

**COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Russell House, Rhyl on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 at 9.30 a.m.

**PRESENT**

Councillors D.I. Smith (Chair), I.W. Armstrong, B. Blakeley, J. Cahill, J.M. Davies, D. Hannam, C.H. Williams and Co-opted Members Mrs G. Greenland, Ms D. Houghton, Dr D. Marjoram and Mr J. Saxon.

Councillors E.W. Williams attended as an Observer.

**ALSO PRESENT**

Corporate Director: Learning and Communities (HW), Head of School Improvement and Inclusion (KE), School Effectiveness Performance Officer: Secondary (JM), Lifelong Learning Finance Manager (CW), Principal Youth Officer (RE), Programme Manager: Modernising Education, (JC), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Administrative Officer (CW).

**POINT OF NOTICE**

The Chair referred to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme, Item Number 7 on the Agenda, and informed Members that funding had been awarded to Denbighshire.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Councillors T.R. Hughes, E.R. Jones, P.W. Owen, S. Thomas and co-opted member Ms C. Burgess.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No personal or prejudicial interest were declared

**3. URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

No items were raised which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

**4. MINUTES**

The Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 were submitted.

Matters arising:-

9. Scrutiny Work Programme – The Scrutiny Coordinator referred to Appendix 3 to the Scrutiny Work Programme report, which detailed progress with Committee

Resolutions, and pages 2 to 3 of the Information Brief document circulated to Committee members which provided an update on issues arising from the Minutes.

The Chair informed the Committee that due to a break down in communication he would be unable to attend the TAIH meeting scheduled for Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2011. He explained that TAIH had now been informed of his appointment to represent the Communities Scrutiny Committee on the Board at future meetings.

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the above, the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.*

## **5. IMPACT OF COMMUNITY YOUTH WORKER STRUCTURE**

A copy of a report by the Principal Youth and Community Officer, which highlighted the impact of the Youth service's new Community Youth Work structure and sought Member's views on any future monitoring of the Service's activities, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Youth Service had been independently reviewed in September, 2009 and a critical report had made 21 recommendations in order to improve the effectiveness of the Youth Service. The report which highlighted a new direction had been considered in December, 2009 and identified the key actions that the service was proposing to implement in order to improve performance. A new 3 year business plan had been created to meet the recommendations highlighted in the review report. The former Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee had considered the business plan in March, 2010 and had been pleased with the new approach and requested further updates on progress.

Many of the 21 recommendations contained in the Review Report overlapped and as a result of improvement work undertaken a number of key themes emerged that would underpin the new direction of the service. These included 5 Key Outcomes as outlined in the report:-

- Improving the effectiveness of Youth Work.
- Meeting the needs of young people and their communities.
- Working Effectively with Partners.
- Improving Leadership and Management.
- Efficiency in using resources.

Details of the actions required to support the new direction had been included in the report. It was explained that the Youth Service had been formally placed within the Leisure, Libraries and Community Development Service and the new locality based Community Youth Work Structure had been implemented.

The Principal Youth and Community Officer explained that to assess the impact two exercises had been undertaken in September, 2011. These included a further independent review of the Youth Service aimed to 'test out' progress against the original 21 recommendations and highlight any further areas for action, and a self-assessment in order to establish progress and to identify areas for continuing improvement. Details of the outcomes of both impact assessment exercises were

included in the report and summarised by the Principal Youth and Community Officer. They included:-

- good and effective progress achieved against the original recommendations
- consultation with over 40 stakeholders had reported very positive comments and registered good progress
- Details of the outcomes achieved for young people
- The new approach of the Youth Service had increased its overall reach with young people from 18% in 2009-10 to 35% in 2010-2011.

The Service self-assessment exercise had been undertaken through a moderation process and the grades had been agreed at the Youth Senior Management Team meeting. The agreed grades were grade 2 across the 5 key outcomes and in addition to the consultant's report this exercise had also indicated good progress. The report outlined areas for further progress, and a new format for the Locality Newsletter had been developed, copies of which had been attached at Appendix 3 to the report.

The Chair invited Members attention to the recommendations on page 32 of the Taith Ltd, Independent Review of Denbighshire Youth Service undertaken in 2009, and the Youth Service Satisfaction Survey and Self Assessment 2011, which had been circulated with the Information Update. A summary of the reports was provided and it was explained that the progress shown in both reports had demonstrated good progress in a short period of time. It was confirmed that the Service had developed a forward plan to accommodate the continuing activity required to maintain progress and development. This would be in the form of an Operational Plan that would be incorporated in the Leisure, Libraries and Community Development (LLCD) Business Plan.

The Principal Youth and Community Officer agreed to investigate concerns expressed by Councillor C.H. Williams that the Youth Bus which provides services for young people in rural areas had recently failed to arrive on various occasions. Councillor Williams referred to the annual young people's satisfaction survey and expressed the view that, whilst the improvement from 76% to 79% in the statistic for overall satisfaction was laudable, the satisfaction level was still too low in his opinion. The Principal Youth and Community Officer explained that many of the 19 indicators had been in excess of the satisfaction figure quoted, however, he confirmed that he was not satisfied with the overall satisfaction figure and would like to see an improvement over a period of time. The Principal Youth and Community Officer confirmed that the £223k funding redirected from management and support activity to the new locality based community Youth Work Structure would be available for the foreseeable future.

In reply to questions from the Chair it was confirmed that a formal review of the volunteer strategy would be undertaken. The Principal Youth and Community Officer explained that the recommendations made in the Self Assessment and the Follow-up Review of the Youth Service would be examined and included in a new two year

plan which would be fed into the Business Plan. It was confirmed that funding would be received on an annual basis from the Welsh Government, through the Youth Service Revenue Grant. The Urdd, Menter Iaith and Young Farmers would continue to be funded from this revenue stream, subject to them complying with the terms of their service level agreements (SLAs) with the Council's Youth Service. It was explained that the funding levels might fluctuate slightly year on year and the Chair highlighted the need to monitor the situation.

The Corporate Director: Learning and Communities explained that the Youth Service in Denbighshire had been transformed and was now working closer to the community and with its partners. The Chair emphasised the success of the scrutiny process in highlighting and identifying the problems within the Service, and the work undertaken in achieving the improvements within the Youth Service provision in the county.

**RESOLVED – that:-**

- (a) the report be received and its contents noted.*
- (b) the Committee recommends that the Youth Service continue to implement the agreed activities, and*
- (c) the Youth Bus timetable be reviewed and monitored to ensure that the County's rural areas were served on a par with the more populated areas*

**6. DENBIGHSHIRE ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION ESTYN INSPECTION**

A copy of a report by the School Effectiveness Performance Officer: Secondary, which sought the Committee's views on the Self Assessment Report and the partners' Quality Improvement Plan in preparation for the Estyn Inspection, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The School Effectiveness Performance Officer informed the Committee that the Inspection would commence on the week beginning the 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. He explained that Estyn would be inspecting the joint Denbighshire and Conwy Adult Community-based Learning (ACL) partnership Cyswllt Dysgu, which took a strategic overview of adult learner needs in both counties. The joint SAR attached at Appendix 1 to the report would form the focus for the inspection although the Local Authority (LA) would produce its own self-assessment and improvement plan.

The development of a Conwy and Denbighshire ACL Learning Partnership had been consistent with the LAs' commitment to closer working in the context of the Making the Connections agenda. To address the changing priorities of Cyswllt Dysgu the Conwy and Denbighshire ACL partnership and the reorganisation of further education colleges the LAs had rationalised the partner colleges for the network.

The local authority was making significant changes to its provision to meet the needs of all learners and address the changing priorities outlined in the ACL Policy statement. They were also working with their partners to move provision away from high school sites to 'close to home' provision. Details of enrolment numbers had been included in the report and all partnership members had performed very well

against national comparators for Further Education and Web Based Learning (FE & WBL).

The LA's revised distribution of ACL funding was outlined for the Committee, and it was confirmed that support for the most vulnerable families identified through the LAs' Families First programme would be targeted. The LA and its partners had an effective 14-19 Network which rigorously supported and monitored young people who were, or were in danger of, becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).

The School Effectiveness Performance Officer responded to a question from Councillor D. Hannam regarding the lack of provision of art courses in the Rhyl area and explained that courses would only run if there were sufficient numbers requiring them. Extensive programmes had been offered to support improving basic skills to address the priority for the Denbighshire Big Plan and the Partnership, and Colleges would deliver in a way which was non threatening and in line with learner needs. Work had been supported by an ESF European funded project, which ensured that all ACL delivery staff achieved basic skills qualifications. Courses had been developed in line with local community needs and interests, and another pattern of basic skills delivery had been through the Family Learning programmes.

Colleges provided training to support regeneration, progression and employment. The importance of ACL in community regeneration had been recognised by partners and in addition to basic skills the following priorities had also been identified:-

- Community development
- Employability skills
- Provision that engages those who are harder to reach.
- Pre vocational provision
- Provision which is at or below level 2
- Access to HE programmes

The Chair questioned whether the 15% 'adequate' score on the outcome "overall teaching across the partnership in percentages" statistic was acceptable. The School Effectiveness Performance Officer explained that observations were being and a standard approach had been adopted with Colleges providing individual support for staff identified as 'adequate'. The Chair referred to the importance of the provision of adult education and explained that he was pleased that all the colleges in Denbighshire were linking together in partnership to enhance the provision for adult learners in the County and consequently in improving their life outcomes. The School Effectiveness Performance Officer outlined the importance of the provision of adult learning in respect of the development of new skills for employment purposes, accrediting courses and also, particularly for older learners, the social aspect of the provision.

The Corporate Director: Learning and Communities referred to future pressures and tensions with regard to the provision of courses to improve basic skills to assist in improving employment opportunities, and leisure and social based courses. Councillor E.W. Williams suggested that there seemed to be insufficient reference within the self-evaluation document to potential funding available via the Rural

Development Plan (RDP) for the provision of adult education courses in rural areas, particularly in the south of the County. He asked that this be included in the document.

In reply to a question from Councillor J.M. Davies, it was explained that the Rhyl Community Agency had examined the provision of courses through outside agencies and bodies.

In reply to a request from the Chair, the Corporate Director: Learning and Communities referred to the probable delay with the release of Regulators' reports during the pre local authority election period, which would commence in mid March and come to an end in May 2012. Members therefore agreed that the Committee receive a report summarising the outcome of the Estyn Inspection when available. It was:-

**RESOLVED** – *that the Committee:-*

- (a) note and understands the priorities and organisation of adult community education in Denbighshire and the partnership with Conwy Council as identified in the report;*
- (b) subject to the inclusion of sufficient information on the availability of potential funding streams for adult education in rural areas in the document , endorses the Self Assessment Report developed jointly with partners and the Quality Improvement Plan;*
- (c) is of the view that the 15% statistic of overall teaching across the partnership being adequate was not acceptable, and therefore should be addressed; and*
- (d) receives a report summarising the outcome of the Estyn Inspection when available.*

At this point in the meeting, with the Committee's consent, the order of business was varied

## **7. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

A copy of a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator, which requested the Committee to review and agree its Forward Work Programme and provided an update on relevant issues, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Cabinet's Forward Work Programme had been included at Appendix 2, and a table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising Members on progress with their implementation had been attached at Appendix 3 to the report. The Committee considered its draft work programme for future meetings, as detailed in Appendix 1, and agreed the following amendments:-

**19<sup>th</sup> January, 2012:** The Committee agreed the 4 Items included in the Forward Work Programme.

**1<sup>st</sup> March, 2012:** Review of Heritage and Arts Assets - Members agreed that this item be deferred to a future date to be confirmed. In the meantime, to enable members to determine which aspects of the subject they would need to focus on in

future, that an information report be prepared summarising all Heritage and Arts Assets and detailing their funding arrangements.

Etape Cymru – Members supported the view expressed by the Chair that in view of the negative press received it would be important to scrutinise the arrangements and communication strategy for the 2011 event prior to the event programmed for 2012 taking place. Councillor C.H. Williams informed the Committee that not all local businesses in the local community had benefited from the event, and therefore this aspect also required scrutinising.

Monies allocated to Member Area Groups – The Chair referred to the request for a report on monies allocated to Member Area Groups. The Corporate Director: Learning and Communities suggested that it might be more beneficial to scrutinise the total package of funding, including that allocated to Town Plans, Area Members Groups, Capital Community Fund and the Community Revenue Fund. Councillor E.W. Williams suggested that opportunities for match funding to benefit the rural communities should also be taken into consideration, particular reference being made to the Rural Development Plan and the Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council Community Chest Fund. The Committee noted the views expressed and agreed that the Chair, Corporate Director: Learning and Communities and Scrutiny Coordinator liaise and scope the issues raised with a view to a report being presented to the Committee in March 2012.

**12<sup>th</sup> April, 2012:** Common Access Route to Housing – In response to a question from Councillor D. Hannam, the Scrutiny Coordinator informed Members that the Performance Scrutiny Committee had recommended that the Empty Homes Officer be invited to provide a presentation to Informal Council in respect of the role of their post.

Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) – Following the receipt of a request from the SCVCG, the Committee agreed to scrutinise the findings and results of the Residents' Survey at its meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2012.

Members were informed that a special joint meeting of both the Communities and Partnerships Scrutiny Committees had been provisionally scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 to consider the recommendations stemming from the NHS Service Reviews. It was explained that the recommendations were expected to propose fundamental changes to the way NHS services were delivered to local residents, and could potentially impact on the way the Council delivered its services to local citizens.

Representatives on Council Boards and Groups - A copy of the template to enable scrutiny representatives on various Boards and Groups to report back to their respective Committees on the key messages, actions and recommendations taken at meetings attended by them had been agreed and a copy was attached at Appendix 4 to the report. An electronic copy of the template would be circulated to all Committee Members and could be completed and submitted electronically. In reply to a request from the Chair it was agreed that Members be provided with a list of Committee's, Boards and Groups to which they had been appointed.

**RESOLVED – that:-**

*(a) subject to the above amendments, the forward work programme as set out in Appendix 1 be approved, and*

*(b) the Chair, Corporate Director: Learning and Communities and Scrutiny Coordinator liaise and scope the issues raised in respect of community for inclusion in the report to be submitted to the Committee in March 2012.*

**8. 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS**

A copy of a report by the Programme Manager: Modernising Education, which provided details of the current position with regard to the national 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme, the future timetable for the Programme, and sought the Committees' observations on the latest developments, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Programme Manager: Modernising Education provided a detailed summary of the position following the resubmission of the revised Band A Programme in November, 2011, and of the future timetable for the Programme.

All Local Authorities had been invited to resubmit their revised Programme of Projects in November, 2011 having considered the revised criteria of prioritisation. Local Authorities had been requested to review those programmes and projects provided in the first band of investment on an affordability and prioritisation basis. The assessment process proposed by the Welsh Government (WG) would identify which local authorities' projects in Band A were tackling the greatest resource inefficiencies in terms of the poorest condition of the estate, surplus capacity and running efficiencies. Denbighshire had submitted the revised Band A proposals based predominately upon its initial submission as detailed in the report.

During the re-submission of the bid Local Authorities were advised of potential discussions to revise the capital funding arrangements for Voluntary Aided Schools and further detail was awaited of changes which may impact on the funding for the project.

Band A proposals had been based on addressing the poor conditions of existing buildings, such as Bodnant Infants, Rhyl High School and Ysgol Glan Clwyd, and addressing existing inefficiencies in the running of schools such as Rhyl High School rather than specifically addressing surplus places. However, the criteria to be applied had not specifically supported investment to meet demand for additional provision, particular to meet Welsh Medium education. This had been of particular concern in relation to the position for Welsh Medium education in Secondary education at Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St Asaph. Based on current pupil levels there would be a need to invest resources in additional capacity at the school to ensure existing primary pupils were able to continue to access Welsh medium education at secondary level.

It had been anticipated that an announcement on the sequencing of the overall national programme would be made December 2011 and the announcement would



outline a long term programme to determine the running order of authorities' programmes and projects in the first band of investment. The first round of sequencing would span 7 financial years and the delivery of programmes and projects identified by Local Authorities in Band A would be the programme's priority. It is anticipated that local authorities with programmes and projects identified within the first round of sequencing would be required to submit an Outline Business Case for such projects during 2012 as the next stage of the planning stage for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools. It was confirmed that due to funding issues it was unclear how many Business Cases would need to be developed and the timescales involved.

The Programme Manager: Modernising Education referred to the statement recently issued by the Minister for Education and Skills detailing the overall programme across Wales in respect of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme. He provided a summary of the implications for Denbighshire arising from the Written Statement by the Welsh Government dated the 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2011, announcing a programme of capital investment in school buildings across Wales, which had been included with the Information Update circulated prior to the meeting.

In reply to concerns raised by Councillor C.H. Williams regarding the project undertaken in the Edeyrnion area, the Programme Manager: Modernising Education confirmed there had been a commitment from Denbighshire to fund the planned extension works at Cynwyd regardless of the outcome of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools application. The Corporate Director: Learning and Communities outlined the programme adopted to examine and review the stability of schools which had commenced in the Prestatyn area with the Edeyrnion area being the third area to be reviewed, following the identification of the potential instability and sustainability of primary education provision in the area which posed a risk to the Authority. Councillor C.H. Williams requested that his comments and concerns be noted.

The Corporate Director referred to the preliminary work already undertaken, and funding aspects, in respect of Rhyl High School and Ysgol Glan Clwyd. He explained that it was anticipated that work at the schools would commence in the early stages of the seven year project pending detail awaited from the Welsh Government. However, work on the Faith Based Secondary School would commence later in the seven year project pending clarification on funding and location aspects.

Issues raised by Dr D. Marjoram included the regional status and importance of Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn as a special school, and the need to formalise the signing up of neighbouring authorities to recognising the school's regional status. She expressed concern that the Welsh Government should not duplicate funding for other competing facilities elsewhere in North Wales, particular reference being made to Ysgol y Gogarth, Llandudno. The Corporate Director expressed concern that the school's regional status had not been qualified in the past, and highlighted the importance of stabilising and securing Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn's status as a regional facility and ensure its sustainability into the future. He confirmed that he would be discussing, with the Director of Education in Conwy County Borough Council, any potential duplication of resources, particularly at Ysgol Gogarth, Llandudno, which could have a detrimental effect and consequently weaken the provision at Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn.

Dr D. Marjoram outlined future plans for Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn which included:-

- Examining economies of scale
- Developing Business Plans to look at outreach.
- The provision of respite facilities.
- The appointment of School Governors from outside the County.
- enhancing the provision of services through the medium of Welsh and further develop the Welsh ethos of the school

The Chair referred to the need for a clear framework with regard to regional collaboration for children with special needs and the Corporate Director referred to phase 2 of the Regional School Effectiveness and Inclusion Service (RSEIS) project which would focus on inclusion. The Corporate Director expressed the view that Plas Bron Dyffryn should be treated as a regional provision and referred to the funding difficulties being experienced, particular reference being made to out of County costs and the need to identify base lines in terms of the funding of special educational needs across the region.

**RESOLVED** – that, subject to the above observations, the Committee receive the report, and note the current position regarding the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.

The Corporate Director: Learning and Communities made reference to the Written Statement by the Welsh Government, regarding the proposed Banding of Primary Schools, dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2011, which referred to the publication of the final bands for secondary education and the approach to banding primary schools, which had been included in the Information Update circulated prior the meeting.

Councillor E.W. Williams informed the Committee that he was pleased to announce that following publication of new performance band figures every school in Denbighshire had improved significantly.

The Corporate Director: Learning and Communities explained that the data utilised for the banding did not include all aspects of the work undertaken by the Secondary Schools. Information relating to Key Stage 4 and Level 2 indicators had been taken into consideration but data pertaining to level 1 or Key Stage 3 had not been included and he felt the information could be considered as exclusive rather than inclusive. Members were informed that a report in respect of the new performance band figures would be submitted to the Performance Scrutiny Committee for consideration. The Head of School Improvement and Inclusion explained that it would be important to note that this was a specific indicator measuring one aspect, it having been a measurement of attainment rather than achievement and could be considered as being exclusive.

## **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** – that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 14 and 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **PART II**

### **9. ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

A copy of a confidential report by the Head of School Improvement and Inclusion, which detailed the progress achieved with the development of an alternative model for Special Education Needs (SEN) funding and outlined the results of the consultation exercise with Headteachers on the proposals put forward, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Head of School Improvement and Inclusion and the Lifelong Learning Finance Manager provided a detailed summary of the report which contained details pertaining to the proposed Moderation and Resource Distribution Process, and the proposed funding model. The key points contained in the report included:-

- the establishment of a new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Panel which would be a multi disciplinary group consisting of stakeholders from across the Improvement and Inclusion Services, and supported by independent members and parental group representatives
- the Panel would consider each case on an individual basis and collectively agree the level of support needed for each child.
- an outline of the formula that would be used to calculate the monetary value of the level of resource recommended by the Panel, and assurances that the utilisation of the funding allocated for each pupil would be at the discretion of the school
- details of the data provided to stakeholders which would be easily cross-referenced with the information requirements needed by all parties, and the model guidance document produced to support the Panel's assessment.
- the assessment criteria specified in the document reflected the basic principles central to the statutory SEN Code of Practice and focussed on:-
  - the child's learning characteristics;
  - the learning environment that the school provided for the child;
  - the task; and
  - the teaching style.
- the role of the newly formed Moderation Panel and the importance of robustness and consistency in respect of the allocation of need. The decision to provide additional support or to undertake a statutory assessment to be made by members of the Moderation Panel.
- emphasis that resources had to be used effectively and maintained for children with the highest level of need.

- The School Budget Forum would consider 2 options when it met on 12 December, these were outlined in the Appendix to the report, Option 2 being the preferred option as it would protect schools from any fluctuations in activity and ensure that outcomes would not be affected by resource constraints.

Dr D. Marjoram expressed her appreciation for the work undertaken and the Committee agreed with the suggestion that an update report be presented to the Committee in six months time encompassing details on the number of service users, budget and expenditure issues, and service provision within the respective schools. Particular reference was also made with regard to statementing issues and the matters pertaining to the provision of additional support when required, be that in mid-year.

The Lifelong Learning Finance Manager explained that the new Moderation process and funding model would mitigate the two key areas of risk which had related to there being sufficient budget provision and ensuring that the Panel adopted the correct decision making process.

In response to questions from the Chair, officers provided further detailed information in respect of funding provision and arrangements and membership and appointment procedures in respect of the Moderation Panel.

During the ensuing discussion Members agreed that the Committee receive a progress report in six months time, and that the County's special schools be included as part of the process. The Committee expressed its support for Option 2 contained in the report.

**RESOLVED** – *that the Committee:-*

*(a) support the revised moderation process to facilitate the closer monitoring of pupils receiving 'additional support' and the effective evaluation of the 'additional support';*

*(b) recommends that schools and the local authority make the most efficient and effective use of funding against revised protocols that ensure an evidence based allocation of additional funding.*

*(c) support the process for identifying and distributing resources in enabling pupils with SEN to achieve better outcomes and therefore raising standards.*

*(ch) receives a progress report, encompassing all the areas identified above, in six months time;*

*(d) requests that the County's special schools be included as part of the process, and*

*(dd) expresses its support for Option 2, as outlined in the report to the School Budget Forum, as its preferred mechanism for the allocation of additional SEN one to one support in primary schools*

Meeting ended at 12.35 p.m.

**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 19 January 2012

**Lead Member/Officer:** Lead Member for Environment & Sustainable Development

**Report Authors:** Maritime Regeneration & Development Manager/Rhyl Going Forward Programme Manager

**Title:** Foryd Harbour Mooring Fees and Charges

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**1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1 The report proposes a scale of charges at the Foryd Harbour relating to the mooring of boats by Harbour users. The proposed implementation date for the charges is 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012
- 1.2 It is considered that the implementation of the appropriate charges for the use of Foryd Harbour facilities is an important element in the development of a valid business case for the area providing for its future management and ability to contribute effectively to the required legacy of the Rhyl Going Forward Programme.
- 1.3 It is recognised that to achieve a sustainable harbour facility there is a need to generate an income to contribute at the maximum level practical towards both its operating and maintenance costs in the long term.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1 It is appropriate that users who benefit from the Harbour facilities should contribute to the ongoing running costs of those facilities.
- 2.2 To seek Scrutiny's support for the implementation of a charging policy for the use of moorings and maritime facilities at the Foryd Harbour.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

- 3.1 It is recommended that:
  - 3.1.1 The proposed scale of charges contained in this report be supported for implementation on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012.

#### **4. Report details.**

4.1 For many years moorings have been placed in the harbour without authorisation and with little regard to appropriate equipment specifications and Health and Safety requirements, thus resulting in substandard equipment being used in many incidences.

4.2 In 2010 Denbighshire County Council undertook to replace approximately 50% (41) of the moorings with its own mooring stock as the first part of the mooring replacement programme, thus leaving approximately 50% of the old moorings still in situ.

4.3 To progress the management of the mooring facilities at Foryd, the mooring arrangements have been split into two sections:

4.3.1 Denbighshire County Council owned moorings; these are moorings that replaced the westerly section of the old mooring stock in 2010. These moorings will be maintained by the Authority and licensed to users on an annual basis.

4.3.2 Existing unauthorised moorings to the east, to be installed and maintained by the user under licence by the Authority.

#### **4.4 Denbighshire Owned Moorings**

4.4.1 The first phase of the mooring replacement has now been completed and 41 moorings have been provided. These moorings have been provided to the point of the mooring buoy. The service, inspection and repair of this equipment will be the responsibility of Denbighshire County Council.

4.4.2 The method of attaching the vessel to the buoy will be the responsibility of the vessel owner. The Authority will provide a specification for the attachment but the provision and maintenance of the strop will be the responsibility of the mooring user.

4.4.3 The proposed charges for the use of these moorings are shown at section 5.2 of this report are proposed in consideration of charges levied at Conwy , which offers similar mooring facilities, but are proposed at a lower level to reflect market considerations relative to the Foryd Harbour.

#### **4.5 Existing unauthorised moorings**

4.5.1 At the eastern part of the harbour, the existing unauthorised moorings are still provided by users themselves. As an interim measure, and until the proposed projects associated with the harbour are completed and funding is identified for further mooring replacement work to be undertaken, it is the intention to formalise the arrangements and introduce an appropriate management structure to ensure that the mooring equipment meets appropriate specifications for the vessels using them.

4.5.2 The interim arrangements being proposed will require all interested parties in this area to register their mooring with the County, ensure that their mooring equipment meets specifications provided by the Authority, undertake regular inspections of the mooring equipment by an authorised surveyor and ensure that their vessels and equipment are appropriately insured. The Maritime Office will issue the location at which the mooring is to be placed and grant an annual agreement for the mooring space.

4.5.3 The proposed charges for the use of these moorings are shown at section 5.3 of this report and are proposed in consideration of charges levied at Rhos-on Sea.

#### 4.6 Harbour Dues

4.6.1 In addition to the proposed mooring charges shown in the report it is considered that all vessels using the Harbour should contribute to the costs associated with its overall management, and the maintenance of non mooring facilities such as quays, slipways, pontoons, landing stages and navigation lights, marks and beacons, by the payment of Harbour Dues. The proposed rates for these charges are shown at section 5.1 of this report.

#### 4.7 Visitors

4.7.1 The use of the Harbour and its facilities by visiting vessels (non mooring holders) should be subject to a charge for such usage. The proposed charge for this category of user, which includes Harbour Dues are shown at section 5.4 of this report.

### 5. **Fees and Charges**

#### 5.1 **Harbour Dues**

All vessels (except vessels covered under the visitor tariff) operating out of Foryd Harbour must pay Harbour Dues. This will be in addition to the mooring fee.

Harbour Dues are to be based on a size band per mooring rather than a charge per metre. Therefore:

Vessels up to 8mtr	£40.00 per/annum
Vessels 8.01mtr to 10mtr	£60.00 per/annum
Vessels 10.01mtr to 12mtr	£80.00 per/annum
Vessels over 12mtrs	£100.00 per/annum

#### 5.2 **Mooring Fees**

**DCC provided moorings** will be charged for per mooring therefore the proposed charges will be:

<i>DCC Resident</i>		<i>Non DCC Resident</i>
8 metre mooring	£300 per annum	£360.00 per annum
10 metre mooring	£375 per annum	£450.00 per annum
12 metre mooring	£450 per annum	£540.00 per annum

Moorings seaward of the new Cycle/Pedestrian Bridge  
All moorings to be at 12 metre rate

**5.3 Vessel Owner provided mooring** (fee payable for agreement to place mooring on DCC land)

DCC Resident  
£25.05 per metre per annum

Non DCC Resident  
£28.65 per metre per annum

**5.4 Visitor Rates (Visitor rates include Harbour Dues)**

**1 – 7 Days Inclusive**

Per Night 8m and under LOA £10.00 per night  
Add £1.50 per metre over 8m (max charge £20.50 per night)

**8 Days and Over**

Per Night 8m and under £7.00 per night  
Add £1.05 per metre over 8m (max charge £14.35 per night)

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

6.1 The redevelopments within the Foryd Harbour area including the new quay, boat storage area, new slipway, safe haven, new pedestrian/cycle bridge, upgraded moorings stock and harbour units. These developments will contribute towards the corporate priority of regeneration and the regeneration of Rhyl.

6.2 The fees and charges that are being put forward will ensure that the harbour is sustainable and can be provided with the level of management and funding that will go towards maintaining a high quality of service in the future.

6.3 The developments and the management arrangements, of which the charging policy is a crucial part, will further contribute to the delivery plan for Rhyl Going Forward.

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

7.1 The implementation of this charging structure will reduce the negative financial impact of the harbour facility on the Council and contribute to the sustainability of the service and facilities.



7.2 If a charging structure is not accepted the ongoing management and maintenance cost will continue to fall on the Authority with little allocated resources to cover the expenditure.

## **8. What consultations have been carried out?**

### **8.1 Foryd Harbour Forum**

The Foryd Harbour Forum has been made aware of the need to charge for the mooring provision at the Foryd Harbour.

### **8.2 Rhyl Member Area Group**

The charging proposals were discussed at the Rhyl Member Area Group on the 28/09/11. The members present understood the need to implement charges and were generally supportive of the proposal. Three members indicated that they were not supportive as their interpretation of previous discussions had given assurances to the harbour users that charging should not be implemented until all moorings at the harbour had been completed.

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

9.1 Adverse reaction from existing users of the Harbour. Existing users will be reluctant to pay for a facility that has to date been free, albeit unauthorised and unregulated.

9.2 To reduce the possibility of an adverse reaction from the existing users of the harbour, consultation has been carried out and further information will be given to the users informing them of the need to implement the charges and the rationale behind the requirement to ensure that existing privately owned equipment meets required standards. This said, it may not be possible to completely eliminate this risk.

## **10. Power to make the Decision**

Article 6 of the Council's Constitution

Contact Officer:

Maritime Regeneration & Development Manager

Tel: 01824 708407

**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012

**Lead Member / Officer:** Lead Member for Environment and Sustainable Development

**Report Author:** Section Manager (Network Services)

**Title:** Review of Roadside Grass Cutting

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**1. What is the report about?**

This report is a follow up to the one that was discussed at the Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting in October 2011 when it was resolved that two particular options for roadside maintenance be explored further.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the likely pros and cons of the two options that were put forward in October 2011. These will include operational and budgetary implications and their likely impact on safety issues and road-users perception of aesthetics.

2.2 Following discussion of the report's contents Members can then discuss how they feel this aspect of Highway maintenance should be undertaken in the future and options with regards to this are given below:

**Option 1:** This is the approach which has been taken last year.  
**First cut to be internal bends and junctions only, Second cut is a full cut.** (As shown in Appendix A) For the purposes of this report this is referred to as the 'Biodiversity Cut'.

**Advantages** Increases the ecological aspects as one side of the verge is allowed to grow without compromising safety with respect to visibility.

**Disadvantages** Will still leave some areas looking untidy due to the reduced cutting. It may also lead to verges 'narrowing' the carriageway where it is not necessary to cut it for visibility reasons.

**NOTE** If this option is to be pursued it will be necessary to raise awareness of the cutting regime and the reasons behind it. This will help in managing expectations.

**Option 2: Revert back to two full cuts per year.**

Advantages	Experience has shown that this maximises safety and minimises the potential for complaint. Members of the public won't resort to having to walk in the road or to cutting the grass along the frontage to their properties.
Disadvantages	Minimises the ecological aspects with respect to biodiversity – an aspect of which the current regime is popular with many members of the public.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That Members consider the options given in paragraph 2 above and recommend whether any changes to the regime are necessary.

**4. Report details.**

**4.1 General**

- 4.1.1 Denbighshire operates two forms of grass cutting regime in the county. Essentially grass cutting within urban areas is undertaken by the Public Realm arm of Environmental Services and is undertaken primarily for aesthetic purposes. The cuts are carried out more frequently and to a high standard. Outside the urban locations (defined as areas outside the 30 mph speed restriction) the cutting is the responsibility of Highways and Infrastructure and it is this aspect that is the subject of this report.
- 4.1.2 Grass verges along these roads are not cut with aesthetics in mind but purely for safety considerations, although obviously they do look better when they have been mowed and therefore enhance the appearance of the network. The regime is for a 1 metre wide swathe along the carriageway edge to be trimmed but in areas of poor visibility this is widened as appropriate. In addition to this basic layout road junction areas and locations where visibility is important for safety are also cut.
- 4.1.3 In Denbighshire the growing season tends to extend from north to south due to both the geography and topography of the county so as a general rule we follow this on the first cut, however we have now reviewed this situation and would aim to cut the grass in two phases for each cut. Nominally everything below the 200 metre contour would be cut before we tackled the verges on the higher land. Appendix B shows the likely coverage of this type of cutting regime.

**4.2 The Contract**

- 4.2.1 Until last summer we have generally split the grass cutting work into two parts. Due to the more onerous requirements relating to traffic management we have always let the cutting on the A and B Class roads out to contract. All other roads were cut by our in-house DSO staff. In 2010, as part of the collaboration with Conwy we jointly put the work out to tender and the rates came back indicating that significant savings could be made. However, at that time we still had four of our own tractors available so we again

kept the same principal road/minor road split. The new contractor came in and quickly and effectively cut the A and B roads with minimal fuss and an overall saving.

- 4.2.2 In 2011, with our own machines now no longer available to us as they had needed replacing and our DSO staff diverted onto other necessary work we let the whole contract out to the winning tenderer from 2010. Last summer they cut all of the network twice as required (although we did have to use another contractor for a short period due to the volume of work that did accrue at the beginning of August) and the complete cost of all of this work came to £92,000. In 2010, with the Contractor/DSO split the cost was £162,000.
- 4.2.3 Despite this saving we have again reviewed whether there would be a benefit in our reinstating the Grass Cutting capability in house and to do this we feel we would require four tractors (which could be used for work other than grass cutting) and four mower attachments. With tractors costing £35,000 and lasting 8 years and the mowers costing £25,000 and having a replacement cycle of four years the annual cost of the plant alone would be in the region of £60,000. Thus by the time these are fuelled and we have paid our own drivers costs over the twenty five week cutting season it is likely that we will again be close to the £160,000 we originally spent, particularly as we would still require Traffic Management on the A and B roads. For that reason it is recommended that we continue to place all of the work out to external contract.
- 4.2.4 The present tender is valid until 2015 and therefore we will be looking to the existing supplier to undertake the work again next summer. In the report to the Committee in October 2011 reference was made to the teething problems that had been encountered and the level of understanding that the contractor had had to take on board in terms of logistics in such a diverse county as Denbighshire and we will have to work closely with them to ensure that the issues that arose last year will not be repeated.
- 4.2.5 We will make one significant change and that is we will take daily control of each machine such that we can direct it as to where we want it to be working rather than relying on the contractor to cover an area as he sees fit. This will allow us to be much more reactive in terms of our approach to requests for service and complaints however, as the contractor will be more inconvenienced then there is likely to be an increase in cost. It is a balance we will have to try and achieve but it is not insurmountable.
- 4.2.6 Furthermore, again in response to the comments made in October, we will increase the supervision levels and more regular checks by Highways Staff will be forthcoming and documented. Last year we received a 'Daily Whereabouts' update from the Contractor but this year, with our own staff being more pro-active in terms of how they direct the workload then site visits will also be easier to achieve.

### 4.3 **The Biodiversity Cut**

- 4.3.1 The idea of undertaking a cut which took into consideration the notion that highway verges are refuges for wildlife came from discussions held with community groups a few years ago. Areas were trialled and proved popular and over time there seemed to

be a desire to extend the regime to other areas of the county.

4.3.2 It was against this background that a paper was taken to Environment Scrutiny Committee in October 2009 so that options could be discussed. The outcome of that was the decision to undertake the cutting regime we undertook which has received both a positive and negative response.

4.3.3 Clearly we cut grass in order to make use of the highway as safe as possible and there is therefore an argument that the more we cut the safer it must be however we also need to bear in mind that Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) states:

*“Every public body must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”*

This is a duty placed upon us and therefore we must try to take a reasonable approach to comply with it.

4.3.4 To what degree we try to meet this duty is of course open to debate but the options laid out in Paragraph 3 of this report give Members the chance to discuss how they feel the Highway Authority should try to blend the two requirements. Having reviewed this aspect and assessing the mixed comments that were received following the work last summer we propose to amend the area in which we undertake the Biodiversity Cut. With the extension of the Clwydian Range AONB to include many of the areas where support for this type of cut is greatest it seems logical to apply it within this boundary. Appendix C shows the full extent of the AONB. As part of the overall management of this area there are specific biodiversity initiatives and therefore it seems entirely logical that the management of the roadside verges should also reflect environmental support. For safety reasons, due to the higher traffic speeds, A and B Class roads running through the AONB would have a full cut. i.e. the 1 metre wide swathe.

4.3.5 Although the principles of what is inferred by a Biodiversity cut may be understood the approach to implementing it have been open to interpretation; even amongst our own supervisors there were differences of opinion and as each one dealt with the contractor his views tended to add to the misunderstanding of what we were trying to produce. This year there will be clear guidelines and all will be aiming for the same, consistent standard of cut right across the County.

4.3.6 As previously stated many of the complaints we received were about the apparently haphazard manner in which the verges were being treated. In the majority of cases the complainants later accepted that ‘if that had been our intention then they could accept it’. If Members decide to continue with the current regime next year then we will learn from our experiences and fully communicate via the media and through the Town and Community Councils so that everyone is clear from the start why we are doing it in that way and what we are aiming to achieve through the growing season.

4.3.7 Option 1, within its revised geographical limits would only be undertaken on the first cut. Elsewhere in the County the first cut would be the traditional 1 metre wide swathe

on all verges with visibility areas such as junctions also being cut back. On the second cut, which usually commences in late July, all roads in the County would receive the normal full cut.

- 4.3.8 In terms of any budgetary considerations we have found that the cost of a Biodiversity cut, both in terms of time and money, makes little difference over the traditional treatment and therefore the real drivers for applying the changes are the legislative ones under the NERC Act and the clear desire from a significant body of the public that we do our best to conserve the wildflowers that grow within our verges.

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

Improving the condition of Denbighshire's roads remains a Corporate Priority and ensuring that the verges are cut back prevents vegetation from blocking drainage systems which in turn leads to a deterioration in carriageway condition.

**6. What consultations have been carried out?**

- 6.1 Feedback from Customer Services with regards to the level and type of complaints received has been ongoing.
- 6.2 Feedback from Members has been a regular facet of communication since the changes to the cutting regime were first implemented.

**7. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

The proposals contained in this report should deliver a saving to the Council for 2012/13 regardless of which option is chosen. These savings will be built into the Medium Term Financial Plan.

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

Awarding the entire work to one contractor means there is a risk if they were to go out of business, but the appropriate checks on their viability will be made and there are other contractors in the area that could be called upon – although this would be at an increased cost.

**9. Power to make the Decision**

Highways Act 1980

**Contact Officer:**  
Section Manager Network Management)  
Tel: 01824 706875



Date 10/10/2011

Scale 1/1320

Centre = 305475 E 376128 N

Grass Cutting - Biodiversity

APPENDIX A

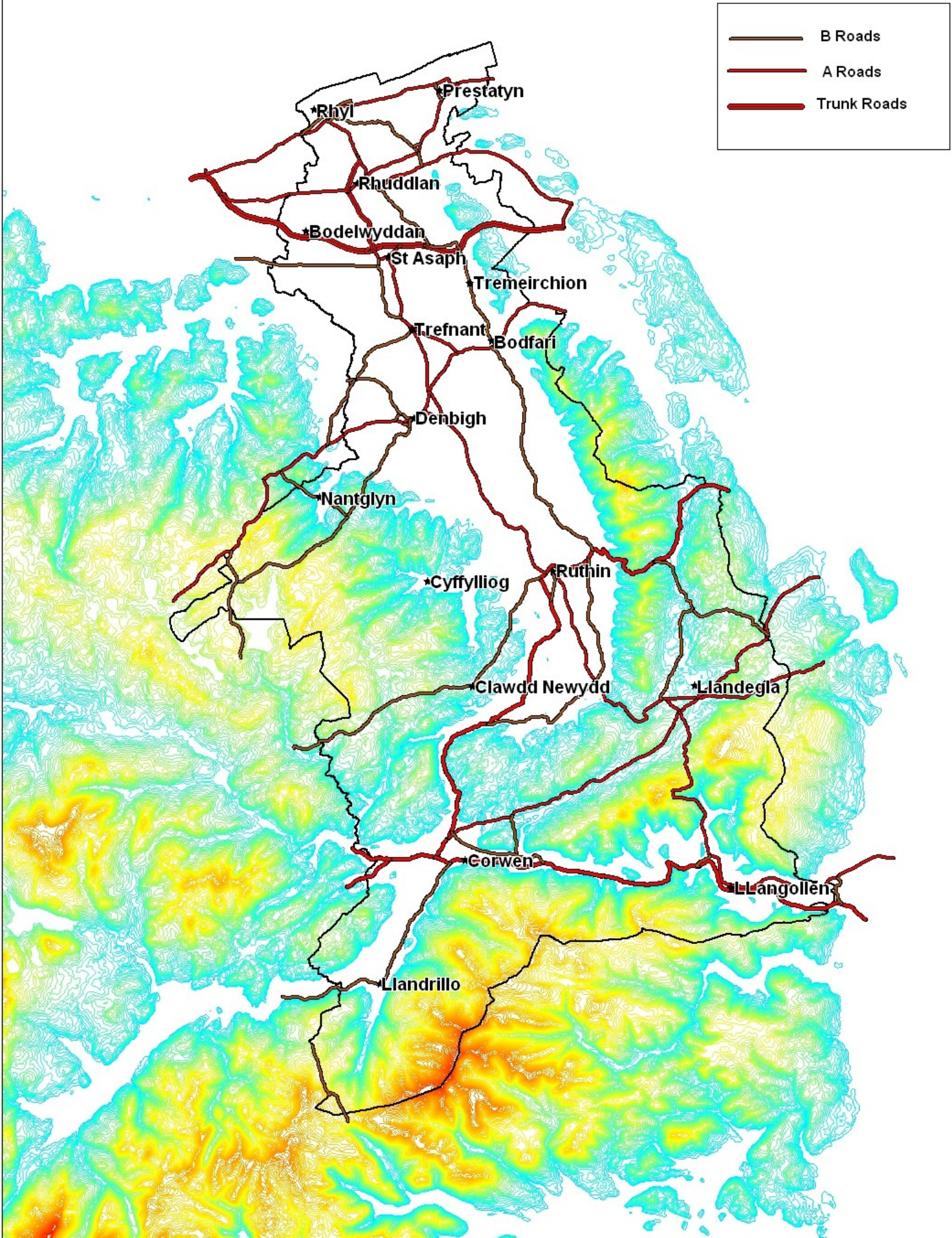


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FIRST CUT - BIODIVERSITY

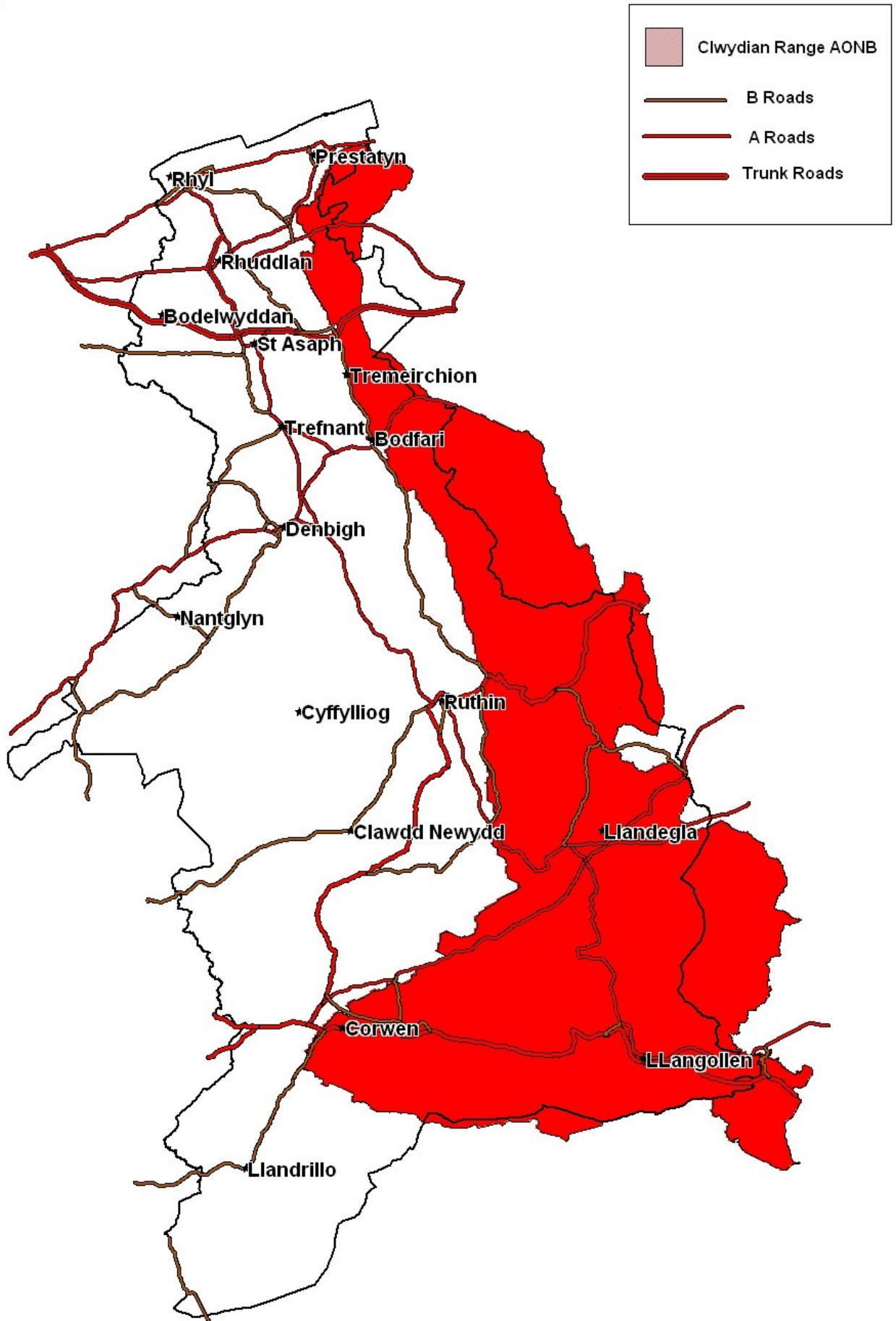


## Appendix B - Land over 200 meters





## Appendix C - Clwydian Range AONB



**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012

**Lead Member / Officer:** Lead Member for Regeneration and Tourism  
Housing Strategy Manager

**Report Author:** Housing Strategy Officer

**Title:** Local Housing Strategy Update

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**1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1 The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out the current local housing situation across all tenures and provides strategic direction for five years. The current LHS was developed in 2007 and is due to be fully revised by the end of 2012.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1 To provide information regarding progress upon the LHS action plan for 2011/12 and seek Members' views on the key headline projects proposed for 2012/13.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That Members:

- 3.1 note the progress made and challenges to achieving key actions identified within the LHS; and
- 3.2 consider key projects and recommend actions to be incorporated within the revised LHS for 2012-17.

**4. Report details**

**4.1 Key Achievements in 2011/12**

- To date 33 new affordable homes have been developed in 2011/12 against a target of 54, a significant achievement given the economic downturn. It is estimated that the year end outturn will be in the order of 45-50 properties
- An affordable housing scheme at The Willows, Llangollen, won a highly coveted Gold "What House?" Award in November 2011. This local landmark had been empty for more than 20 years and was successfully renovated into apartments for local people whilst maintaining the historic character of the building. The project was a successful collaboration between North Wales Housing, CADW and Denbighshire County Council

- An update of the Local Housing Market Assessment undertaken by Glyndŵr University revealed there is a need to develop 174 new affordable homes each year, for the next five years, across the County. The assessment will underpin the county's revision of the LHS and the emerging Local Development Plan
- Welsh Government (WG) funding was secured to appoint a Housing Benefits Co-ordinator, who will develop a range of projects to mitigate the impacts of the forthcoming housing/welfare benefits changes for vulnerable tenants across the county. This is a collaborative project in conjunction with Flintshire and Wrexham Councils
- Funding was secured to undertake the initial phase of a feasibility study into developing a single access route into affordable housing (SARTH). The project involves Denbighshire, Conwy, Flintshire and Wrexham local authorities; five Housing Associations; and Glyndŵr University. It will look at the possibility of developing a common housing register; allocation policy; and housing options approach, which could be standardised across all partners
- A local Mortgage Rescue scheme funded by Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd will have assisted around 3 Denbighshire households to remain within their own homes.

#### 4.2 Key Headline LHS projects - 2012/13

- A full review of the LHS will be undertaken during 2012. As part of which discussions are being undertaken with Conwy regarding ways in which we could collaborate more closely upon housing issues
- WG funding has been secured to redevelop an area of West Rhyl; reducing the number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs); and developing new family housing. The project will involve partial demolition; the creation of a new green amenity space; and the resettlement of upto 120 residents
- The County's affordable housing policy will be fully reviewed as part of the emerging Local Development Plan
- Phase two of the SARTH feasibility study will commence and be reported to members later in the year.

#### 4.3 Key challenges for 2012/13

- The regeneration of Rhyl West is a key challenge and Strategic Regeneration Area (SRA) funding has been secured from WG. The housing needs of residents are being analysed and a decanting policy for displaced residents with support is being developed
- The amount of funding for housing from WG has reduced significantly recently. If additional funding becomes available, Denbighshire is ready to

seize any opportunities that arise. Alternative funding mechanisms are being investigated such as the use of pension funding

- Development of a revised LHS and Affordable Housing Policy have been discussed in 4.1 and 4.2.

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

5.1 The housing projects contained within this report link directly into two corporate priorities:

- Responding to demographic change
- Regeneration – in both town and rural areas.

Other benefits to the community include:

- Development of affordable homes to meet community needs
- Benefit from better quality homes as the Council and Housing Associations close in on meeting the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) deadline.

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

6.1 The projects are subject to external grant applications and within existing resources.

## **7. What consultations have been carried out?**

7.1 A variety of consultative mechanisms are utilised including:

- Regular discussions and updates to the Lead Member – delegated powers SHG, etc.
- 4 groups to feed into each of the strategic objectives – Homelessness Forum, Affordable Housing Working Group/Liaison Group, Housing Regeneration Officers Group and the Registered Social Landlords (RSL Forum)
- Strategic Housing Partnership – Denbighshire/Conwy Councils and five Housing Associations
- Reports to Scrutiny twice a year and reports to Cabinet when necessary.

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

8.1 The risks for each project are monitored and evaluated regularly as part of the project management approach.

## **9. Power to make the Decision**

9.1 The Local Government Act 2003 – Part VII gives the Council general powers to produce the LHS and associated policies.

### **Contact Officer:**

Housing Strategy Officer

Tel: 01824 712282

**Report To:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 19 January 2012

**Report Author:** Scrutiny Coordinator

**Title:** Scrutiny Work Programme

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**1. What is the report about?**

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

- the scheduling of education related topics which require the attendance of the statutory education co-opted members
  - 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. No such proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.
- 4.5 Day Services provision for Older People in the north of the county  
At its meeting in October 2011 the Committee considered a report on the Review of Day Care Provision for Older People in North Denbighshire and consequently resolved that that the options eventually identified for future service provision be submitted to the Committee for consideration at the current meeting. However, due to various reasons, the work of the focus group tasked with developing the options has been delayed and consequently the preferred options will not be available for consideration until early summer 2012. With the Chair's consent the item has therefore been rescheduled on the Committee's forward work programme for its meeting in July 2012.
- 4.6 Members will see from the attached draft work programme that a number of items listed under 'Future Issues' require the Committee to scope the purpose of the reports and the desired outcomes to be achieved from scrutinising the topics. 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 should assist members with this task.

- 4.7 Cabinet Forward Work Programme  
A copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 2. The Committee may find this document useful when considering items for inclusion on its programme of future work.
- 4.8 Progress on Committee Resolutions  
A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 3 to this report.
5. **Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group**
- 5.1 Under the new scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) has assumed the role of a coordinating committee and can thus seek individual committees to accept topics onto their forward work programmes, or recommend that certain topics are re-allocated to another scrutiny committee if agenda pressures are identified or if it is deemed that the topic is better aligned to another committee's remit.
- Provision of Music within Schools
- 5.2 At its meeting in September 2011 this Committee considered a report on the 'Provision of Music within Schools' and decided that a further report, detailing the County's local plan for music provision and the progress achieved with the collaborative Task and Finish Group's work, be submitted to the Committee in due course. At the time there was some uncertainty as to whether this matter should actually be considered by Communities Scrutiny Committee or whether it should be transferred to Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, as it includes services which are delivered in partnership with other organisations.
- 5.3 The SCVCG at its meeting on 5 January 2012, when considering the coordination of committee work programmes, resolved to ask Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to accept the above item onto its work programme due to the partnership element and because it already had an education related item scheduled into its work programme for April 2012 which required the attendance of the Council's statutory education co-opted members. In seeking Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to accept the item onto its work programme the SCVCG was keen to ensure that the co-opted members were not being asked to attend scrutiny committees for individual business items on consecutive weeks. The item has therefore been transferred from this Committee's forward work programme to that of Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.4 At its recent meeting the SCVCG also discussed requests from a member of the public for topics to be examined by the Council's scrutiny committees. One of these requests related to the disposal of Council assets e.g. buildings, property and land, and whether due



consideration was being given to alternative uses for these assets prior to their disposal. The Group was of the view that this subject merited examination and therefore requested that Communities Scrutiny Committee schedule the item into its forward work programme. The topic has been temporarily entered under the 'Future Items' section of the attached work programme (Appendix 1). The Committee is asked to confirm its acceptance of the request to consider the topic and determine when it wishes to schedule the item into its work programme.

#### 5.5 NHS Service Reviews

Members will be aware that the SCVCG had recommended that a special joint meeting of Communities and Partnerships Scrutiny Committees be convened in February 2012 to consider the proposals for the reconfiguration of the delivery of NHS Services in North Wales, on which the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) was expected to consult during early 2012. However, North Wales Council Leaders have now been informed that the work on the reviews will continue until approximately April 2012 and therefore the public consultation stage on the proposals is unlikely to commence until July 2012. Consequently, the joint meeting scheduled for 17 February has been provisionally rescheduled for July. However, it has also emerged that the consultation with elected members may take the form of a presentation to full Council at that time. Members will be kept informed of developments.

#### Representatives on Council Boards and Groups

5.6 Committee members will recall that, for information sharing purposes, the SCVCG developed a template to enable scrutiny representatives on various boards and groups to report back to their respective committee(s) on the key messages and actions/recommendations taken at meetings attended by them. The approved template, which all scrutiny committees have agreed to utilise, has since been sent to all scrutiny members for their use.

5.7 Whilst accepting that the reporting template would be a useful tool to facilitate representatives to report back to their respective committees on discussions etc. at various boards and groups, the SCVCG also felt that it would be useful if an additional standing item was included on all scrutiny committee agendas in future to allow representatives to give a brief verbal update on meetings attended by them as Committee representatives. An item titled 'Feedback from Committee Representatives' will appear on all scrutiny agendas in future.

### **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 represent 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](mailto: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	
1 March	1	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 (rescheduled October 2011)
	2	Residents' Survey	To consider the findings of the Residents Survey and the actions to address the recommendations stemming from the survey	Monitoring the progress in implementing the key developments which have stemmed from the survey will assist the Council to achieve its aim of getting closer to the community	Ewan McWilliams	May 2011 scheduled by SCVCG November 2011
	3	Monies allocated to Member Area Groups and Future Community Funding	(i) To establish the criteria under which the money was allocated to Member Area Groups and how the money was utilised for the benefit of the communities; and (ii) to consider the financial streams available for future community funding (capital/revenue/town plan funding) including match funding opportunities via the RDP, the DVSC's Community Chest and any other available monies	(i) Evaluation of the effectiveness of current system and its benefits to local communities, and formulation of recommendations with respect to future criteria for utilisation of similar funds; and (ii) development of a streamlined process and easily accessible funding packages for community projects	Paul McGrady/Mark Dixon	October 2011

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered	
	4	Etape Cymru	To scrutinise the arrangements and the communication strategy for the 2011 event, the benefits realised by local communities/losses suffered by local business as a result of the 2011 event	Improved planning and communication strategies for similar events in future to ensure that local communities realise maximum benefits and suffer the least amount of disruption/losses from such events	Mark Dixon/Ruth Williams/Tim Towers/Mike Hitchings	October 2011
12 April	1	'Closer to the Community' – Community Engagement Strategy	Presentation of the agreed Community Engagement Strategy and consideration of the action plan for its delivery	Monitoring the implementation of the strategy which will improve communication between the Council, stakeholders and the community should ensure the Authority delivers high quality services which residents desire	David Davies	September 2011
	2	Getting Closer to the Community – Action Plan	Monitor progress in implementing and achieving the actions set out in the action plan	Identification of slippages against the action plan or other actions which may need to be included in the action plan, will assist the Council to come closer to its communities	Hywyn Williams	October 2011
	3	Common Access Route to Housing <b>[Communities initially, could eventually be Partnerships]</b>	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 (rescheduled September 2011)
	4.					

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
24 May (provisionally)	1	Estyn Adult Community Education Inspection <b>[Education]</b>	To consider the findings of the Estyn Inspection of Adult Community Education Inspection	Monitoring the implementation of actions identified to address the regulator's recommendations and to improve outcomes for adult learners in the county	Julian Molloy	December 2011
July (date to be confirmed)	1	NHS Service Reviews	To consider the proposals for the reconfiguration of the delivery of NHS Services in North Wales	Evaluation of the impact of the reviews on the residents of Denbighshire will assist the Council to commence its planning for future public service health and care provision in the county and identify future budgetary pressures	Sally Ellis/BCU	By SCVCG November 2011 (rescheduled January 2012)
Potential Special Joint Meeting with Partnerships Scrutiny Committee						
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

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
3	Allocation of Additional Resources to SEN in Primary Schools <b>[Education]</b>	To monitor the progress in developing a revised funding formula for one to one SEN support in primary schools	Effective targeting of financial SEN resources for primary schools to support and improve outcomes for individual pupils	Karen Evans/Carly Wilson	December 2011
4	Day Services provision for Older People in the north of the county <b>[Lead Member to attend]</b>	Presentation of proposals to change service provision to vulnerable client group	Development of effective and efficient services which meet service users/residents' needs and align to new methods of service delivery	Helena Thomas/Phil Gilroy	September 2011 (rescheduled from January)

## Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
Challenging Behaviour and its impact on Council services <b>[could possibly be an issue for Partnerships as joint working with BCU involved]</b>  <i>(Committee to discuss whether this topic should be referred to the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee)</i>  <b>[education]</b>	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
<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>

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

<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>
<i>Review of Heritage and Arts Assets (post May 2012)</i>	<i>The Committee to scope the purpose and expected outcomes following receipt of information report (see section below on information reports)</i>		<i>Steve Parker</i>	<i>May 2011</i>
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

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Disposal of Council Buildings, Property and Land	Consideration of the Council's asset management/disposal strategy and the procedures/guidelines in place for disposing of Council assets	Assurances that due consideration is given to alternative uses, including community use, in all asset disposals, and that all asset disposal transactions are open/transparent and are undertaken in the taxpayers' interest	Paul McGrady/Chris Davies	January 2012
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**For future years**


**Information/Consultation Reports**

<b>Information / Consultation</b>	<b>Item (description / title)</b>	<b>Purpose of report</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date Entered</b>
Information Report (for circulation in Dec 2011) <b>[education]</b>	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 and Oct 11)
Information [January]	Heritage and Arts Assets	To outline the heritage and arts assets owned/operated by the Council, their annual running costs, profits/losses, how they are funded and the level of community use made of the assets if applicable	Steve Parker/Paul McGrady	December 2011
Information (early 2012)	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/Wyn Jones (CCBC)	July 2011 rescheduled September 2011



## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

09/01/2012**Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines**

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
1 March	<b>15 February</b>	12 April	<b>30 March</b>	<i>24 May (provisional)</i>	<b>10 May</b>

Communities Scrutiny Work Programme.doc

## Appendix 2

### CABINET: FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

<b>24 JANUARY 2012</b>	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Prestatyn Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
Budget Report	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Regional Commissioning Procurement and Monitoring Hub Project	Councillor P A Dobb / Councillor M M Jones Sally Ellis
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 / Melanie Evans / Carina Edwards 708307
Options for Prestatyn Library Relocation	Councillor P Marfleet / J Groves
Routine reporting on Personnel	Councillor P J Marfleet Linda Atkin
Ruthin Town Plan	Councillor D A J Thomas M Dixon
Phase II Construction of the Foryd Harbour Walking and Cycling Bridge	Councillor S Frobisher / Councillor D A J Thomas S Davies / Bob Humphreys
Care Home Fees Methodology	Councillor Pauline Dobb / Sally Ellis
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>21 FEBRUARY 2012</b>	
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
Adoption of the Full Business Case for the North Wales Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service	Councillor E Williams / H Williams
Regional CCTV	Councillor Sharon Frobisher / Steve Parker (tbc)
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>20 MARCH 2012</b>	
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
Supporting People Strategy Update and Operational Plan 2012 – 13	Councillor P A Dobb Gary Major
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>24 APRIL 2012</b>	
Finance Report 2011 -2012	Councillor J Thompson Hill P McGrady
Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees	Scrutiny Coordinator

#### **FUTURE ISSUES**

<b>DECEMBER 2012</b>	
Welsh Housing Quality Standards	Councillor David Thomas / Peter McHugh

Updated 13/12/2011

## Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
8 December 2011	5. Impact of Community Youth Worker Structure	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> – that:-</p> <p>(a) the report be received and its contents noted.</p> <p>(b) the Committee recommends that the Youth Service continue to implement the agreed activities, and</p> <p>(c) the Youth Bus timetable be reviewed and monitored to ensure that the County's rural areas were served on a par with the more populated areas</p>	Awaiting confirmation of progress
	6. Denbighshire Adult Community Education Estyn Inspection	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> – that the Committee:-</p> <p>(a) note and understands the priorities and organisation of adult community education in Denbighshire and the partnership with Conwy Council as identified in the report;</p> <p>(b) subject to the inclusion of sufficient information on the availability of potential funding streams for adult education in rural areas in the document , endorses the Self Assessment Report developed jointly with partners and the Quality Improvement Plan;</p>	Awaiting confirmation of inclusion

		<p>(c) is of the view that the 15% statistic of overall teaching across the partnership being adequate was not acceptable, and therefore should be addressed; and</p> <p>(ch) receives a report summarising the outcome of the Estyn Inspection when available.</p>	Provisionally scheduled into the work programme for May/June's meeting
	<b>7. Scrutiny Work Programme</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED – that:-</b></p> <p>(a) subject to the above amendments, the forward work programme as set out in Appendix 1 be approved, and</p> <p>(b) the Chair, Corporate Director: Learning and Communities and Scrutiny Coordinator liaise and scope the issues raised in respect of community for inclusion in the report to be submitted to the Committee in March 2012</p>	See entry no. 3 for the Committee's meeting on 1 March on Appendix 1 attached
	<b>8. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED – that, subject to the above observations, the Committee receive the report, and note the current position regarding the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.</b></p>	No action required
	<b>9. Allocation of Additional Resources to Special Educational Needs (Part II)</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED – that the Committee:-</b></p> <p>(a) support the revised moderation process to facilitate the closer monitoring of pupils receiving 'additional support' and the effective evaluation of the 'additional support';</p> <p>(b) recommends that schools and the local authority make the most efficient and effective use of funding against revised protocols that ensure an evidence based allocation of</p>	

		<p><i>additional funding.</i></p> <p><i>(c) support the process for identifying and distributing resources in enabling pupils with SEN to achieve better outcomes and therefore raising standards.</i></p> <p><i>(ch) receives a progress report, encompassing all the areas identified above, in six months time;</i></p> <p><i>(d) requests that the County's special schools be included as part of the process, and</i></p> <p><i>(dd) expresses its support for Option 2, as outlined in the report to the School Budget Forum, as its preferred mechanism for the allocation of additional SEN one to one support in primary schools</i></p>	<p>(ch) report has been provisionally scheduled into the work programme for July's meeting (see attached work programme – Appendix 1</p> <p>(d) Special Schools cannot form part of this review. They are funded separately due to the level of need. This funding relates solely to SEN pupils in mainstream education.</p> <p>(dd) The report was, in the main, well received by Schools Budget Forum however they have requested for it to be considered by their clusters in order for a collective view to be sought</p>
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