

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 14 July 2011 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT

Councillors: D.I. Smith (Chair), I.W. Armstrong, B. Blakeley, J. Cahill, J.M. Davies, D. Hannam, T.R. Hughes, E.R. Jones, S. Thomas and C.H. Williams

Observers: Councillors W.L. Cowie (Chair of the Council), M.LI. Davies, R.L. Feeley, M.M. Jones (Lead Cabinet Member for Welsh Language, Children, Young People and Leisure)

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director Learning and Communities (HW), Acting Head of Corporate Governance (JK), Head of Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory Services (GB), Engagement and Consultation Manager (DD), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Committee Administrator (KEJ)

POINTS OF NOTICE

The Chair –

- welcomed Steffan Hughes, pupil from Ysgol Brynhyfryd who was attending the meeting as part of his work experience with the Council, and
- referred to the Welsh Government's recent announcement to scale back its 21st Century Schools Capital fund and advised that this matter had been scheduled in the committee's future work programme for September.

1 APOLOGIES

The Chair reported that Councillor A.G. Pennington was no longer a member on the committee and a replacement would be sought from the Conservative Group.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of personal or prejudicial interest had been raised.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 9 June 2011 were submitted.

Accuracy –

Page 6 – Item No. 7 – Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Report – Councillor C.H. Williams advised that his reference to flood risk areas in the Llandrillo area had been incorrectly translated in the Welsh version of the minutes to read “Llandrillo yn Rhos”

Matters Arising –

The Chair asked that committee resolutions also be detailed separately in future and attached to the minutes for ease of reference. For clarification purposes and in the interests of transparency Councillor S. Thomas added that the name of the proposer and seconder of motions also be included within the minutes. The committee agreed with those suggestions.

Page 9 – Item No. 9 – Scrutiny Work Programme – The Scrutiny Coordinator advised that representatives from the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) had attended Partnerships Scrutiny Committee on 7 July to discuss a number of issues. One of the items referred to the North Denbighshire Coastal Locality Project, including the future provision of hospital in-patient beds, and that committee had agreed to receive the recommendations on service delivery once they became available in the autumn. The Chair encouraged members interested in that item to attend at the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee when it was discussed.

The Chair also suggested that, in future, the forward work plans of all scrutiny committees be attached to the work programme report in order to avoid duplication.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2011 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE V2 APPEAL

The Acting Head of Corporate Governance (AHofCG) and the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory Services (HofPR&RS) submitted a joint report (previously circulated) informing members of the implications of the outcome of the V2 appeal and the safeguards being introduced to ensure the Council’s interests were protected in future. A background to the case (Appendix 1) had been attached to the report.

At this juncture (9.45 a.m.) Councillor T.R. Hughes entered the meeting.

Members were advised that it had been necessary to review the procedures following the recent Appeal Decision in respect of the licensed premises known as V2 Nightclub to ensure that the risk of a similar decision was minimised. With reference to the District Judge’s statement in relation to costs (circulated at the meeting) the AHofCG explained that the Judge had given a very clear indication at the end of day one that either the reviews were premature, ill-judged and heavy handed or there was a lack of evidence. On that basis the Council would have been foolhardy to proceed. The HofPR&RS elaborated upon the background history to the case and the events leading up to the Council’s decision to concede the Appeal. Whilst reporting on the specific details of the case in this instance, i.e. the history to

the premises, the wealth of public opposition, and the fact that the problems associated with a nightclub in the area had been long established, this was purely to put the situation into context. The Chair asked that members concentrate on the procedural aspect of the process and to satisfy themselves with the robustness of the procedures to be adopted. Members were invited to scrutinise the proposals detailed at paragraph 4.4 of the report which had been put forward in order to ensure officers in the Licensing and Legal sections worked more closely together and that members were kept updated on progress in licensing appeals and court cases.

A number of councillors spoke in relation to their involvement at different stages within the review process, including Councillor C.H. Williams, Chair of the Licensing Committee and Councillors I.W. Armstrong and B. Blakeley as members on one or more of the Review hearings, together with Councillor R.L. Feeley as local ward member. It was made clear that there was no blame or criticism of any members throughout the whole process and that any decisions made by the Licensing Sub Committees had been based upon the evidence which had been presented to them.

Members took the opportunity to raise questions with the officers including specific questions in terms of the V2 case and to the procedures followed leading up to the decision to concede the Appeal. Officers responded as follows –

- clarified the responsibilities of licensees and the police with regard to anti social behaviour both inside and outside the premises
- the police in this case had argued that they could not police the area to the degree required when the premises was open
- members had not taken the decision to close the premises lightly and there had been four hearings before it had been resolved to revoke the licence
- there had been a problem in the way the evidence had been presented and questions raised as to whether enough had been done to present the evidence to the Judge in such a way as to maximise the case
- the Council had not been permitted to present the evidence relating to the CCTV footage showing the problems at the premises
- the V2 was a matter for the Licensing Committee to deal with – officers were working with the premises, local residents and local ward members in an attempt to find a resolution to the problem including the potential for a gating order at Canol y Dre preventing pedestrian access and the provision of a shuttle bus service to transport people from the town centre to the Club
- it would not be possible to retrieve any costs back from Counsel in this case.

During examination of the case concerns were raised that the situation had been allowed to continue to Appeal stage with no prior intervention and that the risks and chances of success had not been assessed at a much earlier stage in the process. Accordingly members welcomed measures being introduced to minimise the risk of a similar outcome in the future and took the opportunity to consider the robustness of the proposals put forward within the report. In scrutinising the facts members highlighted the need to engage Counsel with relevant experience in the field of licensing. It was clear that the evidence presented to the Licensing Sub Committee had not given an accurate reflection of the true situation and the proposal to ensure all the evidence which might be put before the courts was available at licensing hearings was supported. Reference was also made to the role of the Head of

Regulatory Services' (CCBC) within the proposed process. There was some uncertainty surrounding the impartiality of the Head of Service's role when advising in such cases, particularly if he had been involved within the process at an earlier stage, and whether that could potentially be interpreted as a conflict of interest. Further clarification and guidance was also sought as to whether members could attend more than one Licensing Sub Committee to review the same premises in view of the challenge made to Councillor Blakeley. The proposals put forward to ensure closer working between licensing and legal were supported.

In order to reassure members regarding the robustness of the procedures to be implemented Councillor S. Thomas proposed, seconded by the Councillor D.I. Smith that members' comments as detailed above be incorporated into the final procedures and that the said procedures be circulated to the committee for information. Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *to ensure the Council's interests were protected the following procedures be put in place –*
- *members be provided with clear guidance as soon as possible as to the Council's stance as to whether they can attend more than one Licensing Sub Committee (hearing) to review the same premises*
 - *that at Review Hearings, all CADS reports (logs made when 999 calls are received) must be presented by the Police, who should not rely on providing a summary of incidents. All the evidence which might be put before the Courts (on an Appeal) must be available at Review hearings*
 - *in high profile/contentious cases Counsel with relevant experience in the field of licensing will be engaged by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services only after consultation with Head of Planning, Regeneration & Regulatory Services*
 - *well in advance of any Court Hearing the Head of Legal and Democratic Services will arrange a conference for Legal Officers and Senior Licensing Officers to meet with the suitably experienced Counsel to assess risks/chances of success*
 - *Head of Planning, Regeneration & Regulatory Services and/or Senior Licensing Officers will keep the Chair of Licensing Committee and Local Ward Members updated on issues relating to any Appeal or Court Hearing on licensing matters*
 - *regular member training will be provided and will be focused to take account of any new legislation or case law;*
- (b) *clarification be sought on the extent of the Head of Regulatory Services' role (CBBC) in advising Licensing Committee in these cases in order to avoid any uncertainty surrounding his impartiality and to ensure his involvement could*

not be interpreted as a conflict of interest particularly if he had been involved at an earlier stage within the process, and

(c) *the finalised procedures be circulated to the committee for information.*

At this juncture (10.30 a.m) Councillors R.L. Feeley and M.M. Jones left the meeting.

6 CONTROL OF CARAVAN SITES

The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory Services (HofPR&RS) submitted a report (previously circulated) detailing proposals on how to develop more robust planning and licensing conditions to control the occupancy of caravans, and to enforce the conditions whilst at the same time developing the local economy. An initial report on the control of caravan sites presented to the former Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 24 June 2010 (Appendix 1) together with a set of standard planning conditions to be imposed on any new or extended caravan parks (Appendix 2) had been attached to the report.

The HofPR&RS introduced Mr. N. Jones, Planning and Environment Enforcement Manager (P&EEM) Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) as the responsible officer in Conwy for a number of environmental and planning issues including caravans. He elaborated upon the main issues arising from the last report highlighting that the control of caravan sites was very much a collaborative project with Conwy harnessing their expertise and delivering economies of scale. As a result it was hoped to see significant progress over the next year. The P&EEM reported upon how CCBC had tackled the issue of controlling caravan sites after initially setting up a Working Group in 2002 and elaborated upon the legislative complexities with sites having established use rights prior to the introduction of more recent legislation. Accordingly a monitoring process had been introduced to police the occupation of caravan sites involving engagement with caravan site operators. Some work had been carried out to recall licences and issue new ones but only in certain circumstances. Information was gathered from various sources to identify whether those in occupation were residents of Conwy or had permanent addresses elsewhere and any breaches were dealt with as appropriate to send out a clear message. If similar problems were found in Denbighshire the same robust processes as CCBC's could be used. The P&EEM also advised that caravan site licences did not generate a fee although there was an expectation for local authorities to inspect sites and consequently there was a resource implication. Through CCBC's Cabinet Member the matter had been raised at the UK Parliament and with the Welsh Government with a view to seeking those institutions to consider establishing a charging scheme to alleviate resource issues.

During the ensuing debate the committee noted the complexities surrounding the control of caravan sites and supported the collaborative approach with CCBC as a way forward in effectively managing that process. Members discussed with officers the legislation governing caravan sites and occupancy and the need to reduce permanent residential occupation of caravans together with the implications of action taken in that regard. It was disappointing to note that retrospective conditions could not be imposed where planning permission had already been granted and that the authority had limited powers to recall licences. Questions were raised regarding the

procedures for controlling caravan sites for holiday use and the methods undertaken in identifying breaches and action to address them. The committee also sought assurances that adequate resources were available to pursue the necessary enforcement action to ensure that the conditions were adhered to. Key points arising from the debate included –

- the standard conditions would apply to all whether part of a large caravan site, a single caravan or clusters in remote areas
- procedures included checking whether the relevant planning permission had been secured in the first instance and that the caravan(s) were licensed
- only 1 or 2 of those living in caravans in Conwy had been rehoused after enforcement action had rendered them homeless but if this was anticipated to be a bigger problem in Denbighshire then officers would need to look into other ways of dealing with the situation
- planning enforcement action had been taken against approximately 6 single caravans found in remote fields in Conwy in the last 5 years
- there was no facility to charge council tax on caravan holiday sites but the sites themselves paid business rates and some of that cost was passed onto guests; individuals could occupy a caravan for 10 1/2 months of the year and if they could show a permanent address elsewhere then no action could be taken. However, other benefits enjoyed by council tax payers could be withdrawn such as providing bus passes and access to schools which were restricted to permanent residents of the county
- no in-depth research had been undertaken in terms of conditions imposed by other local authorities and the standard planning conditions (Appendix 2) had been based on model conditions
- there was a resource implication in terms of investigations, regulation and monitoring together with pursuing enforcement action but this aspect was being addressed via collaborative arrangements with Conwy to produce economies of scale, engaging with caravan site operators to set up clear procedures for monitoring the occupancy of sites, and ensuring a coordinated approach across the authority
- the electoral register and housing benefits were used as tools to check on addresses provided and other local authorities were contacted where individuals provided permanent addresses outside the county in order to check the validity of their claim.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *the direction of the project to develop a more robust approach to controlling caravan sites be agreed;*
- (b) *a Working Group be established involving officers from Denbighshire and Conwy covering Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory functions together with two scrutiny representatives from each of those authorities in order to develop a set of standard conditions and procedures for controlling and monitoring caravan sites across the two counties;*

- (c) *Councillors T.R. Hughes and S. Thomas be nominated to serve on the above mentioned Working Group on behalf of this committee and to report back thereon;*
- (ch) *the proposals to arrange and manage a Caravan Park Operators Seminar across Denbighshire and Conwy counties be agreed with the aim of providing up to date advice and guidance on legal and health and safety issues and to also discuss the arrangements for controlling and monitoring their sites with the aim to reduce permanent residential occupation of caravans, and*
- (d) *the proposed standard conditions and procedures developed by the Working Group for the purpose of controlling and monitoring caravan sites in both Denbighshire and Conwy as well as the feedback received at the Operators' Seminar be presented to the Committee in due course for consideration.*

At this juncture (11.05 a.m.) Councillors W.L. Cowie, J.M. Davies and S. Thomas left the meeting which adjourned for a refreshment break.

7 MANAGEMENT OF ALLOCATION OF SECTION 106 COMMUTED SUMS FOR OPEN SPACE PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE

The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory Services (HofPR&RS) submitted a report by the Policy, Research & Information Manager (previously circulated) outlining the current arrangements for the requirement for Section 106 agreements and the management of the allocation of commuted sums received for open space provision and maintenance. A summary of Open Space Commuted Sums received to date (Appendix 1) had been attached to the report.

The Open Space Commuted Sum Scheme started in 2004 to manage contributions from developers through legal agreements. Open space provision could be made either (1) on site or off site but close to the new development, or (2) via a commuted sum payment to enable the required provision or agreed equivalent to be made within the locality. Denbighshire had been ranked highly for securing contributions from developers for open space but there were opportunities for improvement. Approximately £1m had been received from developers to date and funding was ring fenced by town/community council area. The HofPR&RS elaborated upon the current operation of the scheme and the proposal to transfer the distribution of funds under the scheme from Planning to Community Grants. Finally he reported upon the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which made provision to introduce a charging mechanism to fund new or improved infrastructure needs arising as a result of new developments and advised that consultants had been commissioned to undertake initial research into that legislation. It was suggested that the CIL might be an item for future scrutiny.

The committee considered the summary of open space commuted funds (appendix to the report) and noted that 90% of the capital money received had been spent or committed to date. The importance of ensuring that adequate sums were provided for ongoing maintenance of particular projects to ensure they were sustainable was also noted. The HofPR&RS responded to members' questions regarding the status of individual projects within their particular ward areas and clarified the position

regarding a number of other developments falling outside of the scheme where Section 106 agreements could be applied. He agreed to report back on the following matters to the individual ward members –

- Bodelwyddan's involvement in former Pilkington's Playing Field Scheme, and
- how the outstanding £570 in the community area of St. Asaph and Cefn Meiriadog would be spent.

Members also supported the transfer of managing the allocation of funds under the scheme to Community Grants, particularly in view of the increased potential to match fund particular projects to further benefit communities. Whilst noting the potential for funds to be returned to developers in the event that they had not been spent within five years the committee agreed that future reports should also include a date by which funds must be spent. The Chair also proposed that a quarterly report be submitted to Area Members Groups detailing the sums available in their communities together with a spending deadline. Having considered the report recommendations Councillor B. Blakeley proposed, seconded by Councillor E.R. Jones that subject to members' comments above the recommendations be approved. Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *the income received through the Open Space Commuted Sums Scheme and the grant offers and payments that had been made be noted;*
- (b) *a further report reviewing the management arrangements and funds received and committed, to include a date by which the funds must be spent, be submitted to the committee in twelve months time, and*
- (c) *a quarterly report be submitted to Area Member Groups detailing the commuted sums available in their communities together with a date by which the funds must be spent.*

8 CLOSER TO THE COMMUNITY – DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Engagement and Consultation Manager (E&CM) submitted a report (previously circulated) outlining the reasons and process for developing a Community Engagement Strategy for the Council. The Welsh Government's National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales (Appendix I) together with the rationale behind the Community Engagement Strategy (Appendix II) had been attached to the report. A copy of Denbighshire's BIG Plan had also been circulated at the meeting.

The Corporate Director Learning and Communities (CD:L&C) provided a brief introduction to the report advising that a Member/Officer Working Group was being established in order to assist with the Council's aim of getting closer to the community and develop a coordinated approach to ensure added value. A key principles document would be produced in the autumn covering issues such as engagement; service delivery, and the development of capacity within communities in responding to issues.

The E&CM outlined the rationale behind the production of an engagement strategy and best practice toolkit in order to ensure that the Council adopted a professional, coordinated and cost effective approach to its consultation and engagement activities. He explained that the development of a strategy represented a significant change in the Council's approach to community engagements, putting communities at the heart of service design and enabling them to play a key role in influencing and shaping the delivery of local services. Examples of good practice in community engagement undertaken by different services were highlighted including the Local Development Plan; Waste Management Service and the BIG Plan. It was important to harness that good practice and ensure a professional approach to effective consultation and also to feedback to the community. It was hoped to submit a draft strategy document for members' consideration in September.

Members discussed a number of issues regarding community engagement with the officers including –

- the percentage of feedback received in response to community engagement being largely dependent on the issue concerned, with a relatively low response to the BIG Plan after extensive consultation but a greater response having been received to sensitive issues such as Modernising Education
- the need to be proactive in developing strategies to actively engage with all residents, particularly hard to reach groups and children and young people
- how the Council could make decisions on very little feedback
- the value of producing newsletters to provide regular updates
- the importance of feedback following consultation to tell residents how their views had been translated and had influenced the final proposals or the decision making process.

At this juncture (12.05 p.m.) Councillor M.LI. Davies left the meeting.

The Chair also asked members to familiarise themselves with the BIG Plan and to raise any issues requiring the committee's attention. It was noted that the BIG Plan would also be scrutinised by the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) subject to members' comments above the suggested approach to the development of a Community Engagement Strategy be agreed, and*
- (b) the completed draft Community Engagement Strategy be submitted to the committee's September meeting for consideration.*

At this juncture (12.10 p.m.) Councillor D. Hannam left the meeting.

9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Coordinator submitted a report (previously circulated) seeking members' review of the committee's future work programme and providing an update on relevant issues. A draft forward work programme (Appendix 1); proposals for a

agenda items on the Supporting People Strategy Update and Operational Plan 2012/13 and Foryd Harbour Mooring Fees and Charges (Appendix 2); Cabinet's forward work programme (Appendix 3); a list of representatives on the Service Performance Challenge Groups (Appendix 4); Draft Terms of Reference of the Capital Strategy & Asset Management Group (Appendix 5), and Terms of Reference of the Corporate Equality Group (Appendix 6) had been attached to the report.

The committee was asked to nominate a number of representatives to serve on various Boards and Groups as detailed within the report. Generally members felt that there were too many meetings being held and the Chair confirmed that he had queried the frequency of Service Performance Challenge Group meetings. Councillor B. Blakeley referred to his membership of the TAITH Board, because as far as he was aware he was a member by virtue of his former office of Chair of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. He suggested that a replacement should be sought from the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Coordinator agreed to look into the matter.

The Chair reminded members that proposal forms were completed by officers to formally request items on the committee's agenda and he asked that this process also be extended to committee members. Consequently members completed the proposal form for an item on the Town Plan (Denbigh) scheduled for October. The Scrutiny Coordinator reported upon the development of the draft work programme for members' consideration, particularly referring to the proposals for items as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report. With regard to the report on Foryd Harbour Mooring Fees and Charges, Councillor I.W. Armstrong felt that the report may be premature as he had been advised that no charges would be introduced until the completion of the second phase. Members accepted the report in October but asked that the Scrutiny Coordinator clarify the timing for submission to the committee. Councillor C.H. Williams referred to the Edeyrnion Area Review of Primary School Provision scheduled for the committee's September meeting and he urged members to familiarise themselves with the proposals as he did not feel there was a need to close one of the schools. Councillor B. Blakeley also reported upon his visit to Rhyl High School and raised concerns regarding the lack of dining facilities and associated health and safety implications. The Corporate Director Learning and Communities (CD:L&C) felt that issue could be resolved outside of the meeting and agreed to verbally report back to members thereon.

Consequently members agreed to –

- receive a report in September on the 21st Century Schools Programme detailing the implications of the absence of funding
- defer the report on Progress of the Youth Service Business Plan and Locality Youth Service Provision to December
- retain the report on Common Access route to Housing in October
- defer the reports on Residents' Survey and Review of Heritage and Arts Assets originally scheduled for October pending scoping of the purpose and expected outcomes of those items
- receive a report on the Town Plan (Denbigh)
- receive reports on the Supporting People Strategy Update and Operational Plan 2012-13 and Foryd Harbour Mooring Fees and Charges in October, and

- receive a verbal report back in September from the Corporate Director on the provision of dining facilities at Rhyl High School.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *subject to the amendments agreed during today's meeting the forward work programme as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;*
- (b) *members be nominated to serve on the following Boards and Groups as follows –*
- *Conwy and Denbighshire Collaboration Programme Board – Councillor J. Cahill*
 - *Business Transformation Programme Board – Councillor B. Blakeley*
 - *Capital Strategy/Strategic Funding Group – Councillor D.I. Smith (substitute Councillor T.R. Hughes)*
 - *Corporate Equalities Group – Councillor C.H. Williams (substitute Councillor T.R. Hughes);*
- (c) *members be nominated to serve on the Service Performance Challenge Groups as follows –*
- *Customer Services – Councillor T.R. Hughes (substitute Councillor B. Blakeley)*
 - *Environment Services – Councillor B. Blakeley (substitute Councillor E.R. Jones)*
 - *Planning, Regeneration & Regulatory Services – Councillor S. Thomas*
 - *Highways & Infrastructure – Councillor T.R. Hughes (substitute Councillor E.R. Jones)*
 - *Housing Services – Councillor B. Blakeley*
 - *Leisure, Libraries & Community Development, Modernising Education, School Improvement & Inclusion – Councillor D.I. Smith*
- (ch) *subject to the above nominations the Scrutiny Coordinator contact committee members seeking expressions of interest for the remaining Service Performance Challenge Groups.*

The meeting concluded at 1.00 p.m.

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 15th September 2011
Lead Member / Officer: Head of Modernising Education
Report Author: Head of Modernising Education
Title: 21st Century Schools – Area Reviews

1. What is the report about?

The report seeks to update members on the current position with regard to the national 21st Century Schools Programme and to outline the potential implications for Denbighshire of the Ministerial announcement.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The report was identified as an issue for the Committee to consider following their review of the submission of the Strategic Outline Programme for 21st Century Schools in November 2010.

3. What are the Recommendations?

To note the current position regarding the 21st Century Schools Programme and discuss its potential impact on funding for schools within Denbighshire.

4. Report details.

National Context

- 4.1 The Minister for Education and Skills issued a written statement in July 2011 (Appendix 1) which informed local authorities that the 21st Century Schools Programme was to be reviewed. The statement announced the intention to invite local authorities “to review their forward outline programmes detailed in the SOPs [Strategic Outline Programmes] against a sharper prioritisation based on the rationalisation of the school estate (including the reduction of surplus places) together with the cost effectiveness of delivery and condition with alignment to All Age Transformation.” The statement also stated that in view of “authorities’ potential ability to borrow and the constrained budget provision from Westminster I am now minded, in contrast to the previous round of transitional capital funding, to move to a 50% rate of capital grant support.” The statement indicates that funding via the 21st Century Schools Programme would be accessed from 2014 onwards rather than 2012 as initially anticipated.

- 4.2 The announcement also reiterated the commitment of the Assembly regarding Tranche 3 Funding. Members will be aware that as part of the previous Tranche 3 Funding announcement, the Council was awarded a sum of £3.061m as part of an overall £4.3m scheme to improve Welsh Medium provision in the north of the County in July 2010. This funding was deferred by the Welsh Government in March 2011. We are still waiting for clarification as to when and how the Council will be able to draw down the contribution from the Welsh Government and how this will impact on the profile for the project to be delivered.
- 4.3 This announcement will have significant implications for future school organisation proposals. Proposals will need to be considered in the context of the findings of the report on the Structure of Education in Wales which was published in March 2011. The report recommended that a “target for school surplus places to be set at 10% across Wales”. In particular it recommends “local authorities should be required to revisit their plans to rationalise their schools estate. Authorities must ensure that there is dialogue with neighbouring authorities and other providers. Issues such as Welsh medium education, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Special Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (SLDD) provision, and the future of small primary schools and schools with small sixth forms must be considered both locally and within regions. Revised plans should be submitted to DCELLS by December 2012. For some local authority education departments this will require minimal work. Capital resource allocation should be judged in this context.” This recommendation has been agreed in principle by the Minister subject to consultation.

Implications for Denbighshire

- 4.4 These announcements provide a clear focus on the expectation from the Welsh Government in respect of school organisation proposals and the ability to access capital funding. At present the level of surplus places across Primary provision within Denbighshire is 17.7% which whilst one of the lower figures within Wales suggests that around 500 surplus places need to be removed across the County to meet emerging national expectations.
- 4.5 It is also acknowledged that in many areas throughout Denbighshire the present pattern of school organisation requires investment in school buildings to increase capacity and to allow rationalisation of the school estate to occur. Recent consultation on proposals such as the amalgamation of Ysgol Gwaenynog and Ysgol Heulfre and the creation of an area school following the closure of Ysgol Maes Hyfryd and Ysgol Llandrillo demonstrate the need for investment to allow the new schools proposed to be created to operate on a single site.
- 4.6 In terms of future area reviews at the Primary sector it is anticipated that the next reviews would be focussed on the Ruthin area and then

the Rhyl area. The authority will need to be clear regarding its strategy for moving forward school modernisation in the context of limited external capital funding and the probable necessity of developing proposals which could be capable of being self funding via the reduction in the number of schools maintained and making the best use of existing assets. The approach to developing such strategies will also need to reflect the emerging Town and Area plans to ensure that the long term vision for education is an integral part of such planning.

- 4.7 In the short term the main area of concern arising from the decision for 21st Century Schools is the position for Welsh medium education in Secondary education at Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St Asaph. Based on current pupil levels there may be a need to invest resources in additional capacity at the school to ensure existing primary pupils are able to continue to access Welsh medium education at secondary level. Across the other secondary schools the main concerns will be with regard to maintaining existing buildings which may already be considered in poor condition and balancing the need to address short term investment against the wider investment needs of the school estate.
- 4.8 The overall level of investment in the Strategic Outline Programme submitted by Denbighshire in December 2010 envisaged investment of £176m during the course of the 21st Century Schools Programme. This was submitted on the basis of the Council contributing £44m over the lifetime of the programme through prudential borrowing driven by efficiency savings, capital receipts from surplus assets and general capital funding provision to be met centrally. The suggestion of a 50% contribution from local authorities will mean that the programme as it stands would need an additional £29.8m to be provided by Denbighshire.
- 4.9 In considering proposals it is important to note that the opportunities for efficiency savings or the disposal of surplus assets is more difficult to ascertain within the Secondary Sector than the Primary Sector. Overall whilst it may be considered possible to rationalise the primary school estate, there are limited opportunities for savings to be made in relation to the six Community Secondary Schools (there are presently different rules regarding funding for faith voluntary aided schools) within Denbighshire.

Next Stages

- 4.10 The Welsh Government will be providing feedback on the individual submissions during September and authorities will be asked to resubmit their likely programme bands based on guidance to be issued also in September. Local authorities will then be asked to resubmit their proposals during the autumn term with a view to a further Ministerial Statement during December 2011.

- 4.11 In the short term this will require Denbighshire to review the priorities identified within Band A as detailed below, whilst considering the overall timescales for the remaining Bands B to D. This work will set the context for future school organisation proposals in the short to medium term.

Brief Description of the Project	Estimated Value £(m)
Secondary – Ysgol Glan Clwyd – New build and refurbishment	£15.9m
New Build of Rhyl High School including Ysgol Tir Morfa	£24.6m
Primary Implement area reviews for Prestatyn and Edeyrnion	£7.3m
Joint Faith Secondary provision	£28.8m * (to be funded 85% WG / 15% Diocesan)

Within the current financial climate it is unlikely that an award of £23.9m to a single authority to fund the Band A projects for Community Schools would be considered as realistic by the Welsh Government. In addition consideration is needed as to whether Denbighshire views the provision of an identical contribution as affordable. In the light of this situation the authority may be required to consider developing options for school organisation which would be effectively self funding within the Primary phase.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 The 21st Century Schools Programme will be the main source of Capital to fund the implementation of the necessary improvements to schools within Denbighshire. The change in the funding balance may require the Council to review how current priorities are funded and particular the use of revenue sources to fund prudential borrowing for capital schemes.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1 The financial costs for the 21st Century Schools Programme are detailed within the report. Clearly before resubmitting the proposals the Council will need to review whether re-profiling of existing projects should take place together with a vigorous assessment of the overall affordability. Should funding be provided the programme is likely to have a significant impact on a number of teams within the Council including Design and Development, Procurement, Finance, Legal, ICT, Project Management amongst others.

7. What consultations have been carried out?

- 7.1 At this stage no wider consultation has taken place on the principles of the re-submission. Detailed consultation has taken place with stakeholders over the individual projects within Band A.

8. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 8.1 A failure to attract funding through the 21st Century Schools Programme will impact significantly on the level of capital resources available to improve schools within Denbighshire. There will be a need to minimise the risk of failing to attract funding to ensure that any revised submission is considered realistic and affordable meeting the criteria to be provided by the Welsh Government during September 2011.

9. Power to make the Decision

No decisions are taken within this report.

Contact Officer:

Head of Modernising Education

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**WRITTEN STATEMENT
BY
THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

TITLE **UPDATE ON EDUCATION AND SKILLS CAPITAL AND THE
21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME**

DATE **13 JULY 2011**

BY **LEIGHTON ANDREWS, MINISTR FOR EDUCATION AND
SKILLS**

I wish to update Members on the 21st Century Schools Programme and expenditure on capital for the period 2011-2014.

The 21st Century Schools programme is a partnership between the Welsh Government, Local Government, the Welsh Local Government Association, Diocesan Directors of the Voluntary Aided Sector and CollegesWales. It is overseen by the 21st Century Schools Programme Board.

In moving from the old formula allocations approach, the Welsh Government has invested in significant transitional projects, these have paved the way for the approach being taken in the 21st Century Schools Programme focussing on improving and rationalising the education and skills estate.

Despite the reduction in capital funding to the Welsh Government every project which has been approved by my Department under the transitional stage of the 21st Century Schools Programme is going ahead in 2011/12 and over the subsequent 2 years and until these projects are completed. Proposed changes to the Programme I will detail later in this statement will only have an impact from 2014.

The first tranche of transitional funding supported 32 projects across Wales with over £77 million of Welsh Government grant. These projects are largely completed. Under the two successive waves of larger projects over £337 million of Government support has been committed for a further 34 projects from the Vale of Glamorgan to Anglesey and from Pembrokeshire to Monmouthshire. These projects are underway and include 26 new schools and 15 Further Education learning centres which have received grant support of

£75 million. These transitional projects in schools and other sectors are set out in the attached annex.

The 21st Century Schools Programme is intended to move us forward beyond the transitional project-based approach. It is more than a programme of capital investment. It is the expression by authorities and others of their medium and long term strategic planning for the delivery of education in each area and in partnership with each other, diocesan authorities and post-16 providers. Key to this planned approach has been the development by Authorities of their Strategic Outline Programmes (SOPs). That is a major undertaking for the Welsh Government and the Programme Board have welcomed the development of this more transparent and planned approach.

The programme will direct funds to schools that require investment to make them fit for the 21st Century. The aim of the programme is to move away from a capital allocation process that was largely based on annual formulaic allocations to a longer term capital investment programme where collectively we secure prioritisation and sequencing of capital investment. I remain committed to this approach as does the Programme Board.

A first step in establishing this national programme was to obtain a comprehensive picture of the condition and suitability of all schools in Wales. With Authorities, we have undertaken the first ever national survey of schools. That survey demonstrates that 63 percent of our schools are in reasonable condition and less than 2 per cent at the end of their operational life but there is a strong need to refresh and rationalise the schools estate.

The original intention for the Programme was to have a flexible approach to funding with an expectation that most if not all 22 authorities would start their first band of projects within the first four years. Authorities have developed their plans on this basis, programming school changes across a number of phases. The environment has changed. There has been a sharp reduction in capital funding imposed on the Welsh Government – taken together a reduction of 40 per cent will occur across the current funding period. The Independent Task and Finish Group report on *The Structure of Education Services in Wales* and the move towards strategic and regional working have been developed since the original programme was conceived and since Authorities developed and submitted their Plans.

Against that background, the Board, and the Welsh Government consider that Authorities must be given the opportunity to review the timing and content of their planned investments so as to take the hard decisions early that will ensure funding goes to the delivery of excellence in education not the maintenance of buildings.

Against the background of national school condition and suitability data for the first time, the scale of aspiration set out in the Strategic Plans is significant – not just to tackle schools in poor condition across Wales but to rationalise and deliver for the future. That aspiration is right – but we must also prioritise and work within the resources that we have collectively.

Officials in my department will, therefore, be writing to all authorities to invite them to review their forward outline programmes detailed in the SOPS against a sharper prioritisation based on the rationalisation of the school estate (including the reduction of surplus places)

together with the cost effectiveness of delivery and condition with alignment to All Age Transformation.

That opportunity will include feedback on Authorities' Plans. The Strategic Plans demonstrate Authorities' commitment to strategic direction with intent to move forward on tackling the surplus capacity in schools through rationalisation of the schools estate education to ensure that the right school is in the right place for effective and cost effective delivery.

Nevertheless there are elements in most Plans where further strengthening of planning may be possible - focussing for example on provision for additional learning needs, Welsh-medium education, the Voluntary Aided Schools Sector and engagement with the transformation agenda. Across the education and skills sectors in Wales there is an acceptance that we must avoid inefficient duplication of courses between schools and other providers. All Local Authorities and Learning Partnerships have provided us with their transformation plans identifying how they propose to secure improvements for post-16 learners. I expect Authorities to ensure that their forward Plans take account of both neighbouring authorities and other providers. Where there is lack of joined up delivery on these plans and no evidence of efforts to make progress the Welsh Government will expect the Board to take this into account in its future recommendations and take it into account on its decisions for future capital funding.

I am also acutely aware that in undertaking this exercise local authorities require further clarity around the financial support to be expected from the Welsh Government. The 21st Century Schools Programme has always been a collaborative programme – the assets are owned by authorities and the decisions on what is needed must ultimately be theirs. Against the background of authorities' potential ability to borrow and the constrained budget provision from Westminster I am now minded, in contrast to the previous round of transitional capital funding, to move to a 50% rate of capital grant support. I wish to build upon the momentum gained through the capital investment programme over recent years. Intervention at this rate will enable the Welsh Government to support more school investment proposals over the life of the programme.

I believe this is right in principle as the assets will remain with authorities for the long term. My officials will therefore be asking authorities to review their programme against that background.

It is also true that there are more innovative ways of funding capital projects including through partnerships with the private sector. These are not right for every authority or for every project or group of projects. I am, therefore, also signalling that where it is the most appropriate approach I would be prepared to support revenue funded partnership approaches by putting in place expert assistance along the lines of the waste programme and, subject to annual budget decisions, a revenue stream.

Finally, it is important to recognise how far we have come. The development of a planned medium to long term programme is to the benefit of Authorities and the Government and ultimately and more importantly to learners and parents. Giving Authorities the opportunity

to reconsider their programme in the light of the likely timing and funding for the next few years can only lead to a better more effective programme. But that does not mean that there is a period of stagnation - in moving to this planned approach, the Welsh Government has already invested over £415.2 million in support of specific strategic capital investments. We and Authorities remain committed to the delivery of these transitional projects which will provide in total delivery of 66 capital projects.

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 15th September 2011

Lead Member Officer: Head of Modernising Education

Report Author: Head of Modernising Education

Title: Review of primary school provision in the Edeyrnion area

1. What is the report about?

This report is to inform the Committee of the process undertaken during the review of primary school provision in the Edeyrnion area and of the responses received to the formal consultation.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Committee requested that this report be considered prior to the Cabinet meeting on the 27th September 2011.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 To note the process undertaken by the authority to date on the review of primary school provision in the Edeyrnion area; and
- 3.2 to note the responses to the formal consultation and comment on the actions undertaken by the authority as a result.

4. Report details.

Background

- 4.1 Cabinet adopted the Modernising Education Policy Framework on 27th January 2009. The policy framework provides the basis for the Council to strategically plan school provision. A key element of the policy framework is the review process to determine options for school provision within an area.
- 4.2 In November 2009 primary school provision in the Edeyrnion (Dee Valley West) area was identified as a priority to review and a number of issues were identified to be addressed through the review including:

- Requests to increase Welsh medium provision
 - Surplus capacity in English and Welsh Medium schools
 - National shortage of Headteachers and upcoming retirements
 - Use of mobile accommodation
 - Suitability and sustainability of schools
- 4.3 The review included 7 primary schools in the area – Ysgol Betws Gwerful Goch, Ysgol Bro Elwern, Ysgol Caer Drewyn, Ysgol Carrog, Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy, Ysgol Maes Hyfryd & Ysgol Llandrillo.
- 4.4 Informal consultation took place with Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and local elected members between February 2010 and September 2010. During this period a number of different options were discussed during this informal consultation process, including:
- One bilingual area school;
 - Two area schools (1 Welsh & 1 Bilingual);
 - Two large schools (1 Welsh & 1 English) and 2 smaller schools (1 Welsh & 1 English);
 - Reducing the number of existing schools;
- 4.5 A report was presented to Cabinet on the 26th October 2010 to seek permission to begin initial public consultation on the review of primary school provision in the Edeyrnion area. Cabinet approved the commencement of initial public consultation to consider options for reducing the number of existing schools in the area.

Initial Consultation

- 4.6 The initial consultation started on the 8th November 2010 and was scheduled to finish on the 18th February 2011. The consultation was extended until the 10th March 2011 as consultation meetings had to be rescheduled due to adverse weather conditions in November / December 2010.
- 4.7 Consultation meetings were held with the staff at all seven schools in November 2010 whilst parent and community consultation meetings were held for all seven schools during January 2011.
- 4.8 A series of five workshops were held with a limited number of stakeholders representing each school.
- 4.9 The initial consultation ended on the 10th March 2011. The consultation generated significant public interest and a large number of responses

were received representing all 7 schools. The consultation responses can be summarised in the following categories:-

- Significant support for the local schools and a strong desire for them to remain open;
- Concern that the review was based on the need to make savings rather than improve education;
- A willingness to see greater collaboration between schools;
- Concern regarding the impact of any changes on pupils and parents;
- Concern regarding the impact of any changes on the local communities;

4.10 The 'Edeyrnion Schools Alliance' was formed with representation from all 7 schools and presented a report to the authority at the end of the initial consultation period. This report suggested a number of potential informal collaboration arrangements that could be developed between the 7 schools to provide a more efficient way of operating their schools while retaining each school.

4.11 Officers considered the Edeyrnion Schools Alliance report and are supportive of many of the principles contained within regarding increased collaboration between schools in particular opportunities around a shared bursar and shared administration staff. However, it is the view of officers that these informal collaboration arrangements would not address many of the issues and risks to sustaining, safeguarding and developing education in the area. A number of the ideas contained within the report are being progressed by the authority including a project to build capacity in schools which is being developed with the Schools Budget Forum.

4.12 Following consideration of all the consultation responses received during the initial consultation period and the suggestions put forward during the workshops, officers developed a set of proposals that if implemented would:-

- Provide an educational system able to sustain, safeguard and develop further standards of education within the area;
- Retain parental choice through providing a range of school sizes and linguistic options;
- Strengthen Welsh Medium provision;
- Significantly reduce the number of surplus (empty) places across the area by removing 111 surplus places;
- Reduce the number of permanent headteachers required;
- Remove all mobile accommodation from the area;

- Provide a more cost effective and efficient educational system;
- Provide a platform to secure capital investment for schools in the area;

4.13 The four proposals endorsed by Cabinet on the 24th May 2011 were:

1. An area school for Cynwyd and Llandrillo;
2. Close Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy and transfer pupils to Ysgol Gwernant, Llangollen subject to parental preference;
3. Recommend federation to the Governing Bodies of Ysgol Betws Gwerful Goch and Ysgol Bro Elwern*
4. Recommend federation to the Governing Bodies of Ysgol Caer Drewyn and Ysgol Carrog*

* These proposals to be progressed by the Governing Bodies of each school.

4.14 In developing these options, officers considered:

- The quality of education;
- The long-term sustainability of each school;
- The quality of school buildings and the need to invest to improve facilities;
- The geography of the area and transport links;
- Impact on access to Welsh Medium provision;
- The need to provide an appropriate number of places and range of school provision within the area;

Formal Consultation

4.15 Formal consultation on Options 1 & 2 started on the 7th of June 2011 and was scheduled to finish on the 20th July 2011. The consultation was extended until the 31st July 2011 in response to requests from the local communities.

4.16 A consultation document was circulated to parents of all pupils at Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy, Ysgol Llandrillo and Ysgol Maes Hyfryd, governors of the three schools, staff at the three schools, local county councillors, community councils, local AMs and MPs and the Welsh Language Board.

An initial impact assessment on the Welsh Language and on the community was drafted by the authority and consulted upon as part of this consultation. A hard copy was circulated to the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors.

Electronic copies of these documents were made available on the Denbighshire website and hard copies were made available at every consultation meeting.

4.17 Consultation meetings were held in June 2011 with staff, governors, parents and the local community of all three schools. An additional round of drop in sessions for parents was held at each school during July 2011.

4.21 A large volume of responses were received during this formal consultation period.

Details of responses to Proposal 1 – An area school for Cynwyd and Llandrillo can be seen in the tables below with a summary of responses provided in Appendix 1.

Formal Consultation Responses from:	Total Number of Responses	No of responses in favour of proposal	No of responses opposed to proposal
Ysgol Maes Hyfryd Parents / Community	46	2	44
Ysgol Llandrillo Parents / Community	86	1	85
AMs / MPs	2	0	2
Other	5	1	4

Initial Impact Assessment Responses from:	Overall Welsh Language Impact		Overall Community Impact	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Ysgol Maes Hyfryd Parents / Community	1	0	1	0
Ysgol Llandrillo Parents / Community	0	46	0	47

Details of responses to Proposal 2 – To close Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy and transfer pupils to Ysgol Y Gwernant can be seen in the tables below with a summary of responses provided in Appendix 2.

Formal Consultation Responses from:	Total Number of Responses	No of responses in favour of proposal	No of responses opposed to proposal
Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy Parents / Community	28	0	28
AMs / MPs	2	0	2
Other	4	1	3

Initial Impact Assessment Responses from:	Overall Welsh Language Impact		Overall Community Impact	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy Parents / Community	0	10	0	10

Actions undertaken by the authority as a result of the formal consultation process

- 4.22 In response to criticism of the initial impact assessments and the high level of concern from the local community, the authority has commissioned Independent Welsh Language & Community impact assessments on both proposals. Dylan Bryn Roberts Consultancy is undertaking the impact assessments which will be available in advance of the Cabinet meeting, so members are fully aware of the community impact before making their decision.
- 4.23 In response to concerns about the traffic concerns raised the authority has arranged for a traffic assessment to take place at the Ysgol Maes Hyfryd site.
- 4.24 A response has been provided by Denbighshire's Senior Environmental Health Officer to concerns raised about the air quality in Cynwyd as a result of the Ifor Williams Trailers factory. This response will be included as part of the Cabinet report.
- 4.25 The Design and Development service has been commissioned to provide more detailed plans and costs relating to the proposed expansion and refurbishment works at the new area school. These will be available for the Cabinet meeting in September.

The Next Steps

- 4.26 Cabinet will consider a report on the outcome of the consultation process on the 27th September 2011.

For each proposal, Cabinet will be asked to decide whether or not to:

- *Approve the publication of a statutory notice. The publication of a statutory notice would result in a 1 month period for any interested persons to submit an objection to the proposal. If one objection is received and not withdrawn during this period the final decision on the proposal would be made by the Welsh Government.*

- *Modify the existing proposals. Any significant alteration of the proposal would result in further public consultation having to take place.*
- *Reject the proposal outright.*

5 What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

Proposal 1 - An area school for Cynwyd and Llandrillo

- 5.1 The creation of a new area school initially on two sites will result in revenue savings of approximately £53,000 per annum. The remaining school budgets would transfer with each pupil to the new area school and would lead to a more efficient education system.
- 5.2 Moving the school to a single site would result in additional pupils being transported to school. This cost has been estimated at an additional £22,000 per year.
- 5.3 Replacing the mobile accommodation at the Cynwyd site would save the authority £4,659 per year in revenue.
- 5.4 The proposal has the potential to impact on staff at both schools and there may be redeployment and redundancy costs associated.
- 5.5 Capital funding would be required to move the new school to a single site. This has been estimated at approximately £1,000,000. This investment would provide improved facilities and a more energy efficient building. Design & Development are currently working on more detailed design for the extension and refurbishment works so that detailed costs can be provided in advance of the Cabinet meeting in September.
- 5.6 The second phase of the proposal would result in the Llandrillo school site being declared surplus. This would result in further savings for the authority:-
 - Reduction in schools maintenance backlog;
 - Reduction in the authority's building stock;
 - Reduction in running costs;
 - Reduction in the authority's carbon footprint;
 - Potential capital receipt;

Proposal 2 - Close Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy and transfer pupils to Ysgol Y Gwernant subject to parental preference.

- 5.7 Closing Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy would result in revenue savings of approximately £67,500 per annum. The remaining school budget would transfer with each pupil to their new school(s) and would lead to a more efficient education system.

- 5.8 Closing the school would result in additional pupils being transported to school. This has been estimated at an additional £17,000 per year.
- 5.9 The proposal would impact on staff at both schools and there may be redeployment and redundancy costs associated.
- 5.10 The proposal would result in the Glyndyfrdwy school site being declared surplus. This would result in further savings for the authority:-
- Reduction in schools maintenance backlog;
 - Reduction in the authority's building stock;
 - Reduction in running costs;
 - Reduction in the authority's carbon footprint;
 - Potential capital receipt;

6. What consultations have been carried out?

The consultation carried out is detailed in section 4 and a summary of responses can be found in Appendix 1 & Appendix 2.

7. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 7.1 There is a strong possibility that the proposal could result in adverse publicity for the Council and in adverse public comments.
- 7.2 To minimise this risk the Council will seek to ensure clear communication with all stakeholders.

8. Power to make the Decision

No decisions are taken within this report.

Contact Officer:
Head of Modernising Education
Tel: 01824 712620

Responses to Proposal 1 – An area school for Cynwyd and Llandrillo

Responses from Parents / Community of Ysgol Maes Hyfryd

- Opposed to having a school on two sites for an undefined period of time with no guarantee of funding.
- Having a school split over two sites / headteacher shared over two sites would result in worse provision for pupils than currently available.
- Negative impact on community relationships from having a school split over two sites;
- Ysgol Maes Hyfryd is an outstanding school – referenced Estyn Inspection 2010.
- Need a quick, clear resolution with dates, timescales and funding guaranteed.
- Opposed to losing their excellent headteacher / headteacher having to apply for the job.
- Concern about equal representation on new governing body for Llandrillo when only 10-20 pupils at the new school will be from there compared to 70 from Maes Hyfryd.
- Don't want to lose the name Ysgol Maes Hyfryd – has no connection to Cynwyd;
- Educational benefits are all for pupils of Ysgol Llandrillo and no benefits to pupils at Ysgol Maes Hyfryd;
- Impact on the Cylch Meithrin – excellent relationship between the Cylch and current headteacher;

Alternative suggestions presented by parents / community of Ysgol Maes Hyfryd

- Close Ysgol Llandrillo and transfer pupils to Ysgol Maes Hyfryd;
- Delay the closure of both schools until the building work is completed then start new school on one site;
- Move the pupils to the Ysgol Maes Hyfryd site before the build is complete – there is accommodation;

Responses from Parents / Community of Ysgol Llandrillo

Education concerns

- The standard of education at the school is very high.
- There is no evidence this proposal will improve education, provide improved facilities or that pupils will benefit.
- Disadvantage to pupils from being in larger classes;
- There are no plans for nursery provision in Llandrillo – disadvantage.
- Only parents who can drive will be able to access pre and after school activities.
- Disadvantage of being educated outside community / lack of local identity.
- Impact of travelling on young children.

Community concerns

- The school is the heart of the community / closing the school will destroy the village.
- Local businesses will suffer, young families will not move to the village and the village will be full of older people.
- School events / concerts will not take place in the village;
- Not worth destroying a community to save £53,000.
- Impact on community relationships, interaction between younger and older generations.
- There will be a generation of people who do not know each other.

Welsh Language concerns

- The school immerses non Welsh speakers in the language;
- Parents will drive children to English schools if the school closes;
- This will dilute the use of Welsh / less Welsh speakers in the community;
- It reduces the choice of Welsh Medium provision;

Other concerns

- Pupils from Llandrillo will not attend the new area school – they will go to Gwynedd.
- The Llandrillo school site is better than the Ysgol Maes Hyfryd site.
- Concern about traffic / health & safety / air quality at Ysgol Maes Hyfryd in particular due to Lfor Williams factory.
- Llandrillo school has never flooded.
- Consultation has been poor / documentation provided has been poor / criticism of officers at meetings;
- Costs are inaccurate / savings don't justify spending £1m

Alternative suggestions from parents / community of Ysgol Llandrillo

- Federate with Ysgol Maes Hyfryd;
- Retain the school as it is;
- Use the community to fund / undertake maintenance works and repairs at the school;
- Edeyrnion Schools Alliance alternative proposal;

Responses from AM's, MP's and other stakeholders

Ken Skates AM

I am writing on behalf of residents in Llandrillo concerning the current review of schools in the Dee Valley.

I have enclosed a copy of a letter from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] concerning this matter and would be very grateful for your observations. I believe a strong argument in favour of Option 3 exists, with the retention of Ysgol Llandrillo and Ysgol Maes Hyfryd as separate schools.

Given the review of the 21st Century Schools Programme, many of the arguments in favour of closing Ysgol Llandrillo appear to be compromised as the condition of Ysgol Llandrillo appears to be superior to that of Ysgol Maes Hyfryd.

Essentially there is widespread and deep concern that the closure of Ysgol Llandrillo could severely weaken the community and lead to a lesser educational experience for local children.

I would therefore be very grateful if all observations and alternative recommendations could be given urgent consideration.

Llyr Huws Gruffydd AM

I would like to state my opposition to the plans that will see some primary schools in Edeirnion closing and others being federated.

There is specific opposition to the intention to close Glyndyfrdwy and Llandrillo schools, because of the broader effect such a decision has on the wider community rather than the education of the children. It is unfortunate, to say the least, that one department of the council wants to close the school to save money because of technical reasons (too many surplus places) while another council department sees the need to spend money in the village to sustain it because of the closure.

I believe that the council needs to look at the value of a school in its entirety, as a centre and a valuable heart of the community. Often this is the only meeting place in a village as it certainly creates a bustle which is lost when a school closes. Therefore there is an added value to a school rather than it being merely an education centre and this community value is impossible to measure purely in monetary terms.

I also fail to understand why the council sees any value in federating Carrog and Corwen while rejecting the same solution in Llandrillo and Cynwyd. Wouldn't this be a better option than closing altogether?

I propose a better option to the intention to close – a choice that has been pursued in a rural area the other side of the Berwyn mountains. Wrexham Council were under pressure to reorganise Dyffryn Ceiriog schools, with a proposal to close two small schools of Pontfadog and Llanarmon and moving everyone to Ysgol Cynndelw in Glyn Ceiriog. It was a wise decision of the council's eventually to keep the three schools open because of the community value each had and because they were able to see beyond the artificial argument of empty places.

Such imagination is necessary to support small village schools where the community want to see them staying open. In the case of Llandrillo and Glyndyfrdwy, the communities want to keep them open.

The recent announcement by the Welsh Government and the Education Minister Leighton Andrews regarding the future of the funding programme for the Schools of the Twenty First Century raise one basic question regarding this whole process of reorganisation. Without the likelihood of funding being available to realise the final plans it could be argued that it undermines the entire value of the consultation. It also creates much anxiety and concern to the communities of Edeirnion which, possibly, is totally unnecessary if there is no funding available to build new schools at the end of the process. Indeed, without extra funding from the Welsh Government it's quite possible that the most cost-effective option would be to keep the schools as they are.

Welsh Language Board

Proposal 1 - Community School for Cynwyd and Llandrillo

The arguments in the document for the closure of Ysgol Maes Hyfryd (Cynwyd) and Ysgol Llandrillo and establish a new community school on the site of the existing schools from 1 September 2012, and then move to one site in Cynwyd after refurbishment work, are strong ones.

The proposals would deal with the surplus places in Ysgol Llandrillo (58.6% of the total as of January 2011) and lead gradually to a per capita expenditure lower than the current level and after moving to the new site, lower than the county average. A short study by the authority of both sites and pupil distribution shows that Cynwyd would be the better site. Travel time would be reasonable – about 30 minutes per journey, although transport costs would increase. Evidence shows that standards should not suffer in any way. This would be a Welsh medium school and because of the the Welsh language and ethos would be protected.

One strand which is common to both proposals above is the effect that closing **Ysgol Llandrillo (Proposal 1)** and **Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy (Proposal 2)** would have on the communities they are part of. Many consider the schools to be the centrepiece of life in the villages, even though there is a community hall in Glyndyfrdwy. It is appropriate that the county discusses further the provision in the future for nursery education and the possibility of keeping the buildings as

a community resource. It would also be good if the county could propose further practical suggestions regarding how it could help sustain viable Welsh communities in these areas should the schools close. That is vital as both areas are ones where the Welsh language and culture are important.

Another subject which needs more attention is primary / secondary progression. It is not clear from the documents what effect the changes, especially in Glyndyfrdwy, would have on the choice of secondary school for pupils and the progression of their Welsh education. Comments on this would help with the process of deciding on the best way forward.

Ffred Francis – Welsh Language Society

At the meeting in Llandrillo, I personally gave the response of Cymdeithas yr Iaith to the proposal to close Llandrillo and Cynwyd schools and create one Area School in Cynwyd. Our response was that the Council – as it has done in other areas – should collaborate with parents and governors to seek compatible solutions. The presence of 200 people at the meeting in Llandrillo clearly demonstrated the commitment of parents, governors and the community to the school and this is a force for good which should be nurtured rather than attempt to defeat it.

There is an obvious compromise available which satisfies a number of the Council's requirements – regarding reducing the numbers of schools and the number of headteachers – namely accepting that the new Area School will be a 2-site school (for the foreseeable future). These are the advantages (for everyone) of having a 2-site School rather than moving towards a one-site School as is the present recommendation of the Council -

1) It is a far cheaper option regarding capital developments. It is difficult to see why the taxpayers of Denbighshire generally should pay significantly for developing the Cynwyd site when the present sites are perfectly adequate. To the extent that there is surplus capacity in the Llandrillo site, part of the building should be decommissioned and discuss with other departments of the Council and the throngs of partners how to use the resource to present other public services in the village.

2) This would ascertain parent and community support in Llandrillo for the new 2-site Area School and collaboration between the two communities. Implementing the present recommendation (moving to 1 site) on the other hand would be a recipe for “civil war” between the 2 communities and this would be very detrimental to the children's education and to the community support which characterizes excellent education in these rural areas.

3) Unanimity in favour of such a compromise would mean that the two schools could begin immediately to prepare for the new structure within 12 months. Otherwise, the uncertainty of Appeal and bad feeling will prevent developments.

4) If the situation changed significantly in the future – regarding numbers etc – the Governing Body could make any decision locally.

In doing so, the Council would have fulfilled a number of its objectives regarding modernising education in Edeirnion AND would have retained community support.

I emphasise again that this model (2 site Area School) is totally different to federation (under the new regulations) as is encouraged for Betws GG and Gwyddelwern schools. The permanent model of a 2-site Area School was not evaluated in the consultation document and this was a fundamental weakness as there is a statutory necessity to “consider all the alternative choices”.

One last legal point that I raised in the meeting and an answer was not forthcoming. The present intention of the County Council (unless it is changed as a result of the consultation process) is to create an Area School for Llandrillo and Cynwyd on the 2 present sites initially and then move to one advanced site in Cynwyd when the capital was available. However, by establishing a 2-site Area School one Governing Body will be elected to govern the 2-site School. Would it not then be the decision for the Governing Body rather than the County Council, whether they wish to operate on 2 sites or on one site? I accept that the Council would have a strong influence regarding the funding provided, but on what basis would you argue that moving to a single site would be a decision for the Council, rather than the new Governing Body?

Responses to Proposal 2 – To close Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy and to transfer pupils to Ysgol Y Gwernant subject to parental preference

Responses from Parents / Community of Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy

Education

- Quality of education at the school is excellent;
- No evidence education will be better at Ysgol Y Gwernant / Benefits could be achieved through federating;
- Children will suffer from being in large classrooms;
- Children will suffer from being transported 12 miles each day;
- There is not enough capacity in Ysgol Y Gwernant;
- The numbers at the school are growing – thriving Ti a Fi;
- No access to Nursery provision / Impact on current Ti a Fi provision;
- Impact of Transition during the early years;

Impact on the Community

- School is the heart of the village;
- Parents able to walk children to school and socialise;
- Loss of Ti a Fi from the community;
- Young parents have moved back to the village because of the school;
- All school events would take place out of the village;
- Children would go to different schools and not know each other – could result in a generation of children / neighbours not knowing each other.

Impact on the Welsh Language

- English schools getting priority over Welsh ones (i.e keeping Carrog open);
- Some parents may chose to go to Carrog because it's closer and lose the language;
- Use of Welsh in the community will suffer;

- Llangollen is a mainly English town, so children's use of Welsh will suffer;
- Welsh will not be the language of the playground in Gwernant;

Other

- Parental choice being taken away;
- Closing the school is a breach of their human rights;
- Hardly any financial savings and many hidden costs (e.g community);
- Concern over the process and the impartiality of certain Cabinet members;
- Impact assessment not independent – completed by same team that put forward proposal.

Alternative suggestions from parents / community of Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy

- Federate with Ysgol Y Gwernant or Ysgol Carrog;
- Merge with Gwernant and retain school site;
- Retain the school as it is;
- Use the community to fund maintenance / repairs to the school;
- Edeyrnion Schools Alliance proposal;

Responses from AM's, MP's and other stakeholders

Ken Skates AM

I am writing on behalf of the community of Glyndyfrdwy regarding the proposed school closure.

While I recognise the need to ensure value for money in the education system, I believe Glyndyfrdwy's school has a value much greater than its costs imply. It is a hub for local activity and binds together the community.

I have a number of concerns over the proposal. Firstly, there is a plan to provide nursery education in the village hall, but this is a large, period property that does not lend itself to be used as a nursery, particularly during winter months. It is also located on the main road, with no parking provision. Consequently, there are very legitimate concerns over child safety at the site. Furthermore, if the proposal is implemented, children progressing from the nursery to school in Llangollen would be at an immediate disadvantage as they would not know their new teachers and peers.

I understand that 18 children under the age of 2 currently live in the village, whose parents intend sending them to Glyndyfrdwy School. In addition, plans for affordable homes have been passed recently in the village, which will attract more families, provided the school remains open.

Conversely, should the school close, I envisage many families leaving the village in order to be closer to the school attended by their children.

I fear that should the school close, Glyndyfrdwy will fall into a steady but noticeable decline, with a migration of people out of the community and a loss of social cohesion. I would therefore be grateful if the proposal could be reviewed, even if a merger with Carrog is needed. I am aware that similar mergers have taken place in the Ceiriog Valley and I believe such a strategy in the Dee Valley could assist in keeping the local schools and villages alive.

Llyr Huws Gruffydd AM

I would like to state my opposition to the plans that will see some primary schools in Edeirnion closing and others being federated.

There is specific opposition to the intention to close Glyndyfrdwy and Llandrillo schools, because of the broader effect such a decision has on the wider community rather than the education of the children. It is unfortunate, to say the least, that one department of the council wants to close the school to save money because of technical reasons (too many surplus places) while another council department sees the need to spend money in the village to sustain it because of the closure.

I believe that the council needs to look at the value of a school in its entirety, as a centre and a valuable heart of the community. Often this is the only meeting place in a village as it certainly creates a bustle which is lost when a school closes. Therefore there is an added value to a school rather than it being merely an education centre and this community value is impossible to measure purely in monetary terms.

I also fail to understand why the council sees any value in federating Carrog and Corwen while rejecting the same solution in Llandrillo and Cynwyd. Wouldn't this be a better option than closing altogether?

I propose a better option to the intention to close – a choice that has been pursued in a rural area the other side of the Berwyn mountains. Wrexham Council were under pressure to reorganise Dyffryn Ceiriog schools, with a proposal to close two small schools of Pontfadog and Llanarmon and moving everyone to Ysgol Cynddelw in Glyn Ceiriog. It was a wise decision of the council's eventually to keep the three schools open because of the community value each had and because they were able to see beyond the artificial argument of empty places.

Such imagination is necessary to support small village schools where the community want to see them staying open. In the case of Llandrillo and Glyndyfrdwy, the communities want to keep them open.

The recent announcement by the Welsh Government and the Education Minister Leighton Andrews regarding the future of the funding programme for the Schools of the Twenty First Century raise one basic question regarding this whole process of reorganisation. Without the likelihood of funding being available to realise the final plans it could be argued that it undermines the entire value of the consultation. It also creates much anxiety and concern to the communities of Edeirnion which, possibly, is totally unnecessary if there is no funding available to build new schools at the end of the process. Indeed, without extra funding from the Welsh Government it's quite possible that the most cost-effective option would be to keep the schools as they are.

Welsh Language Board

The reasons for this proposal are strong ones. The number of pupils in Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy are very low (2011-16) and unlikely to increase, with surplus places equivalent to 69.8% of the total places. The cost per pupil is much higher than the county average. The schools needs considerable capital investment. It's difficult to appoint a headteacher – the one there currently is temporary. Transfer to the Welsh school Ysgol Gymraeg y Gwernant in Llangollen (established 2004) would not harm the children's Welsh education. There would be substantial revenue savings from closing the school, even after taking into account the additional transport costs.

It's not possible to say, however, that all the parents would wish their children to transfer to Ysgol y Gwernant. All efforts would be needed to ensure that

none of the pupils would lose their Welsh education as a result of the change. It's appropriate that the county speaks to all parents to see which school they would wish their children to go to, and provide transport in accordance with the county's policy. It would certainly be an opportunity to explain the advantages of Welsh education to them.

One strand which is common to both proposals above is the effect that closing **Ysgol Llandrillo (Proposal 1)** and **Ysgol Glyndyfrdwy (Proposal 2)** would have on the communities they are part of. Many consider the schools to be the centrepiece of life in the villages, even though there is a community hall in Glyndyfrdwy. It is appropriate that the county discusses further the provision in the future for nursery education and the possibility of keeping the buildings as a community resource. It would also be good if the county could propose further practical suggestions regarding how it could help sustain viable Welsh communities in these areas should the schools close. That is vital as both areas are ones where the Welsh language and culture are important.

Another subject which needs more attention is primary / secondary progression. It is not clear from the documents what effect the changes, especially in Glyndyfrdwy, would have on the choice of secondary school for pupils and the progression of their Welsh education. Comments on this would help with the process of deciding on the best way forward.

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 15 September 2011

Lead Officer: Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

Report Author: School Effectiveness Support Officer: Curriculum Enrichment and Well Being

Title: Provision of Music within Schools (Education)

1. What is the report about?

The report is intended to provide the Communities Scrutiny Committee with information on the progress that has been made in ensuring that the appropriate level of provision exists for the development of Music, Art and Drama within the County's schools, subject to the existing budgetary framework.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

At the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24 March 2011, it was agreed that Members would be kept informed of music provision for schools and on developments of the work of the Music 'Task and Finish' Group, set up by the six North Wales Local Authorities.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee discusses the contents of the report and continues to support the on-going work with respect to music development in the County's schools in light of the progressive work of the North Wales Music Task and Finish Group.

4. Report details

- 4.1 The Music Service is provided to schools as part of the Curriculum Enrichment and Well Being department of the School Improvement and Inclusion Service. Details of music ensembles and events at which school pupils from the county have participated can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The William Mathias Music Service is contracted on an annual basis to provide peripatetic tuition in schools and to help run County ensembles.
- 4.3 The Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW) established a North Wales' Task and Finish Group to review current Arts and Music provision. This presents opportunities to explore local provision, work regionally through collaboration and develop a regional perspective on national youth arts provision.

- 4.4 The North Wales Music Task and Finish Group has met three times to date, under the Chairmanship of Mr Geraint James (ADEW), to identify current levels of music provision in the six North Wales local authorities.
- 4.5 Each local authority representative has provided details of music provision for schools. This information has been collated by Denbighshire County Council's Data Team and included in a confidential working document.
- 4.6 Details include delegated monies to schools, formulae used for delegation, gross budget, ratio of pupils and length of lessons, County music ensembles, instrument loan schemes, regular/additional activities, charges to schools for tuition, number of musicians employed, terms/conditions of employment, rates of pay and numbers of pupils accessing tuition.
- 4.7 The Music Task and Finish Group will meet next on 12 October 2011 to examine the detail contained in the working document and to determine the next steps in moving forward towards collaborative working.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The provision of music in schools contributes to the commitment to ensure that all children and young people have the entitlement to experience a range of opportunities and develop specific talents in order to enable them to realise their potential and achieve their aspirations.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

The level of provision is currently financed through the money delegated to schools to provide peripatetic music tuition. In addition, a sum of money is held centrally to pay the cost of the contract with the William Mathias Music Service, the Co-ordinators' salaries and the cost of musical instrument purchase.

7. What consultations have been carried out?

Local Authorities are currently being encouraged to collaborate on services for schools; this includes Arts, Music, Dance and Drama provision.

8. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The capacity to deliver a high performing service which is affordable to schools.

9. Power to make the Decision

N/A.

Contact Officer:

School Effectiveness Support Officer: Curriculum Enrichment and Well Being
Tel: 01824 708055

County Music Ensembles & Events

Appendix 1

ACTIVITY/ EVENT	NUMBERS PARTICIPATING	VENUE(S)
<u>Denbighshire Carol Concert</u> Denbighshire Brass Ensemble Denbighshire Youth Choir Individuals	100 pupils	St Asaph Cathedral
<u>Can Sing (Specialist Singing Training)</u> Teacher training days Resource guidance Observed singing workshops	40 teachers over 1000 pupils	Denbighshire Schools (Rhyl/ Prestatyn/ Ruthin Denbigh) Denbigh Town Hall
<u>Four County Easter Concerts(Grade 5 +)</u> Residential Course Concert	8	William Aston Hall, Wrexham
<u>Denbighshire/ William Mathias Concert</u> Denbighshire Brass Band Denbighshire Brass Ensemble Denbighshire Youth Choir Corwen Schools Wind Band Denbighshire small ensembles/ individuals	250 pupils	Llangollen Pavilion (400 seats (indoors))
<u>Drumchasers Workshop (Percussion)</u> Ysgol Hiraddug	75 pupils	Ysgol Hiraddug Rhyl Pavilion Theatre
<u>Festival of Cultural Celebration (EAL)</u> Choir created (4 week rehearsal)	100 pupils	Ysgol Mair
<u>Can Sing Performance project. –</u> Development of training in Spring term) (4 week rehearsal) Rhyl / Prestatyn Ysgol Esgob Morgan Ysgol Emmanuel Ysgol Penmorfa	250 pupils 250 pupils	Rehearsals at schools Rhyl Pavilion Theatre
<u>Ruthin Can Sing Day</u> 10 Ruthin area schools)		Rhos Street School Coverage on TV/ radio

ACTIVITY/ EVENT	NUMBERS PARTICIPATING	VENUE(S)
<u>Denbighshire Schools Festival of Performing Arts</u> Denbighshire Youth Choir Denbighshire Brass Band Can Sing Choir (Rhyl / Prestatyn) Ysgol Brondyffryn (Musical Theatre) (led by tutor Alex Wynne Jones)	400 pupils 70 pupils	Rhyl Pavilion Theatre Llangollen Pavilion (4000 seats in main marquee) TV/ Radio coverage
<u>Musical Instrument Tour</u> Ysgol Penmorfa Ysgol y Llys Ysgol Mair Ysgol Hiraddug Ysgol Emmanuel	200 pupils	Schools (as before)
<u>North Wales Youth Orchestra Residential Summer Course</u> Summer Concerts	5 pupils	Moreton Hall, Oswestry William Aston Hall, Wrexham PJ Hall, Bangor

Report to:	Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 September 2011
Lead Member:	Leader and Lead Member for Customer and Communities
Report Author:	Community Engagement Manager
Title:	Development of a Community Engagement Strategy

1. What is the report about?

The report outlines the development of a Community Engagement Strategy.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 Members of the Committee agreed at the July 2011 meeting to the proposed approach to be taken to develop a structured Community Engagement Plan and accompanying best practice 'toolkit' in order to ensure the Council adopts a professional, co-ordinated and cost effective approach to its consultation and engagement activities.
- 2.2 The development of a strategy represents a significant change in the Council's approach to community engagement, putting communities at the heart of service design and enabling them to play a key role in influencing and shaping the delivery of local services.
- 2.3 A draft 'toolkit' is currently being devised and will accompany the Strategy when consultation commences. Copies of the draft 'toolkit' will be available at the meeting.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Scrutiny:

- 3.1 comments on the proposed Draft Strategy (Appendix 1) prior to it going out for consultation; and
- 3.2 further considers the Action Plan as an item on the Committee's forward work programme

4. Report details.

- 4.1 All the residents of Denbighshire have the right to influence the future of their area. This can only be achieved through active engagement of the people who use and deliver our services. Community engagement empowers citizens by providing them with an opportunity to tell the Council about their own vision for their communities and neighbourhoods, and about what they want and need in terms of service provision. It also enables them to work with the Council and its partners to realise their vision and improve their communities and thus, their quality of life.

Engagement is also a mechanism for the Council to tell local people about what it does, what services it can and cannot provide, and how its priorities and policies are determined.

- 4.2 Most of the Council services undertake some form of consultation and engagement; however most of it is undertaken in an unstructured and 'ad hoc' manner with little guidance given to using the most appropriate engagement mechanism and little co-ordination between services and external partners.

The council is fully committed to engaging with citizens and other key stakeholders. The Community Engagement Plan and Toolkit will provide guidance to colleagues who are carrying out community engagement exercises, and to ensure that community engagement throughout the County is streamlined and carried out to a consistently high standard.

- 4.3 A corporate Community Engagement Strategy will complement existing plans such as the Communication Plan, the Social Media Guide etc. and provide direction and cohesion to the plethora of consultation and engagement activities currently undertaken by services.

- 4.4 The objectives of a Community Engagement Strategy and toolkit are:

- To improve understanding of the benefits of good citizen and community engagement
- To improve the engagement skills of elected members and paid staff involved in community engagement and consultation
- To avoid duplication of resources by establishing greater coordination of engagement activity
- To effectively utilise the identified engagement mechanisms and review these at regular intervals

- 4.5 The Welsh Government has recently introduced the 'National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales (see Appendix 2) with the

expectation that all local authorities will formally adopt these guiding principles. The Community Engagement Plan will encompass these principles and explain how Denbighshire will be guided by them.

- 4.6 Within the Council there are many examples of good practice undertaken by different services. Recently the Waste Management Service, the Local Development Plan team and the Partnerships and Communities team's approach with 'the BIG Plan' have all received plaudits for aspects of their consultation and engagement. The Council needs to harness these successful techniques and corporately adopt them.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 Developing a Community Engagement Strategy will be key to the strategic aim of a *"high performing Council closer to the community"*. The strategic paper 'Getting Closer to the Community' identifies as an action 'the development of a community engagement framework and toolkit'.
- 5.2 The Community Engagement Strategy will be a cornerstone of future corporate and service plans and will guide staff on the appropriate methods they should adopt. In particular the guidance on engagement with 'hard to reach groups' is important in meeting our 'equalities' agenda.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1 There is no dedicated consultation and engagement budget, therefore any engagement by a particular service will be met from within existing resources.
- 6.2 No staffing or accommodation implications have been identified
- 6.3 No IT implications have been identified

7. Chief Financial Officer's Statement

Any costs will have to be met from existing service budgets

8. What consultations have been carried out?

This report to Scrutiny outlines the draft Plan for Members comments prior to the document going out to consultation both internally and externally.

9. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 9.1 There is a corporate risk that a failure to consult and engage effectively with communities and work with partners to tackle key priorities will adversely affect the Council's Corporate Plan and result in lower resident satisfaction levels.
- 9.2 In its last Annual Report to the Council, the Welsh Audit Office specifically questioned our approach to public engagement particularly in relation to seeking the views of children and young people.
- 9.3 Consultation and engagement activities need to be planned to avoid the risk of 'consultation fatigue' and declining levels of community involvement
- 9.4 The lack of a coordinated approach to our consultation with Denbighshire's residents may result in them feeling disengaged and disempowered.
- 9.5 Unstructured engagement may result in an inefficient service delivery as services are shaped to meet the needs of local people and potentially harm the reputation of the Council.
- 9.6 Implementing the Community Engagement Strategy will require a change in the way some services engage with communities in respect of adopting a corporate and consistent professional approach e.g. identifying at an early stage an engagement action plan to accompany any new change of service delivery if appropriate.

10. Power to make the Decision

Local Government Act 1999; Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009

Contact Officer:

Community Engagement Manager

Tel: 01824 706146



DRAFT

Denbighshire's
Community Engagement Strategy

Draft

Contents

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Definition of terms used

These are working definitions for the purposes of this Strategy. It is recognised that different organisations will use a variety of terminology to mean similar things.

Engagement:

An active and participative process by which people can influence and shape policy and services that includes a wide range of different methods and techniques.

Consultation: A formal process by which policy makers and service providers ask for the views of interested groups and individuals.

Participation: People being actively involved with policy makers and service planners from an early stage of policy and service planning and review.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 All the residents of Denbighshire have the right to influence the future of their area. This can only be achieved through active engagement of the people who use and deliver our services. Community engagement empowers citizens by providing them with an opportunity to tell the Council about their own vision for their communities and neighbourhoods, and about what they want and need in terms of service provision. It also enables them to work with the council and its partners to realise their vision and improve their communities and thus, their quality of life. Ultimately, engagement can lead to citizens being empowered to manage the services that they receive.
- 1.2 Engagement is also a mechanism for the council to tell local people about what it does, what services it can and cannot provide, and how its priorities and policies are determined.
- 1.3 Denbighshire County Council is fully committed to engaging with its residents and other key stakeholders. This Community Engagement Strategy and accompanying Toolkit and Action Plan provides guidance to colleagues who are carrying out community engagement exercises, and to ensure that community engagement throughout the county is streamlined and carried out to a consistently high standard.
- 1.4 The Strategy provides corporate direction, the Action Plan identifies how the council will deliver its objectives and by when and the Toolkit will be a 'helping hand' to staff and elected members in meeting the challenge of delivering effective and efficient community engagement.

2.0 Objectives

- 2.1 The overarching aim of this Community Engagement Strategy is to ensure that residents, visitors, workers and other key stakeholders in Denbighshire have a voice to influence the development of policies and strategies that will affect their lives, and to inform the way in which services in the county are planned and delivered.
 - ◆ To ensure that throughout the council there is a clear understanding of and commitment to engaging with communities about decisions that affect their lives.
 - ◆ To establish a co-ordinated and consistent approach to community engagement in Denbighshire
 - ◆ To ensure that community engagement in Denbighshire is carried out to the highest possible standard both professionally and ethically.

- ◆ To ensure that community engagement is inclusive by giving every citizen of the county the opportunity to express their views, particularly people and groups which may be harder to reach and that those views will be listened to and respected.
- ◆ To keep our communities informed of the outcomes of engagement and ensure that the outcomes of community engagement impact on decision-making and the way in which services are delivered.
- ◆ To plan and deliver services, strategies and policies that reflect the needs of the citizens of Denbighshire
- ◆ To provide a framework for sustained community engagement in the work of the council
- ◆ To ensure that the community engagement process is transparent and accessible to all.

3.0 What is Community Engagement?

- 3.1 Community engagement is all about involving the community in the decisions that are made about the services that are provided for them and our definition is:
- ‘The process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people by geographic proximity, special interest or similar situations to address issues that affects them’.
- 3.2 The term ‘community engagement’ is used to embrace a whole spectrum of activities that support the two-way communication process and continuous dialogue between the council and citizens, visitors and other key stakeholders in the county.
- 3.3 ‘Consultation’, ‘involvement’, ‘participation’ and ‘research’ are all terms that are regularly used, often interchangeably, to describe community engagement activities. It is important that the appropriate terminology is used when undertaking any form of engagement activity in order to avoid confusion and clarity of purpose. Denbighshire’s four levels of community engagement are:

A) Information-giving

This is simply a one-way communication that provides solid, accessible information to our residents and other services. Although it is a form of engagement in itself, information-giving underpins all other levels of engagement, as it is essential that participants are provided information (in varying detail and formats) about the issues about which they are being engaged so that they are able to make informed and considered choices.

Participants should also receive feedback after engagement has been completed and this is in itself an information-giving exercise. It allows people to make an informed decision on how, when, where and whether to access a service. Examples include our residents' newsletter, press releases, our website and Denbighshire's community forums etc.

B) Consultation and Learning

This is a two-way communication and its objective is to seek the views and opinions of Denbighshire's citizens and inform the decision-making process. It also involves listening and offering choices to those who are being consulted. There also needs to be an awareness of the need to take these views into account and the need to feedback to those consulted on what decisions have been taken and why. We must be open to suggestions and be prepared to take on the ideas of the community.

C) Involvement

This means working together to design, deliver or assess a service. This allows residents and service users to be fully involved in the decision making process and includes agreeing together on future developments. Examples are the support groups interested in a particular service.

D) Devolve

This involves passing responsibility for a service to a community organisation who are then able to plan and deliver that service in a way that best suits local people. It is the most ambitious level of engagement and aims to maximise community empowerment and capacity building. Examples are devolved powers to Town and Community Councils and local Participatory Budgeting.

4.0 Who are our communities?

4.1 It is important to recognise that 'communities' can be defined in different ways. A simple and broadly accepted definition is as follows:

Communities of place – the 'community' is defined by an area with physical boundaries e.g. a housing estate, neighbourhood etc.

Community of interest or interest group – the 'community' is defined by a shared interest, experience or demographic characteristic – for example young people or people with disabilities.

People often belong to more than one community perhaps unemployed with a disability. It is important to recognise that there are some communities who experience social exclusion and are referred to as 'hard to reach' groups. The

term 'hard to reach' groups is used to describe those groups or communities who are generally perceived by agencies as being difficult to access and are therefore disempowered. However, it is important to note that many of these communities are not actually that 'hard-to-reach' and do not consider themselves as such. It is simply that organisations have not put enough effort into seeking their view.

5.0 Why involve our customers and communities

5.1 Effective engagement requires effort and commitment, on both sides. There are many reasons why it is essential that we, as the council and local community leaders, take the time and effort to engage our communities. Customer and community involvement is an essential tool in planning and delivering our services and statutory regulators such as the Wales Audit Office expect public organisations to demonstrate our effectiveness at consulting and responding to what we are told.

However whilst it is true we have a statutory commitment to engage those who live and work in Denbighshire we are not satisfied with merely doing the minimum expected of us. Instead we see the real value in building better relationships through delivering the services people want, in the manner they want them delivered.

Key reasons why we should consult;

- *To plan a service.* Information on service users and their needs and preferences is essential when planning how we will deliver a service.
- *To help prioritise services.* Consultation is important when due to limited resources the council has to make decisions on how it prioritises its services and has taken public opinion into account.

- *To help understand public perception of a service.* Customer feedback is essential in evaluating the quality of a service and the response to new ideas and initiatives.

- *To foster good working relationships.* Done well, community engagement can help our residents and customers to understand problems facing the council and explain why we cannot always do what they would like.

6.0 National guidelines and principles for public engagement in Wales

6.1 The Wales Government requires the public sector in Wales to ensure that participation and engagement is an ongoing and sustainable feature in the way we deliver services. This principle is endorsed in its 'Making the Connections' Policy where 'citizens at the centre' and 'public engagement' are key cornerstones to bringing councils closer to the community they serve.

6.2 To ensure that our engagement is as effective as possible and carried out to as high a standard as is possible we have adopted the 'National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales'. These principles have been produced under the guidance of Participation Cymru Advisory Panel and endorsed by the Welsh Government in March 2011. These principles allow public sector organisations in Wales to consider how they will put the principles into practice in a way that reflects their own size and structure and in relation to other specific standards and guidance for their sector. These are principles and **NOT** standards. They are an overarching set of principles aimed at Public Service organisations across all sectors in Wales. They aim to sit above any specific standards that Services may already be using e.g. Standards for Children and Young People or Social Services Improvement Agency standards and are intended to compliment them. They aim to offer a consistent approach and good standard for public engagement across Wales. (*The National Guidelines can be found in Appendix 1*).

7.0 Engaging with hard to reach groups

7.1 We have already referred to people who we find hard to reach although it might more accurately be referred to as being 'seldom heard'. It is important to identify who you seldom hear from and try to identify why that is as there may be barriers to them getting engaged which you will need to reduce.

8.0 Engaging with children and young people

8.1 Denbighshire is committed to the philosophy that children and young people should be listened to and heard. This Strategy particularly identifies the need for all Services to conform to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which has been adopted by the Wales Government. In particular Article 12 sets out children and young people's RIGHT to participate:

UNCRC Article 12

Children and Young People have the Right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account

8.2 Statutory bodies such as the Wales Audit Office have previously identified weaknesses in our engagement with children and young people. To remedy this and adopt good practice throughout the council we will be producing a specific guide to assist services in effectively consulting and engaging with children and young people.

9.0 Related Plans and Documents

9.1 This Strategy for engaging and consulting with the community is only one of many helpful documents designed to give councillors and staff direction and support. None should be used in isolation as they all highlight specific aspects of communicating with the public.

9.2 **A key corporate aim of ‘The council getting closer to the community’**

One of Denbighshire County Council’s strategic aims is for the county to become a ‘high performing Council closer to the community’. Achieving this aim of getting closer to the community necessitates three key actions;

Engaging with communities will mean conducting effective consultations on proposed changes or improvements and demonstrating that the views of users have shaped those proposals. True engagement must demonstrate that the council has been receptive and responsive to views and that such views have been taken into account.

Doing the right thing is making a decision that is better for the residents, it provides value for money for the taxpayer, and it is a decision that improves the effectiveness and quality of the service. Where practically possible, it is a resident or community driven decision.

Explaining decisions is part of the on-going dialogue with communities. We will never satisfy all views, and neither should we, but it is important to explain why a certain decision has been made outlining the facts that led to the decision.

9.3 **The Corporate Communications Strategy**

Effective communication is vital to the success of any organisation and Denbighshire is no exception. The Communication Strategy sets out a co-ordinated approach to internal and external communications and media activities aimed at publicising the council’s services and policies. The Strategy guides councillors and colleagues on their role in improving services, enhancing the council’s reputation and communicating more effectively.

9.4 **Engagement Toolkit**

To give practical advice and guidance an ‘engagement toolkit’ has been produced to ensure that when planning any consultation or engagement activity a consistent approach is adopted, it is properly resourced, is of a high standard and appropriately inclusive.

9.5 **Welsh Language Scheme and Welsh Language Guide**

All consultation and engagement activities must conform to our Welsh Language Scheme in ensuring that the council adopts the principle that in the

conduct of its business with the public, it will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality.

The council recognises that language is an essential part of a person's identity. The council also recognises that members of the public have a right to express their views and access services in Welsh and English and we have a duty to promote and have empathy with the Welsh language.

A user friendly Welsh Language Guide has been produced to lead officers and councillors through the policies and procedures adopted in the Scheme.

9.6 Corporate Equalities Plan

Equality is not just about meeting a legal obligation; it is also about fairness and good sense, and a moral duty to challenge discrimination. The purpose of the Corporate Equalities Plan is to make a commitment to take the needs of everyone into account in everything we do, whether that's providing services, employing people, developing policies, communicating or consulting.

The council is committed to ensuring no one is discriminated against, either directly by the council or indirectly, because of their age, disability, gender, black and ethnic origin, marital status, nationality, preferred language, religion, belief, or political beliefs sexual orientation.

9.7 Social media

The widespread availability of social media (the online and mobile tools that people use to communicate) has brought the opportunity to engage and communicate in new ways and to reach residents and customers who do not engage with us through the traditional channels. The Social Media Guidelines ensure that these technologies and services are used effectively and appropriately as a valuable tool for communication.

9.8 Local Tenant Participation Strategy

This provides effective mechanisms for the range of different tenants to participate as *they prefer* across the whole landlord services and organisation. It also provides effective training, support and structures for all staff to involve tenants in their area of work and provides training and support for tenants to enable them to participate effectively and for personal skills growth and development.

Tenant Participation means tenants helping to make decisions about housing policies, housing conditions and housing services and this Strategy explains how tenants in Denbighshire are able to influence decisions either individually or as a group.

9.9 Children and Young People's Engagement Strategy.

This easy read guide is currently under development and will be a useful resource for all services who are seeking the views and engagement opportunities with children and young people.

10.0 How will this strategy be monitored and reviewed?

This strategy will be reviewed after three years, unless circumstances call for an earlier review. The accompanying Action Plan will be monitored by the Communities Scrutiny Committee on a regular cyclical basis and updated accordingly.

Action Plan

Action	Outcome	Time-scale	Lead Service
Develop an annual programme of consultation, engagement and communication both corporate and service based.	A co-ordinated and focussed programme informing key council decisions	March 2012	Partnerships and Communities Team (PCT)
Monitor and update the Engagement Toolkit	Adopt best practice and ensure consistent approach	April of each year	PCT
Develop a consultation and engagement database	Avoid duplication and ensure consultation results are recorded and shared	April 2012	PCT
Develop 'How to' guides as a 'helping hand to Services ie engaging older people or ethnic minorities. Particularly targeted at 'hard to reach' groups.	Sharing well practised methods of engagement to ensure a best practice approach. First guide will be 'children and young people'.	March 2012	Co-ordinated by PCT

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN WALES



1 Engagement is effectively designed to make a difference
Engagement gives a real chance to influence policy, service design and delivery from an early stage.

2 Encourage and enable everyone affected to be involved, if they so choose
The people affected by an issue or change are included in opportunities to engage as an individual or as part of a group or community, with their views both respected and valued.

3 Engagement is planned and delivered in a timely and appropriate way
The engagement process is clear, communicated to everyone in a way that's easy to understand within a reasonable timescale, and the most suitable method/s for those involved is used.

4 Work with relevant partner organisations
Organisations should communicate with each other and work together wherever possible to ensure that people's time is used effectively and efficiently.

5 The information provided will be jargon free, appropriate and understandable
People are well placed to take part in the engagement process because they have easy access to relevant information that is tailored to meet their needs.

6 Make it easier for people to take part
People can engage easily because any barriers for different groups of people are identified and addressed.

7 Enable people to take part effectively
Engagement processes should try to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of all participants.

8 Engagement is given the right resources and support to be effective
Appropriate training, guidance and support are provided to enable all participants to effectively engage, including both community participants and staff.

9 People are told the impact of their contribution
Timely feedback is given to all participants about the views they expressed and the decisions or actions taken as a result; methods and form of feedback should take account of participants' preferences.

10 Learn and share lessons to improve the process of engagement
People's experience of the process of engagement should be monitored and evaluated to measure its success in engaging people and the effectiveness of their participation; lessons should be shared and applied in future engagements.

Produced under the guidance of Participation Cymru Advisory Panel.
Endorsed by The First Minister of Wales, The Right Hon. Carwyn Jones
AM on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government.
Further guidance on the National Principles can be found at

www.participationcymru.org.uk

March 2011

Report To: Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 15 September 2011
Report Author: Scrutiny Coordinator
Title: Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The report presents the Communities Scrutiny Committee with its draft forward work programme for members' consideration.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

3. What are the recommendations?

That the Committee considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate.

4. Report details.

4.1 The Constitution of Denbighshire County Council requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.

4.2 The Committee is therefore requested to consider its draft work programme for future meetings, as detailed in appendix 1, and approve, revise or amend it as it deems appropriate taking into consideration:

- issues raised by members of the Committee
- matters referred to it by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group
- relevance to the Committee's/Council's/community priorities
- the Council's Corporate Plan and the Director of Social Services' Annual Report
- meeting workload
- timeliness
- outcomes
- key issues and information to be included in reports

- officers and/or lead Cabinet members who should be invited (having regard to whether their attendance is necessary or would add value)
 - questions to be put to officers/lead Cabinet members
- 4.3 When considering future items for inclusion on the forward work programme members may also find it helpful to have regard to the following questions when determining a subject's suitability for inclusion on the work programme:
- what is the issue?
 - who are the stakeholders?
 - what is being looked at elsewhere
 - what does scrutiny need to know? and
 - who may be able to assist?
- 4.4 As mentioned in paragraph 4.1 above the Constitution of Denbighshire County Council requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested issues. One such proposal form has been received for consideration at the current meeting. The request, seeking members to consider receiving a report on 'Highway Verge Grass Cutting' at its next meeting in October, is attached at Appendix 2
- 4.5 The Committee has agreed in principle, unless special circumstances necessitate otherwise, to continue with the practice of limiting the number of reports considered at any one meeting to four plus the work programme report. The Committee will note from the draft work programme that its business agenda potentially exceeds this desired number of items for October's meeting. Members are asked to discuss the proposed business agenda and determine whether they wish to reschedule any of the listed items, or receive any of them as information or consultation reports outside of the formal meeting - if they deem that approach appropriate to the subject under consideration.
- 4.6 Members will see from the attached draft work programme that a number of items listed under the schedule of meetings and under 'Future Issues' require the Committee to scope the purpose of the report and the desired outcomes to be achieved from scrutinising the topic. These topics/areas were identified at the training session held for Committee members ahead of the Committee's first meeting. To enable officers to start preparing the reports for presentation at future meetings the Committee is asked to determine why it wishes to receive reports on these subjects and what it expects to achieve from

scrutinising them. The five questions listed in paragraph 4.3 above may assist members with this task.

Information/Consultation Reports

- 4.7 Listed under the 'Information/Consultation Reports' section of the attached draft work programme are reports on the 'Review of One Stop Shop locations' and 'Impact of cessation of free school transport for pupils living within Wrexham County Borough Council who attend Ysgol Dinas Brân, Llangollen', both of which should have been circulated to members prior to the current meeting. Since these reports were requested there have been some changes which have affected the timetable for their presentation to members.
- 4.8 With respect to the review of the One Stop Shop Locations, this review is now being linked into the work of the 'Bringing the Council Closer to the Community Project Group', and the review of the Customer Service Strategy, both of which are being led by the Corporate Director: Learning and Communities. Consequently, the Review of the One Stop Shops will no longer be presented to the People and Places Board in isolation, as it will form part of the Customer Service Strategy Review which will be presented to the Business Transformation Programme Board in September.
- 4.9 The implications of Wrexham County Borough Council's decision to withdraw free school transport to pupils travelling from within its boundary to Ysgol Dinas Brân, Llangollen initially needs to be reported to the School Budget Forum. Therefore officers are not yet in a position to provide scrutiny with the required information until it has met with the Forum. Officers are due to meet with the Forum during September and the requested report will then be circulated to scrutiny members during October.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.10 A copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3. The Committee also may find this document useful when considering items for inclusion on its programme of future work.

5. Committee Representation on Boards and Groups

At its meeting on 14 July the Committee nominated a number of members to represent it on the Authority's various boards and groups. For members' information a list of this Committee's representatives, along with Cabinet and other scrutiny committees' representatives on these bodies, can be seen at appendices 4a and 4b. There are still a number of vacancies to be filled and members are therefore asked to inform the Scrutiny Coordinator if they are interested in taking up any of the vacant positions.

6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council in monitoring and reviewing policy issues.

7. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

8. What consultations have been carried out?

None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represents a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

9. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme. However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

10. Power to make the decision

Article 6.3.7 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work.

Contact Officer:

Scrutiny Coordinator Tel No: (01824) 712554

Email: dcc_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Note: Items entered in italics have not been approved for submission by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
27 October	1 Common Access Route to Housing [Communities initially, could eventually be Partnerships]	To present the findings of the feasibility study into the provision of a common access route to housing	Development of a common mechanism for accessing affordable housing, and allocation policies and procedures for a number of local authorities and Registered Social Landlords who work closely with the authorities	Simon Kaye	December 10
	2 <i>Town Plan (Denbigh)</i>	<i>To consider the draft town plan for Denbigh and the draft template which will be used for other town plans</i>	<i>(i) The development of a flexible town plan which addresses the Council and residents' needs and which will deliver positive outcomes for all parties; and (ii) the development of a standard but flexible template which will be used for all future town plans and for comparative purposes</i>	<i>Graham Boase/Mark Dixon</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
	3 Supporting People Strategy Update and Operational Plan 2012-13	Pre-decision scrutiny of the programme which supports people who need housing and seeks to contribute towards tackling the issues of transience, poverty and multiple deprivation	Scrutiny of ring-fenced grant funding proposals for housing related support services in Denbighshire valued at approximately £7million per year.	Gary Major	July 2011
	4 Foryd Harbour Mooring Fees and Charges	Proposed management arrangements and charges for the Foryd Harbour Moorings	Endorsement of the proposed Management Plan, fees and charges and agreement on the process of implementation and timing.	Tom Booty/Mark Budd	July 2011

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered	
	5	<i>Getting Closer to the Community</i>	<i>Presentation of the Council's key principles on how to get closer to the communities</i>	<i>Refinement of the principles to assist the Council to achieve its aim of getting closer to the community</i>	<i>Hywyn Williams</i>	<i>July 2011</i>
	6	<i>Highway Verge Grass Cutting</i>	<i>To review the effectiveness of this year's grass verge cutting programme, especially the extent to which first cut grass is treated</i>	<i>Formulation of recommendations with respect to 2012 grass cutting programme</i>	<i>Tim Towers</i>	<i>September 2011</i>
8 December	1	Local Housing Strategy	To consider progress made in response to national housing policy and legislative initiatives and to consider the draft LHS action plan for the forthcoming year	Regular six monthly monitoring of the strategy's implementation will identify slippages, suggest corrective action for failing projects, identify new actions to address unmet needs and inform future grant funding applications	Simon Kaye	December 10
	2	<i>Adult Education</i>	<i>Tbc</i>		<i>Julian Molloy</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
	3	Allocation of Additional Resources to SEN [education]	To monitor the progress achieved in developing an alternative model for SEN Funding and the results of the consultation exercise with headteachers on the proposals put forward	The development of an effective system of funding, monitoring and evaluating appropriate support for pupils with SEN to enable them to fulfil their full potential	Karen Evans	June 2011
	4	Progress of the Youth Service Business Plan and Locality Youth Service Provision	To review progress made following the restructure of the service and the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee's consideration in January 2011 and to receive information on the locality youth service	To monitor progress and to scrutinise the effectiveness of the provision.	Jamie Groves/Roger Ellerton	January 2011

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			structures and engagement with town & community councils.			
	5	<i>Residents' Survey</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Tony Ward/Eva Walters</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
	6	<i>Review of Heritage and Arts Assets</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Jamie Groves/Paul Mc Grady</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
19 January 2012						
1 March						
12 April						
24 May (provisionally)						

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
July	1	Management of allocation of Section 106 Commuted Sums for open space provision and Community Infrastructure Levy(CIL)	To monitor the effectiveness of the management arrangements and funds received and committed (report to include the time limits applicable to each commuted sum)	Effective management of the commuted sums and CIL schemes will assist with the Council to deliver the regeneration priority and to bring the Council closer to the community	Graham Boase/Angela Loftus	July 2011
	2	Control of Caravan Sites	To present the proposed standard conditions and procedures developed by the Working Group for the purpose of controlling and monitoring caravan sites in both Denbighshire and Conwy as well as the feedback received at the Operators' Seminar	The development of a robust and collaborative approach to ensure that tourist sites contribute to the local economy and the delivery of the regeneration corporate priority	Graham Boase/Neil Jones (CCBC)	July 2011

Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
<p>Challenging Behaviour and its impact on Council services [could possibly be an issue for Partnerships as joint working with BCU involved]</p> <p><i>(Committee to discuss whether this topic should be referred to the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee)</i></p> <p>[education]</p>	An analysis of the impact of children's challenging behaviour on the Council's education and social services' functions	Identification of measures, or other Council services, which may assist education and social services to address challenging behaviour and ease budget and resource pressures in the long-term	Leighton Rees/Karen I Evans	March 11

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Transformation of Post 16 Education <i>(Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group to be asked to discuss the most appropriate Committee to discuss this item) [May need to be deleted from work programme until WG's response to the draft proposals are received]</i>	To present the draft proposals for transforming the provision of post 16 education in Denbighshire	The development of a viable and robust policy for the delivery of post 16 education in the county	John Gambles	May 2011
<i>The Quality and Provision of Community Facilities</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Hywyn Williams/Jamie Groves/Diane Hesketh</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
<i>Rural Transport</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Peter Daniels</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
<i>Rural Community Sustainability</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Hywyn Williams/Jamie Groves/Diane Hesketh?</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
<i>Access to the Countryside</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Mark Dixon/Huw Rees</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
<i>Waste Management Provision</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Steve Parker/Ken Thompson</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
<i>Transfer of Services to Town Councils</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Hywyn Williams/Helen Burkhalter/Paul Mead</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
<i>The effectiveness of CCTV</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Graham Boase</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
<i>Wind Farms</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes</i>		<i>Graham Boase/Paul Mead</i>	<i>May 2011</i>

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Flood Risk Areas within Denbighshire (autumn 2012)	Information on all areas within the County which are at risk from any type of flooding incidents and the plans in place to address the identified risks	Assurances that action has been taken or plans are in place to mitigate the risk of flooding to the identified communities and development of robust contingency plans	Wayne Hope	June 2011
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For future years

Information/Consultation Reports

Information / Consultation	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
Information (circulation February 2011 of report prepared for People and Places Board)	Review of One Stop Shop locations	To inform the Committee on the progress made with planning and undertaking the review of the locations of One Stop Shop facilities in the County	Cara Williams/Catherine Spencer	January 2011
Information Report (for circulation in Oct 2011) [education]	Impact of cessation of free school transport for pupils living within Wrexham County Borough Council who attend Ysgol Dinas Bran, Llangollen	To outline the impact of Wrexham County Borough Council's decision to withdraw free school transport to pupils from the County attending Ysgol Dinas Bran, Llangollen on the number of pupils attending the school, future projected pupil numbers, its future viability and the consequential implications for the community in and around Llangollen	Jackie Walley/Karen Evans	June 2011 (rescheduled July 11)
Information (Sept 2011)	Review of Licensing Procedures	Progress report on the implementation of the proposals, as agreed by the Committee in July 2011, to strengthen the Council's licensing procedures	Graham Boase/Phil Rafferty	July 2011

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

05/09/11

Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
27 October	13 October	8 December	24 November	19 January 2012	5 January 2012

Communities Scrutiny Work Programme.doc

PROPOSAL FORM FOR AGENDA ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY COMMITTEES		
NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Communities Scrutiny Committee	
DATE OF MEETING / TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION	27 th October 2011	
TITLE OF REPORT	Highway Verge Grass Cutting	
P U R P O S E	1. Why is the report being proposed? (see also the checklist overleaf)	As a result of this summer's grass cutting programme it is clear that some of the issues that have arisen are of interest to many Members and a review of the approach taken to this activity is appropriate.
	2. What issues are to be scrutinised?	This is a follow up to a report that went to Environment Scrutiny in October 2009 which resulted in changes to the service delivery being put in place. Members may wish to review the effectiveness of these changes – especially with regards to the extent to which we treat the grass in the first cut.
	3. Is it necessary/desirable for witnesses to attend e.g. lead members, officers/external experts?	The Lead Member for Environment may wish to attend but it isn't necessary for anyone else to appear other than appropriate Highways Officers
	4. What will the committee achieve by considering the report?	Members will be able to give appropriate feedback as to how they wish the 2012 grass cutting regime to be undertaken
	5. Score the topic from 0 – 4 on aims & priorities and impact (see overleaf)*	Aims & Priorities
	4	4
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	This subject has received a lot of interest over recent weeks and it is clear that changes to current practice may be required.	
REPORTING PATH – what is the next step? Are Scrutiny's recommendations to be reported elsewhere?	The Scrutiny Committee Recommendations will be used by Highways and Infrastructure officers only so that any changes can be implemented for next summer.	
AUTHOR	Tim Towers – Section Manager (Network) Highways and Infrastructure.	

Appendix 3

CABINET: FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

27 SEPTEMBER 2011	
Proposed Joint Conwy & Denbighshire Adoption Panel	Councillor M M Jones Julie Moss, Corporate Parenting
Regional Education Project	Councillor E W Williams H Williams
Edeyrnion Education Review	Councillor E W Williams H Williams / J Walley
Rhyl Going Forward Delivery Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas T Booty
Discussions on DCC land in Rhyl on Quay Street and Wellington Road - Ocean Plaza Development	Councillor P J Marfleet P McGrady / C Davies / K Bowler
New Work Connections: Training and Education - Procurement of accredited training courses across the project – up to 1620 people could be involved in the training e.g. a one day confidence building course or an NVQ Level 4 course.	Councillor P A Dobb Gwynfor Griffiths / Carina Edwards 708307
Regional Commissioning Hub – Outline Business Case	Councillor P A Dobb S Ellis
Village Green Applications - land known as "The Park" off Ffordd Elan, Rhyl	Councillor S Frobisher S Cordiner
Monitoring Performance Against the Corporate Plan	Councillor H H Evans T Ward
Progress on the LDP and arrangements for the LDP Joint Officer Members Steering Group	Councillor S Frobisher G Boase / A Loftus
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Officers
25 OCTOBER 2011	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Capital Plan 2011-2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Agreement to Consult on the Proposed Disposal of Middle Lane, Denbigh	Councillor P J Marfleet J Walley / J Williams
Options for Prestatyn Library Relocation Part II	Councillor P J Marfleet J Groves
Phase II Construction of the Foryd Harbour Walking and Cycling Bridge	Councillor S Frobisher / Councillor D A J Thomas S Davies / Bob Humphreys
Waste Project - 2nd Inter Authority Agreement which sets out the respective rights and obligations of each Council for the implementation and operational phases of the project – Part II	Councillor S Frobisher S Parker / J Espley / S Thompson
Waste Project – Final Business Case – Part II	Councillor S Frobisher S Parker / J Espley / S Thompson
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Officers
22 NOVEMBER 2011	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady

Community Capital Grants	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon / Brian Evans
Denbigh Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
Supporting People Strategy Update and Operational Plan 2012-13	Councillor P A Dobb Gary Major
Regional Support Services Project	Councillor P J Marfleet B E Jones
HR / People Strategy	Councillor P J Marfleet L Atkin
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Officers
13 DECEMBER 2011	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Destination Management - Tourism Partnership North Wales have offered to work with the Council to undertake an audit of the experience which a visitor gets when they come to the County and this item will provide an opportunity for Cabinet to receive the results of the audit and consider actions which need to be taken to improve the experience	Councillor D A J Thomas G Boase / M Dixon
Ruthin Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
DCC & CCBC Highways and Infrastructure endorsement of the consultation process	Councillor S Frobisher B E Jones /
Monitoring Performance Against the Corporate Plan	Councillor H H Evans T Ward
Scala Cinema and Arts Centre: Update	Councillor P A Dobb P McGrady / J Groves
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Officers
24 JANUARY 2012	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Corwen Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
Prestatyn Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Officers
21 FEBRUARY 2012	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Rhuddlan Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
St Asaph Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Officers

20 MARCH 2012	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Corwen Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
Llangollen Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
Monitoring Performance Against the Corporate Plan	Councillor H H Evans T Ward
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Officers

Scrutiny Representatives on Council Programme Boards and Groups 2011/12

Board/Group	Communities Scrutiny	Partnerships Scrutiny	Performance Scrutiny
Business Transformation Programme Board	Cllr. Brian Blakeley	Cllr. Gwyneth Kensler	Cllr. Huw LI Jones (sub/potential 2 nd member: Cllr Bobby Feeley)
Conwy and Denbighshire Collaboration Programme Board	Cllr. June Cahill	Cllr. Dewi Owens (with Cllr. Gwilym Evans as the reserve/substitute)	Cllr. Ian Gunning
People and Places Programme Board	Chair of Communities Scrutiny by virtue of office held (Cllr. David Smith)	N/A	N/A
			<i>overleaf/...</i>

Appendix 4a

Board/Group	Communities Scrutiny	Partnerships Scrutiny	Performance Scrutiny
Capital Strategy/Strategic Funding Group	Cllr. David Smith (sub: Cllr. Rhys Hughes)	Cllr. Dewi Owens	Cllr. Huw LI Jones
Corporate Equalities Group	Cllr. Cefyn H Williams (named sub: Cllr. Rhys Hughes)	Cllr. Christine Evans (named sub: Cllr. Jane Yorke)	Cllr. Colin Hughes (named sub: Cllr Gwilym C Evans)
Service Performance Challenge Groups	see separate sheet		

Service Performance Challenge Group - Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee Representatives

Service:	Cabinet Lead Member(s):	Performance Scrutiny Service Lead(s)	Partnerships Scrutiny Service Lead(s)	Communities Scrutiny Service Lead(s)
1. Adult & Business Services - Neil Ayling	Cllr Pauline Dobb	Cllr Bobby Feeley	Vacancy	Vacancy
2. Business Planning & Performance - Alan Smith	Cllr Hugh Evans, Cllr Paul Marfleet, Cllr Morfudd Jones	Cllr David Lee, Cllr Gwilym C Evans	Cllr Gwilym C Evans	Vacancy
3. Customer Services - Cara Williams	Cllr Hugh Evans, Cllr Paul Marfleet			Cllr. Rhys Hughes (sub Cllr. Brian Blakeley)
4. Corporate Governance - Jane Kennedy (Acting)	Cllr Hugh Evans			Vacancy
5. Strategic HR - Linda Atkin	Cllr Paul Marfleet			Vacancy
6. Children & Family Services - Leighton Rees	Cllr Morfudd Jones			Cllr. George Green Cllr Ian Gunning*
7. Environment Services - Steve Parker	Cllr Sharon Frobisher	Cllr Lucy Morris, Cllr Michael Eckersley	Cllr. Christine Evans	Cllr. Brian Blakeley (sub Cllr. Richard Jones)
8. Planning, Regeneration & Regulatory Services - Graham Boase	Cllr Sharon Frobisher, Cllr David Thomas, Cllr Pauline Dobb			Cllr. Selwyn Thomas

Service Performance Challenge Group - Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee Representatives

Service:	Cabinet Lead Member(s):	Performance Scrutiny Service Lead(s)	Partnerships Scrutiny Service Lead(s)	Communities Scrutiny Service Lead(s)
9. Finance & Assets - Paul McGrady (Acting)	Cllr Paul Marfleet, Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill	Cllr Huw Jones	Vacancy	Vacancy
10. Highways & Infrastructure - Stuart Davies	Cllr Sharon Frobisher	Cllr Rhys Hughes	Vacancy	Cllr. Rhys Hughes (Cllr. Richard Jones)
11. Housing Services - Peter McHugh	Cllr David Thomas	Cllr Peter Duffy	Cllr. Christine Evans	Cllr. Brian Blakeley
12. Leisure, Libraries & Community Development - Jamie Groves	Cllr Morfudd Jones, Cllr Pauline Dobb	Cllr George Green Cllr Ian Gunning*	Vacancy	Cllr. David Smith
13. Modernising Education - Jackie Walley	Cllr Eryl Williams	Cllr Colin Hughes	Vacancy	Cllr. David Smith
14. School Improvement & Inclusion - Karen Evans	Cllr Eryl Williams	Cllr Colin Hughes	Vacancy	Cllr. David Smith

* Councillor Gunning is also the Committee's lead contact for the Ffynnon performance management system and the Council's Arms Length Companies (including Clwyd Leisure Limited and the Scala)