009 Feedback collated and actioned where appropriate

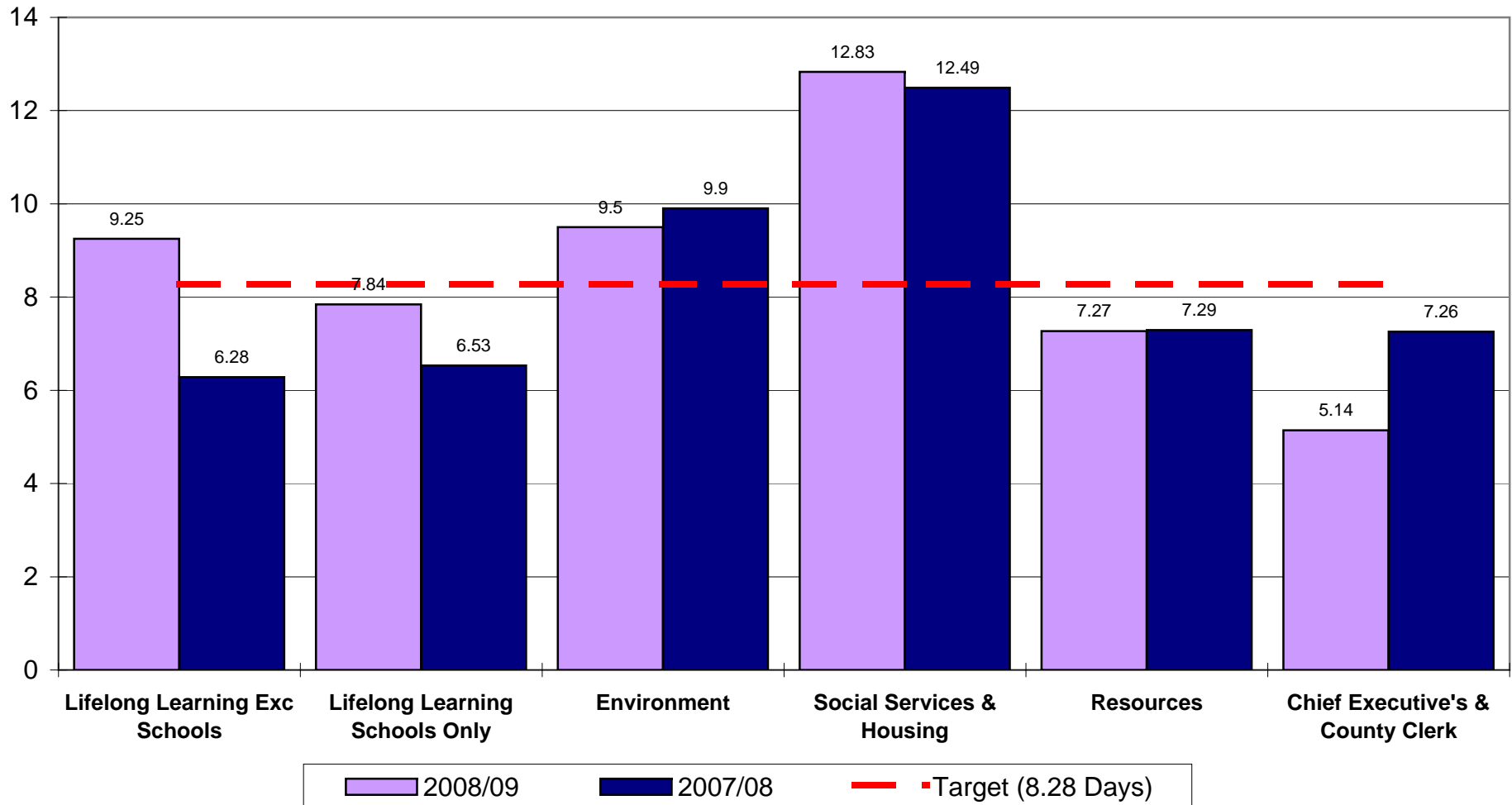
10 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1. Members note the information considered in this report and identify issues which future reports should focus upon.

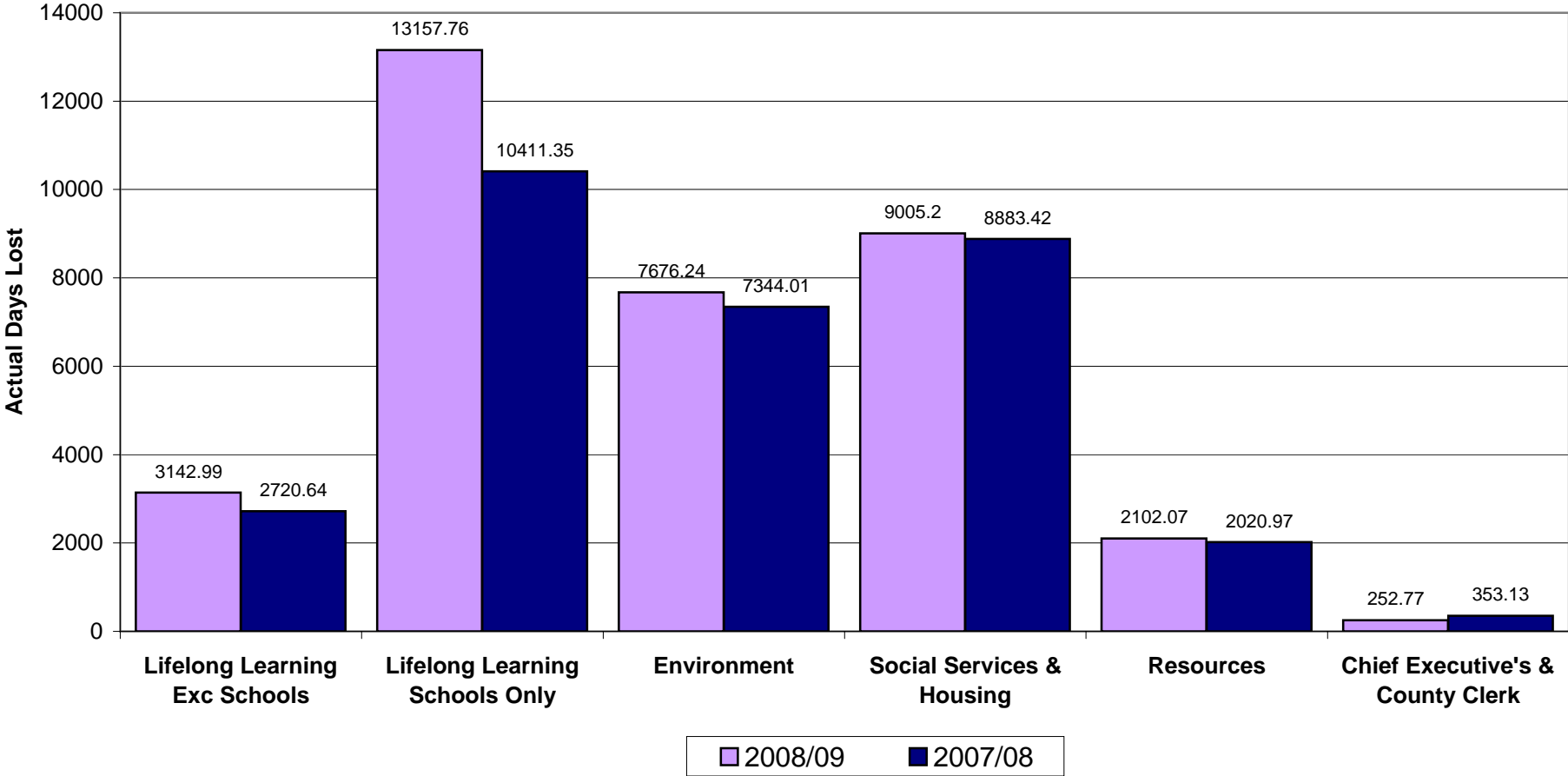
Denbighshire County Council Average Number of Days Lost per Employee December 2008



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



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



SERVICE	January 5th to 9th 2009	Number of Agency Staff		Over 6 mths	
		Full Time	Part Time	FT/PT	
LIFELONG LEARNING					
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT		3	0	1	To provide cover until permanant member of staff appointed. 3 admin staff down at present.
PARTNERSHIPS & INCLUSION		1		1	Head of Service
POLICY & PERFORMANCE		nil			
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS		nil			
CORPORATE DIRECTOR		1		1	
CHIEF EXECUTIVES DEPARTMENT		nil			
COUNTY CLERKS		nil	1		Vacancy following long-term sickness
RESOURCES		nil			
	AUDIT	nil			
	PERSONNEL	nil			
	ICT	nil			
	REVS & BENS	nil			
	CUSTOMER CARE	nil			
	FINANCE	nil			
ENVIRONMENT					
TOURISM, HERITAGE & COUNTRYSIDE					
	HERITAGE	1	nil		Caretaker
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES					
	MANAGEMENT	nil	1	1 p/t	Principal Property Manager
	CONSERVATION	nil	1	nil	Senior Conservation Officer
	BUILDING SERVICES	8	3	6f/t 3p/t	Surveyors - M&E, Building, Asbestos, Repairs Clerk, Clerk of Works
	DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT	12	0	11	Surveyors - M&E, Building, QS
	VALUATION & PROPERTY	2	1	1	2 on Maternity leave and 1 on Secondment to Unison
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES		11	0	5	numbers expected to fall further during 2009
FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE		nil			
	PASSENGER TRANSPORT	1	1		PT 0.4
PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION					
	FOOD & H&S TEAM	nil			
	HOUSING ENFORCEMENT	1	1	1p/t	Paid for from Performance Improvement Grant. Most efficient use of resources given temp. nature of funding
	ADMIN	2		1	Cover for long term vacancies and secondment to support specific functions elsewhere in the Service. Based in Russell House
	BUILDING CONTROL	nil			
TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE		9	6	8ft 5pt	Technical engineers working on projects
SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING					
HOUSING		1	0	0	1 covering for member of staff on secondment.
ADULT SERVICES		7	1	3	'Mental Illness 1 (grant), 1 S.People admin. 1 p/t Welfare Rights, Admin 2 (1 p/time), First Contact 1, 1 HSCWB (grant), 1 OT Admin.
BUSINESS SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT		2	0	2	2 full time Paris
CHILDRENS' SERVICES		8	3	2 (part time) (6 full time)	1 Team Manager, 1 Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer (21 hours), 4 Social Workers (1 part time), 2 Family Support Workers (covering long term sickness which is being managed),1 part time Administrator and 2 Full Time Administrators As per previous Cabinet reports - Chidren's Services have been unable to attract Senior, experienced Social Work staff to Social Services and are, therefore, 'growing our own.' This is part of a planned strategy and experienced Agency staff have been utilised in order for Children's Services to deliver fully on its improvement plan and transform key performance indicator (KPI) performance. Some Agency staff are to deliver a targeted piece of work and are, therefore, only on a temporary basis, ie. reducing the number of 'Children Looked After'. Some of the Family Support Workers are covering long term sickness, which is being managed, and the Personal Advisor is covering the findings of a recent judicial review against Caerphilly, pending the development of a service and permanent recruitment of such advisors.

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CABINET: FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

17 FEBRUARY 2009	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
2009-2010 Budget Update	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor R W Hughes L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget 2008-2009	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
Housing Revenue Account Budget Proposals 2009-2010	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
CET Performance Report	A Evans
Quarterly Performance Report	Councillor P J Marfleet J Williams
DCC / CCCB Planning & P P Collaboration Detailed Agreement	Councillor E W Williams G H Boase
Interim Planning Guidance for West Rhyl	Councillor E W Williams Martha Savage
Customer Relationship Management	Councillor S Frobisher C J Williams
Fees and Charges for Adult Social Care	Councillor P A Dobb A Hughes Jones
Hyfrydle Progress Against Action Plan	Councillor H H Evans J Williams
Outline strategic plan for Transforming Education and Training Provision in Denbighshire	Councillor H H Evans M Mehmet / J Walley
24 MARCH 2009	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor R W Hughes L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
CET Performance Report	A Evans
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor H H Evans J Curran
DCC / CCBC Planning & PP Collaboration (detailed agreement)	Councillors S Frobisher / E W Williams G Boase
Deposit LDP for Consultation – Informal Cabinet	Councillor E W Williams G Boase
Local Area Partnership Agreement	Councillor M M Jones Jamie Groves
DCC Comments and Complaints Policy	Councillor S Frobisher Claire O’Gorman
28 APRIL 2009	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
CET Performance Report	A Evans

Capital Plan	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor R W Hughes L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
Joint Denbighshire and Conwy Safeguarding Children Board (SCB) – Annual Update	Councillor M M Jones N Ayling
Additional HMO Licensing	Councillor S Frobisher G Boase / Mannon Thomas
Empty Homes Strategy	Councillor P A Dobb G Boase
26 MAY 2009	
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2008-2009	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Capital Plan	Councillor J Thompson Hill R Parry
Routine Reporting on Personnel	Councillor R W Hughes L Atkin / G Humphreys
Housing Revenue Account Budget	Councillor P A Dobb P Quirk
CET Performance Report	A Evans
Quarterly Performance Report	Councillor P J Marfleet J Williams
Modernising Education Action Plan Monitoring	Councillor H H Evans J Curran

CABINET: DELEGATED DECISIONS

FEBRUARY 2009	
Homeless 24 Hour High Level Temporary Supported Housing Project	Councillor P A Dobb Gary Major
MARCH 2009	
Approval of the social care workforce development bid to the Welsh Assembly.	Councillor P A Dobb R Hayes
APRIL 2009	