



To: Members of the County Council

Date: 1 July 2013

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COUNTY COUNCIL** to be held at **10.00 am** on **TUESDAY, 9 JULY 2013** in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN LL15 1YN**.

Yours sincerely

G Williams
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Notice of items 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 CHAIRMAN'S DIARY** (Pages 5 - 6)
To note the civic engagements undertaken by the Chairman of the Council (copy enclosed).
- 5 MINUTES** (Pages 7 - 18)
To receive the minutes of the meeting of County Council held on the 4th June, 2013 (copy enclosed).
- 6 INVESTIGATORS' REPORT ON THE FLOODS** (Pages 19 - 62)
To consider a report by the Senior Engineer, Flood Risk Management (copy enclosed) on the findings of the flood investigation, and an update on the progress with the investigation into the Glasdir flood event.
- 7 DRAFT ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY** (Pages 63 - 108)
To consider a report by the Corporate Director: Economic & Community Ambition (copy enclosed) on the development of Denbighshire's first Economic and Community Ambition strategy in line with the Corporate Plan priority of developing the local economy.
- 8 FINAL BUDGET POSITION AND REVENUE OUTTURN 2012/13** (Pages 109 - 124)
To consider a report by the Chief Accountant (copy enclosed) which provides an update of the final revenue position and the proposed treatment of balances.
- 9 ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK - SOCIAL SERVICES**
(Pages 125 - 172)
To consider a report by the Early Intervention, Strategy and Support Service Manager (copy enclosed) which provides Council with the self assessment of social care in Denbighshire and identifies improvement priorities for 2013/2014.
- 10 APPOINTMENT TO THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** (Pages 173 - 176)
To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (copy enclosed) on the appointment of one member to the North Wales Police and Crime Panel for a minimum of one municipal year.
- 11 WEBCASTING OF MEETINGS** (Pages 177 - 180)
To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (copy enclosed) on the potential for webcasting meetings of the Council.

12 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 181 - 184)

To consider the Council's forward work programme (copy enclosed).

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Ian Armstrong
Raymond Bartley
Brian Blakeley
Joan Butterfield
Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones
Bill Cowie
Ann Davies
James Davies
Meirick Davies
Richard Davies
Stuart Davies
Peter Duffy
Hugh Evans
Peter Evans
Bobby Feeley
Carys Guy
Huw Hilditch-Roberts
Martyn Holland
Colin Hughes
Rhys Hughes
Hugh Irving
Alice Jones
Huw Jones
Pat Jones

Gwyneth Kensler
Geraint Lloyd-Williams
Margaret McCarroll
Jason McLellan
Barry Mellor
Win Mullen-James
Bob Murray
Peter Owen
Dewi Owens
Merfyn Parry
Paul Penlington
Arwel Roberts
Gareth Sandilands
David Simmons
Barbara Smith
David Smith
Bill Tasker
Julian Thompson-Hill
Joe Welch
Cefyn Williams
Cheryl Williams
Eryl Williams
Huw Williams

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Agenda Item 4

Digwyddiadau wedi eu mynychu gan y Cadeirydd / Events attended by Chairman

30.05.13 – 24.06.13

Dyddiad / Date	Digwyddiad / Event	Lleoliad / Location
30.05.13	Trosglwyddo Swyddogol - Canolfan Blas ar Fyw Official Handover - Healthy Living Centre	Corwen
31.05.13	Gŵyl Gerdd Rhyngwladol Gogledd Cymru North Wales International Music Festival	Wrecsam Wrexham
01.06.13	Garddwest Blynyddol y Clwb Rotari Rotary Annual Garden Fete	Llangollen
03.06.13	Cyflwyno Gwobrau Gwirfoddolwyr Volunteers Awards Presentation	Prestatyn
05.06.13	Cyfarfod hefo Ian Bellingham Meeting with Ian Bellingham	Llanelwy St Asaph
06.06.13	Cyflwyno Gwobrau Gwirfoddolwyr Volunteers Awards Presentation	Rhyl
07.06.13	'Llangollen ar gyfer digwyddiadau' 'Llangollen launch event'	Llangollen
08.09.13	Diwrnod o Hwyl - Anabledd Dysgu Fun Day - Learning Disabilities	Prestatyn
08.06.13	Penblwydd Priodas 70 mlynedd George & Nancy Green 70 th Wedding Anniversary	Waen
09.06.13	Gwasanaeth Dinesig Cadeirydd Sir Y Fflint Flintshire Chairman's Civic Service	Treuddyn
14.06.13	Ymweld a Ysgol Frongoch Visit Frongoch School	Dinbych Denbigh
14.06.13	Cyflwyno siec i 'Cyclathon' Present cheque to 'Cyclathon'	Bodelwyddan
20.06.13	Gŵyl Celfyddydau Perfformio Ysgolion y Sir Denbighshire Schools' Festival of Performing Arts	Rhyl
20.06.13	'Sky Hawk' Is Gadeirydd wedi mynychu / Vice Chair attended	Yr Wyddgrug / Mold
21.06.13	Agoriad swyddogol Clos David Owen Official opening of Clos David Owen	Rhuddlan
21.06.13	Ymweliad a Meithrinfa plant Visit to Children's nursery	Rhuddlan
22.06.13	Diwrnod y LLuoedd Arfog - Gogledd Cymru North Wales - Armed Forces Day	Glannau Dyfrdwy Deeside

23.06.13	Gwasanaeth Ffarwelio Canon John Glover Farewell Service	Rhyl
24.06.13	Ymgyrch 'Chwifio'r Faner' 'Fly the Flag' Campaign	Rhuthun Ruthin
24.06.13	Arddangosfa Gelf Art Exhibition	Ysgol Uwchradd Dinbych Denbigh High School
26.06.13	Ymweliad a Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn a Gerddi Glasfryn Visit to Brondyffryn School & Gerddi Glasfryn	Dinbych Denbigh

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin LL15 1YN on Tuesday, 4 June 2013 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Ian Armstrong, Raymond Bartley (Chair), Brian Blakeley (Vice-Chair), Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Bill Cowie, Ann Davies, Meirick Davies, Richard Davies, Stuart Davies, Peter Duffy, Hugh Evans, Peter Evans, Bobby Feeley, Carys Guy, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Rhys Hughes, Hugh Irving, Alice Jones, Huw Jones, Pat Jones, Gwyneth Kensler, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Margaret McCarroll, Jason McLellan, Barry Mellor, Win Mullen-James, Bob Murray, Dewi Owens, Merfyn Parry, Paul Penlington, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, David Smith, Bill Tasker, Julian Thompson-Hill, Joe Welch, Cefyn Williams, Eryl Williams and Huw Williams

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (MM), Head of Legal and Democratic Services (RGW), Head of Planning and Public Protection (GB), Head of Business, Planning and Performance (AS), Planning Policy Manager (AL), Corporate Improvement Manager (TW), Representatives of Welsh Audit Office (GB and HLJ) and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors James Davies, Martyn Holland, Colin Hughes, Peter Owen, David Simmons, Barbara Smith and Cheryl Williams

Prior to the meeting the Chair informed Council that Councillor Peter Owen was in hospital following an operation and wished to send Councillor Owen everyone's best wishes and a get well soon card would be sent.

At this juncture, Councillor Pat Jones requested she be able to hand in a petition re: Mount Road. The petition was to stop a resident from opening up their garden fence for working vehicles access. The petition was accepted by the Chair.

The Chair announced that this was the season of Eisteddfodau and congratulated the children and young people of Denbighshire who had recently competed successfully at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Pembrokeshire and those held previously to this. He also thanked the parents, teachers and grand-parents and to everyone who had taken part.

The International Musical Eisteddfod in Llangollen was the next one and the National Eisteddfod would be held in Denbigh in August. A Denbighshire County Councillor, Meirick Lloyd Davies would be honoured with a blue robe by the Gorsedd of the Bards at the Eisteddfod on 9 August for services to his community and the Welsh language.

The fund raising target for the Eisteddfod in Denbigh was £300,000 and the amount

raised was now almost up to £320,000. The Chair wished to express his thanks to the Members of Denbighshire Town, for working hard to raise this amount and to congratulate everyone in Denbighshire.

The Chair announced the winner of Rhyl Bridge naming competition:

The Rhyl Harbour Project Board supported a competition to help find the most appropriate name for the new Pedestrian & Cycle Bridge across the river Clwyd.

The competition was open to all primary school children in Rhyl, Towyn and Kinmel Bay. The pupils were asked to provide a name for the bridge with a short story as to why they chose the name which should have some or all the following characteristics.

- have Welsh roots (Culture, History, Language)
- have a story that can explain it
- have a visual form
- inspire the opportunity to create events based around the name

An independent panel had considered more than 30 names submitted by the five schools that entered the competition.

- Ysgol Maes Owen
- Ysgol Llywelyn
- Ysgol Christchurch
- Ysgol Bryn Hedydd
- Ysgol y Foryd

All the names submitted were creative and interesting, and the panel had a very tough choice, but in the end agreed that five entries stood out and followed the judging criteria. After long debate Leon Jones from Ysgol Maes Owen inspired the name chosen by the panel '**Pont y Ddraig**'. The name would be featured at both entrances to the bridge. The three runners up were:

Cassie Parry - Ysgol Maes Owen

Adam Torkoniak - Ysgol Maes Owen

Kiera McEwan-Williams - Ysgol Maes Owen

Formal presentation of prizes would be held during the official opening of the Pedestrian & Cycle Bridge in September 2013.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Paul Penlington declared a personal interest in the item "Adoption of the Denbighshire Local Development Plan" (Agenda Item 6).

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised.

4 CHAIRMAN'S DIARY

A list of civic engagements undertaken for the Council by the retired Chair and the new Chair for the period 27 April 2013 to 24 May 2013 had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

RESOLVED that the list of civic engagements undertaken for the Council by the retired Chair and the New Chair be received and noted.

5 MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 May, 2013 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 ADOPTION OF THE DENBIGHSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006 - 2021

Councillor Eryl Williams presented the Adoption of the Denbighshire Local Development Plan 2006 – 2021 report (previously circulated) to inform Members of the findings of the binding Inspectors Report into the DCC Local Development Plan 2006 – 2021; request formal adoption of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and seek approval to carry forward the current suite of Supplemental Guidance Notes (SPGs) for use with the Local Development Plan. Councillor Williams stated the importance of having control of development within the county but expressed his disappointment at the additional four pieces of land which had been added to the LDP by the Inspector.

Both the Head of Planning and Public Protection and the Planning Policy Manager confirmed they would be recommending acceptance of the report. Many years of hard work by Officers had been involved in producing the LDP document. Over the past 12 months there had been a number of public hearing sessions held with the Inspector.

Following agreement at full Council on 20 May 2011, the LDP and its evidence base was formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for public examination. Public Hearing sessions were held in January and February 2012 and additional Hearing sessions held in May 2012. The Inspectors issued their initial findings on 14 June 2012. Further Hearing sessions were held in February 2013 to enable discussion to take place and for any objectors to present their concerns and evidence to the Inspectors. There were 28 separate Public Hearing sessions held over a 13 month period.

It has been the Inspectors role to consider the LDP, together with all the evidence, including comments made as a result of public consultation and the public hearing sessions. The Inspectors had to report back to the Council on whether they considered the LDP to be “sound”. The Inspectors’ report was binding on the Council.

The Inspectors found the LDP to be “sound and deliverable” subject to some amendments.

In summary, the key points raised were:

- Legal requirements and procedural tests were met
- The overall strategy and distribution of growth was supported, including the Bodelwyddan KSS
- The overall housing figure of 7,500 dwellings was supported but additional housing allocations were to be included to increase the land supply. These were the 21 sites proposed by Council **plus** four sites included in the earlier consultation (March/April 2012) which were not proposed for allocation by Council. The four sites were:
 - Land off The Paddock, St. Asaph
 - Bryn Gobaith, St. Asaph
 - Ffordd Hendre, Meliden
 - Rear of Castle View & The Hollies, Llangollen
- The Council’s proposed phasing policy for the development of the additional sites has **not** been included in the plan
- A minimum density requirement of 35 dwellings per ha was to be included. This would not apply to villages and a small number of individual sites.
- Amendments to the Affordable Housing Policy:
 - Developments of 10 or more dwellings would make on-site provision of 10% affordable housing
 - Developments of 3-9 dwellings would make a financial contribution
 - The above requirements would be increased once sale prices are 10% and 20% above 2009 prices.
- The Area of Outstanding Beauty (AOB) would be partially removed from the proposals maps and not afforded the same level of protection as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Employment land had been retained within the Plan and had been accepted by the Inspectors. This had a potential to create 8000 jobs.

Councillor Peter Evans expressed his disagreement with the Plan. He raised concerns of the infrastructure at Ffordd Hendre, Meliden. Councillor Evans stated he would vote against the adoption of the Plan and called for a recorded vote.

Councillor Stuart Davies expressed his disagreement with the Plan, due to the fact “rear of The Hollies” Llangollen had been added into the Plan. Councillor Davies stated he would vote against the adoption of the Plan.

Councillor Alice Jones stated that in her opinion, it was an unsound Plan. Councillor Jones wished to acknowledge the people of Bodelwyddan who had objected against the Plan. Councillor Jones stated she would certainly be voting against the Plan.

The Head of Planning and Public Protection (H:P&PP) confirmed the Inspector was an independent person and he had concluded that the Plan was sound. It was not a perfect Plan as it did not provide everyone with everything they wanted but, on balance, it was a very good Plan. Planning Committee had the opportunity to deal with issues around the sites as planning permissions could be refused due to the

infrastructure issues. SPG could build in infrastructure requirements for the 25 sites.

The Planning Policy Manager (PPM) confirmed all 25 sites had infrastructure issues and this would allow Planning Committee to have control of planning applications received.

Councillor Richard Davies spoke on behalf of the residents of the Brookhouse area of Denbigh. He expressed his disappointment at the fact that two sites in Denbigh had been included within the LDP. Residents felt the Council and the Welsh Government had gone against their own planning policies. Councillor Davies stated he would be voting against the Plan. Cllr Davies then asked the H: P&PP what would be the process if the LDP was not adopted at Council today.

Councillor Arwel Roberts stated the Plan was totally unsound. Good land was being ruined. Councillor Roberts expressed concern that local people would not be able to get the jobs or houses but that these would be going to people from outside the area. Councillor Roberts urged Members to vote against the adoption of the Plan.

The Leader, Councillor Hugh Evans, clarified that if the Inspector were to be challenged and the LDP was not adopted, it would be referred to the Minister and the Welsh Government would then make the decisions. The Inspectors' report could be utilised as evidence for planning applications. Members would be in a more advantageous position to protect communities to adopt the Plan and control planning applications. One of the greatest challenges to the local authority would be that the Inspector had reduced affordable housing from 30% to 10% to move development forward. The affordable housing had been brought in to assist young people to get on to the property ladder. 26 acres of employment land was in the Plan which meant a possibility of 8000 jobs could be created within the next 10 years. Councillor Evans stated he would be voting in favour of adopting the Plan.

The H:P&PP clarified that it was advantageous to look at the Plan as a whole and not to look at specific sites. 7,500 had been the recognised figure as there had been a need to provide houses for people who lived within Denbighshire and also to encourage job growth. There was a potential for 8000 jobs in the future but there was no guarantee these would all go to local people. The allocation of land for the potential of 8000 jobs was a good thing but there was also the advantage of the local labour market accessing those jobs.

It provided a great regeneration opportunity which would also work with the Rhyl Going Forward Plan. Statistics showed that 67% of people who lived in new builds in the county were from Denbighshire and 87% were from within North Wales.

Affordable housing had been reduced from 30% down to 10%. This had been what the local market could sustain. If, in the future, it was evidenced that the market could sustain more than 10% of affordable housing, the Council would have a policy which could increase the percentage.

Within the LDP was a policy that had not been included in the UDP that all new build housing within Denbighshire's rural hamlets, were to be affordable housing for local people.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that the Town & Country Planning (Local Development Plan)(Wales) Regulations 2005 state that the Council must adopt the Plan within 8 weeks of the publication of the Inspectors Report.

Councillor David Smith agreed there was a need for 7500 houses and 8000 jobs within the county. Councillor Smith was in agreement to adopt the Plan and thus allowing the Planning Committee control of all planning applications. The Planning Committee had the power to add conditions to Planning Permissions. An LDP Group was to be set up consisting of Councillors, who would be able to scrutinise all planning applications. Councillor Smith stated he would be voting in favour of the adoption of the Plan.

Councillor Bobby Feeley and Councillor Hugh Irving confirmed that after careful consideration, they would be voting in favour of the adoption of the Plan.

At this juncture (11.25 a.m.) there was a break

Meeting reconvened at 11.50 a.m.

Apologies received from Councillor Bill Cowie as he had to leave for the second part of the Council meeting.

Advance notice of apologies was also received from Councillor Alice Jones as she would be leaving the meeting early.

Declaration of Interest – Councillor Huw Williams declared a personal interest in 3 lots of land in Llanbedr.

Councillor Rhys Hughes raised the issue of the current Housing Policy by which a person had to be at the top of the housing list to be considered for a house in Denbighshire. Councillor Hughes expressed his annoyance at the Plan due to the fact schools, shops, chapels and public houses were all closing down. He also questioned if all other Councils in Wales had an adopted LDP.

Councillor Gwyneth Kensler explained that Members came into Local Government to represent the people. Councillor Kensler expressed concern due to the fact the phased approach had been taken out of the LDP and the percentage of affordable homes had been lowered from 30% to 10%. She stated that, in her opinion, SPG's had no statutory force. Once open countryside had been developed it would be lost to future generations.

The PPM responded that the closure of rural area premises and the loss of community facilities were not unique to Denbighshire. It was due to the change in people's shopping habits and the modern day culture. Denbighshire were doing their utmost to support local facilities. She also reported that:

- Affordable housing in groups of small clusters had been a step forward.
- Consultation had taken place on the sites and a number of people who had objected had attended.
- The SPG, if it went through the correct process, could carry a lot of weight in making planning decisions.
- All the Welsh Authorities were preparing to have an adopted LDP. Torfaen and Anglesey did not have an adopted UDP but were currently going through the process of the LDP.
- If the LDP was not in place, there would be a risk of uncontrollable sporadic developments in unsuitable areas

Councillor Dewi Owens confirmed that he approved of a majority of the Plan but did not approve of the sites the Inspector had added. Councillor Owens felt the Plan had to be approved to enable Members to deal with issues when applications were made. Councillor Owens also suggested the Welsh Government be approached to ascertain what powers the Inspector had and how they were scrutinised.

Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill confirmed he was in favour of adopting the Plan as it was impossible to draw up an LDP which would satisfy everyone. The consequences of not adopting the Plan would mean a prolonged hiatus period which would leave the Council vulnerable to ad-hoc developments. Councillor Thompson-Hill stated he would vote in favour of the adoption of the Plan.

Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies expressed his concern about the development of the countryside and especially the additional land allocated in St. Asaph. He also expressed concern about developers targeting the county purely to make money.

Councillor Bob Murray expressed his concerns and stated he would vote against the adoption of the Plan.

The PPM clarified that the UDP had run to the end of 2011 and it was now out of date. Regarding Councils without plans in place, all were moving forward to adopt a LDP. There had been various comments regarding the overriding issue of democracy and process. The main issue was regarding the final stage and the additional four sites added. The majority of the Plan had been set up by the Council. This was a high level plan. Every site would be subject to a detailed planning application, especially as some sites had significant issues.

Following the intense discussion which took place Members felt the control of the LDP exercised by the Inspectors and the Welsh Government seriously undermined local democratic control and accountability, a situation which they deplored.

Councillor Eryl Williams gave his closing address. Councillor Williams moved to accept recommendation 1, recommendation 2 and recommendation 3. Councillor Hugh Irving seconded the motion.

The Chair thanked the Officers. It was unanimously agreed that a recorded vote took place.

The H:L&DS noted the recorded vote of which 21 Members voted in favour of the recommendations and 18 Members voted against the recommendations.

RESOLVED that the Council:-

- (1) *Formally adopt the Denbighshire County Council Local Development Plan (including Proposals Maps) as amended by the Inspectors' binding recommendations in accordance with Section 67 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation of the Town and Community Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005.*
- (2) *Agrees to carry forward the list of adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes for use in the determination of planning applications, pending a full review of all existing guidance.*
- (3) *Agrees that the SPGs, infrastructure plan(s) development briefs etc., as necessary will be required, where appropriate, prior to the development of the 25 additional sites.*
- (4) *registered a recorded vote as follows:*
 - a. *Voting in favour of the Proposal to adopt the LDP – Councillors Ian Armstrong, Brian Blakeley, Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain Jones, Meirick Lloyd Davies, Richard Davies, Hugh Evans, Bobby Feeley, Hugh Irving, Huw Jones, Pat Jones, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Margaret McCarrol, Barry Mellor, Win Mullen-James, Dewi Owens, Merfyn Parry, David Smith, Bill Tasker, Julian Thompson-Hill, and Eryl Williams*
 - b. *Voting against the Proposal to adopt the LDP – Councillors Raymond Bartley, Ann Davies, Stuart Davies, Peter Duffy, Peter Evans, Carys Guy, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Rhys Hughes, Alice Jones, Gwyneth Kensler, Jason McLellan, Bob Murray, Paul Penlington, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, Joe Welch, Cefyn Williams and Huw Williams.*

7 ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT

Councillor Hugh Evans introduced the Annual Improvement Report (AIR). The AIR was a key report produced every year. Overall this was a very positive report. The report highlighted areas where further improvements could be made but there were no further recommendations within the report.

Hugh Lloyd-Jones, Welsh Audit Office (WAO) clarified that the report was in three main sections.

Within the first part of the report it was concluded that the Council were making good progress in delivering improvement in its priority areas:

- Performance continued to improve in most aspects of the Council's work to adapt service delivery to address demographic change;

- There had been progress in supporting regeneration projects in Rhyl but, in challenging economic times, progress had been slow in supporting economic growth across Denbighshire as a whole;
- Estyn had judged that the Council provided good quality education services for children and young people and that prospects for further improvement were good;
- The Council's programme to improve roads was progressing but, following the 2012 floods, an independent investigation would determine whether actions were needed to ensure flood risk in the County would be appropriately managed in the future;
- The Council continued to make good progress with its planned actions to improve the way it worked.

The second part of the report found that the Council's corporate performance management arrangements support reliable self-evaluation but there was scope to improve the quality of some of the evidence the Council used to judge its effectiveness.

Finally, the third part of the report set out the views of the WAO on how well the Council was planning for, and making arrangements to support improvement. It was concluded that the Council's arrangements to support improvement was good. In particular:

- The Council had discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure;
- The Council had complied with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and its Welsh Language Scheme;
- The Council continued to make good progress in addressing the proposals for improvement identified in the previous WAO assessments.

It had been concluded that there were no new recommendations this year. The report set out the progress the Council was making to address the recommendations and proposals for improvement made in the previous WAO report.

Councillor Raymond Bartley thanked Hugh Lloyd Evans (WAO) for his presentation and stated how proud he was of this Council.

At this juncture, the Chief Executive requested to make a comment. Regarding the previous debate, Adoption of the Denbighshire Local Development Plan, he had been very pleased that the representatives from the WAO had been at the meeting to witness the debate. The fact Members were so engaged was to their credit.

The Chief Executive thanked the WAO representatives for their report. It was a fair and good report. Denbighshire were focused on the big services, education and social services. Denbighshire had significantly improved in both of these services and were determined not to step back. The regeneration had been mentioned and a strategy would be launched in the autumn. The Chief Executive was hoping and confident that when the WAO report next year, they would be able to report on the progress on the new priority.

The service challenge process had improved. There were already things in place which would come up next year. Most important was the new Corporate Plan. There were seven priorities and funding strategy within the Corporate Plan.

It was recommended by Members that an audit of the Member Area Groups (MAGS) should take place.

Councillors Eryl Williams and Hugh Evans questioned what the Welsh Government had in mind for Denbighshire as there were mixed messages being communicated from Ministers. Councillor Evans indicated there were a lot of things the Council wanted to do better but had not been touched upon. The Local Government Measure might allow the council to focus on a local level. Town/Area plans had been introduced to assist. The challenges in Rhyl were much bigger than in any other area.

Hugh Lloyd Jones (WAO) agreed to feed in the concerns with their discussions with the Welsh Government. Recommendations could have been made within the Report but they would have statutory implications.

Gwilym Bury (WAO) clarified there had been a couple of proposals in letters. In the final report, there were improvements and progress made, so not to be in the report.

The WAO representatives both agreed an audit of MAGs was a very good suggestion. One area the WAO have agreed to observe this year was to take part in a Service Challenge. This would enable a greater understanding of the services.

RESOLVED that subject to the above, the Council noted and accepted the Annual Improvement Report by the Welsh Audit Office.

8 ELECTRONIC VOTING PROCEDURES

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (H:L&DS) presented a report (previously circulated) to provide information regarding the operation of the electronic voting system, requests that had been made for information from the system and the implications of changing the way in which the system was used.

The voting system within the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin, had been introduced as a quick way of counting votes cast in the Chamber. Some people had requested the identity of those who had cast their vote in a particular way. There had been a potential problem in releasing this information if the incorrect voting card had been placed in the slot in front of a Councillor, or if a Councillor changed seats following the placement of the voting cards. Therefore, voting information was not guaranteed to be 100% correct as to identity. It would always be correct as to the numbers of votes cast in a particular way. A request had been received for a greater transparency over the voting system, but strict processes would need to be in place, ensuring the correct voting card was used at all times.

RESOLVED that Council agreed to strict processes being put in place to enable accurate information to be made available via the electronic voting system in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin.

At this juncture, for information - The Chief Executive informed Council that the result of the ballot of staff "workforce efficiencies" had been received and the vote had been overwhelmingly in favour of accepting the proposals put forward.

9 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (H:L&DS) submitted the Council Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the council's Forward Work Programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 1.30 p.m.

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Report To: Full Council

Date of Meeting: 9th July 2013

Lead Member / Officer: Lead Member for Public Realm / Corporate Director:
Economic and Community Ambition

Report Author: Senior Engineer, Flood Risk Management

Title: Investigation into the November 2012 Floods

1. What is the report about?

An Investigation into the flooding events across Denbighshire in November 2012 has been underway since February 2013. The investigation is now complete, with the exception of Glasdir, where the complexity of the issues surrounding the flood event means that the investigation is ongoing.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To bring to Members attention the findings of the flood investigation, and to provide an update progress with the investigation into the Glasdir flood event.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Members:

- Approve the implementation of the recommendations set out in Appendix 2.
- Actively support the Council and Natural Resources Wales in approaching the Welsh Government for funding to implement the recommendations.
- Support the establishment of a River Management Partnership, which will bring together all relevant partners to develop flood risk management plans.
- Agree to receive Part 2 of the Investigation Report, relating to Glasdir, at the Full Council meeting on 10th September 2013.

4. Report details.

4.1

Significant flooding occurred at a number of locations across Denbighshire on 26th and 27th November 2012. Around 500 properties, commercial and residential, were flooded at a total of 12 separate locations. Under the terms of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Council is undertaking an investigation into the causes of flooding. Natural Resources Wales (formerly Environment Agency Wales) is supporting the Council with the investigation. The sources of flooding were main rivers, for which Natural Resources Wales is the risk management authority, and ordinary watercourses, for which Denbighshire County Council is the risk management authority.

4.2

The investigation was formally launched in February 2013 and was due to report to Council in May. The report was delayed from May due the complexity and scale of the investigation of the two larger flooding incidents at St Asaph and Glasdir. The investigation of the St Asaph event is now complete and is summarised in Appendix 2. However, the full report of the Glasdir event will be delayed until September. The investigation Terms of Reference are attached for information (Appendix 1).

4.3

The purpose of the investigation is to clarify why the flooding happened, how likely it is to recur and what, if anything, needs to be done to manage flood risk appropriately in the future.

4.4

The criteria for agreeing a location for investigation are:

- One or more properties with internal flooding
- Disruption to critical infrastructure, e.g. roads or utilities
- A repeated 'near miss' of either of the above.

It was decided not to include the general flooding of agricultural land as part of the investigation, unless the flood event was unusual or unexpected. Discussions are taking place at a national level regarding the impact of flooding on agricultural land.

4.5

The investigation of flooding for the majority of locations is being carried out by the Council and Natural Resources Wales. Independent investigators have been commissioned to carry out the investigation into the flooding at Glasdir, Ruthin, however, due to the complexity of events at that location. The Independent Investigators, Dr Jean Venables and Clive Onions, were also asked to review the Council and Natural Resources Wales' findings for all other flood locations. The locations being investigated are:

- St Asaph, including Lower Denbigh Road
- Rhuddlan, including Sarn Lane
- Brookhouse, Denbigh
- Llanynys
- Gellifor
- Glasdir, Ruthin
- Park Place/Mwrog Street/Maes Ffynnon, Ruthin
- Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd
- Loggerheads
- Corwen
- Glyndyfrdwy

A report covering the findings of the investigation is enclosed (Appendix 2)

4.6

The flood investigation work is co-ordinated by a Flood Investigation Working Group comprising officers from the Council, Natural Resources Wales and the Trunk Road Authority. To date, three Stakeholder briefings have been issued and these are included for information (Appendix 3). Meetings have also been held with representatives of residents at the two larger flood locations at Glasdir and St Asaph.

4.7

The Council has given consideration to interim measures to reduce flood risk pending the conclusion of the investigation. As the result, the following work has been carried out:

- Fitting of anti-flood non return valves on surface water drains at Brookhouse, Denbigh.
- At Glasdir, the removal of the safety grilles on the 5 box culvert, the fitting of a temporary telemetry enabled water gauge in the culvert channel and the construction of a hardstanding above the culvert to enable access for the removal of debris during a flood.

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

Flooding has the potential to cause severe and prolonged disruption to the communities it affects. Understanding and managing local flood risk supports the Council's priority to develop the local economy.

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

The cost of implementing the recommendations set out by the investigation with respect to ordinary watercourse flooding could be up to £1 million. This cost cannot be accommodated within the Council's existing budget. However, the Welsh Government, which states its aim as reducing the risk to people by encouraging the provision of flood defence measures, has powers to award grant under the Land Drainage Act. With this in mind, it is important that the Council seeks Welsh Government funding support in respect of the recommendations.

Natural Resources Wales estimates that a scheme to reduce the risk of flooding in St Asaph to an acceptable level is likely to cost in excess of £5 million. The Council should seek assurance from the Welsh Government that sufficient priority will be given to the early funding of Natural Resources Wales' proposals with regard to St Asaph and any other recommendations coming from the investigation with respect to flooding from main rivers.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out.

8. What consultations have been carried out?

To date, three Stakeholder Briefings have been produced to share with all interested parties. Regular liaison meetings have taken place with representatives of the residents at Glasdir. Two meetings have taken place with representatives of the residents at St Asaph, with further meetings scheduled.

The interim findings of the investigation were discussed with Partnerships Scrutiny on 25th April 2013.

9. Power to make the Decision

Section 19 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 gives the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, the responsibility to investigate incidents of flooding.

Section 10 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places a duty on the Council to develop, maintain and monitor a local flood risk management strategy

Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Council the power to do anything which is likely to promote or improve the social, economic or environmental well being of the Council's area.

Denbighshire County Council

Investigation into the November 2012 Floods

Flood Investigation Report - Part 1



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Executive Summary

On the 26th and 27th of November 2012, Denbighshire experienced heavy and prolonged rainfall, which led to the flooding of more than 500 properties and, tragically, the death of a St Asaph resident.

According to Natural Resources Wales, the rainfall event had a 1 in 13 chance of happening. However, because the rain fell on ground that was already saturated many of the rivers in the county rose to record levels. The flood event has been calculated to have had a chance of occurring of between 1 in 100 and 1 in 200.

The overall investigation has been led by Denbighshire County Council, with support from Natural Resources Wales. The Council has appointed independent experts to examine the complex issues surrounding the flooding of the Glasdir housing development in Ruthin and to review the investigation of the other flood locations. The investigation has been coordinated by a Flood Investigation Officers' Working Group, with representation from all of the relevant risk management authorities.

The investigation into the flooding at Glasdir has raised numerous questions concerning the hydrology of the River Clwyd catchment. Work to answer these questions is progressing well and it is expected that the independent investigators will be able report on their findings by September 2013.

There is now a clear understanding of the flood events other than Glasdir and both Natural Resources Wales and Denbighshire County Council are considering a range of options to reduce the risk of flooding in future. The recommendations range from straightforward maintenance and improvement work to multi-million pound flood risk management schemes. It will be essential to seek the support of the Welsh Government with respect to the funding of these schemes.

In the case of St Asaph, flood modelling work carried out as part of the investigation has shown that the level of protection provided by the raised defences is considerably less than what had previously been understood. Instead of being defended against a 1 in 100 chance flood event, parts of the city are now believed to be at risk from an event with an annual likelihood of 1 in 30.

Throughout the investigation there has been good cooperation between the relevant authorities. There is now an opportunity to build on the working relationships that have been forged, by engaging with all the affected stakeholders and managing flood risk through a partnership approach.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Flood Event

According to the Met Office, 2012 was the third wettest year on record in Wales. Following a dry start to Spring, wetter conditions prevailed resulting in saturated ground conditions in the run up to the November rainfall event. The rainfall event, although prolonged, could probably be described as moderate rather than severe and had a 1 in 13 chance of happening in any one year. However, because the rain fell on ground that was already saturated many of the rivers in the county rose to record levels. As a consequence, the flood defences of the River Elwy and River Clwyd were overtopped at numerous locations leading to widespread flooding of property and agricultural land. There was also flooding from the River Ystrad and River Alyn, as well as several ordinary watercourses. The flood event has been calculated to have had a chance of occurring of between 1 in 100 and 1 in 200. Based on the evidence gathered during the investigation, there were no major incidents of surface water or groundwater flooding.

1.2 Purpose of the Investigation

The purpose of the investigation was to address the following key questions:

- Why did the flooding happen?
- How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?
- What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

1.3 Legislative Context

Denbighshire County Council, as a Lead Local Flood Authority, has a duty under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act to investigate flooding in its area.

The Act states:

- (1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate -
 - (a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
 - (b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood
- (2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must –
 - (a) publish the results of its investigation, and
 - (b) notify any relevant risk management authorities.

The main sources of flooding during the November event were the River Elwy, River Clwyd and River Ystrad. These are classified as main rivers and the responsibility for the detailed investigation of each flood location rests with Natural Resources Wales. There were nine separate locations affected by main river flooding. These ranged from large communities, such as St Asaph and Ruthin, to individual isolated properties.

Significant, but less extensive flooding was experienced from ordinary watercourses at three separate locations. The responsibility for the investigation of these events rests with Denbighshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

1.3 Flood Investigation Officers' Working Group

Because of the extensive, and likely complex nature of the flood investigation, potentially involving a number of flood risk management authorities, Denbighshire County Council decided as Lead Local Flood Authority to undertake a full investigation of the relevant flooding incidents and to establish a Flood Investigation Officers' Working Group to oversee and support the process. The working group, which met frequently, proved essential in ensuring strong communication between the relevant parties and helped to forge a partnership approach to the investigation by building on strong existing relationships between the respective organisations.

1.4 Independent Investigation

Recognising that the circumstances surrounding the flooding of the Glasdir housing development were far from straightforward, Denbighshire County Council decided to commission two independent experts, Dr Jean Venables and Clive Onions, recommended by the Institution of Civil Engineers, to carry out a full and independent investigation of the Glasdir event. In addition, the experts have been requested to review the findings of the other investigations and validate the conclusions and recommendations.

1.5 Public Consultation

The investigation involved a considerable amount of public engagement and consultation, aimed at gathering information about the flood and keeping people aware of progress with the investigation. Public drop in sessions took place at St Asaph, Rhuddlan and Glasdir, with visits to individual properties elsewhere. For St Asaph and Glasdir, these were followed by meetings with residents groups representing the affected residents.

2 The Flooding Locations

There were 12 distinct flooding locations, from Rhuddlan in the north of the county to Glyndyfrdwy in the south. St Asaph, Rhuddlan (including Sarn Lane) and Lower Denbigh Road were flooded from the River Elwy under similar circumstances, so have been grouped together. The other flooding locations are considered separately.

2.1 St Asaph, Rhuddlan (including Sarn Lane) and Lower Denbigh Road

According to Natural Resources Wales, the River Elwy recorded its highest ever level on the 26th and 27th November 2012. This was due to prolonged heavy rain falling on saturated ground. As a consequence, the river overtopped its banks and the flood defence bunds, leading to widespread and significant flooding. Computer modelling work carried out by Natural Resources Wales indicates that the flood event had between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 probability of occurring (referred to as an Annual Exceedance Probability, or AEP).

St Asaph

Overtopping of the flood defences took place between approximately 4:45 am and 3:15 pm on the 27th November. Flooding began downstream of the A55 with water spilling into the Spring Gardens area. This was followed quickly by flooding at Roe Park, and soon after by flooding upstream of the A55 as the majority of the flood defences became overwhelmed and large areas of the centre of St Asaph became inundated. Parts of the city were flooded for several days, despite the deployment of high capacity pumps.

Approximately 320 properties and 70 caravans were flooded during the event. St Asaph is protected from the River Elwy by flood defences consisting of raised earth embankments which were overtopped due to high river levels. There is no evidence of any breach of the defences.

Flood modelling carried out for the investigation has concluded that, contrary to previous understanding, the defences downstream of the A55 only offer protection against a 1 in 30 AEP event, whilst those upstream of the A55 will protect against a 1 in 75 AEP event. The level of protection is, therefore, significantly less than what was understood to be the case prior to the November 2012 event. The improved understanding has come about through refinement of the methods used by Natural Resources Wales to create the flood model, combined with records of the actual flood which have enabled the model to be precisely calibrated.

During the course of the investigation, a number of questions have been raised by the affected residents concerning factors which might have had an influence on the levels in the River Elwy.

Firstly, did the high tide make the situation worse? Natural Resources Wales has confirmed that the River Elwy at St Asaph is high enough above sea level for the tide not to have had any impact. The limit of tidal influence is near the confluence of the River Elwy and River Clwyd, around 1.5km downstream.

Secondly, was water being released from Llyn Aled and Aled Isaf during the flood? Welsh Water has confirmed that there were no releases from Llyn Aled and only a small quantity of water was released from Aled Isaf between 25th November and 29th

November, but that this was within agreed operating procedures. It is believed unlikely that either reservoir had a significant influence on the St Asaph flood.

Thirdly, did Spring Gardens Bridge contribute to the flooding? Computer modelling work carried out by Natural Resources Wales shows that while the bridge does create a 'constriction' on the flow of water, in this instance it did not contribute significantly to the flooding. Data shows that the height of the water was so significantly above the level of the flood defence bunds that they would have been overtopped even if the bridge had not been in place, although Roe Park would have been flooded to a lesser depth and Spring Gardens Holiday Park probably wouldn't have flooded at all.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which resulted in water levels in the River Elwy that were higher than the flood defences were able to cope with.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

The event is believed to have had between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 chance of occurring in any one year. Although this could be described as an extreme event, with a relatively low risk of recurring, the investigation has shown that the flood defences at St Asaph could be overtopped leading to widespread flooding in a far less severe event.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

The current defences in St Asaph provide protection against a 1 in 30 chance event north of the A55 and 1 in 75 chance event south of the A55. This is below the standard of protection considered appropriate. Natural Resources Wales is currently considering options to reduce the risk of flooding to a more acceptable level. Early indications are that a range of solutions may be possible, but that the costs could be significant (in excess of £5 million). Natural Resources Wales is also investigating whether any short term interim measures could be carried out to reduce the risk until a scheme is put in place. These could include the removal of trees and vegetation from the river banks, which would reduce the risk of blockage and potentially increase the capacity of the river during a flood, and the localised raising of defences north of the A55, providing this doesn't increase the risk of flooding elsewhere in the short term. It is likely that the costs of these short term measures and any longer term solutions would have to be borne by Natural Resources Wales from within its capital funding budget.

Rhuddlan, including Sarn Lane

The investigation into the flooding that affected the Marsh Road & Station Road areas of Rhuddlan has established that this was caused by the River Elwy overtopping its banks north of St Asaph and flowing along the flood plain behind the flood defences. Sarn Lane, which is an access route to Glan Clwyd hospital, was flooded from the same source. Isolated sections of the River Clwyd flood defences were also overtopped upstream of Rhuddlan. A total of 10 properties (residential and commercial) were flooded.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which resulted in the River Elwy overtopping its defences downstream of St Asaph and flowing along the floodplain towards Rhuddlan. The River Clwyd also overtopped its banks. The River Clwyd at Rhuddlan is tidal. Although the full effect of the high tide is unknown, evidence suggests that the flood was still occurring even at low tide, which would indicate that the tide had minimal impact as a cause of flooding.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

The event is believed to have had between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 chance of occurring in any one year. As noted previously in relation to St Asaph, the flood defences at the source of the floodwater, that is, downstream of the A55, provide protection against a 1 in 30 chance event. There is a significant risk that flooding could recur without measures being taken to reduce the risk of overtopping at that location.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

Improvement works carried out to the River Elwy defences at St Asaph would also reduce the likelihood of flooding at Rhuddlan. There might also be opportunities to direct flood water away from properties in the event that the defences are overtopped. Since the flood, Natural Resources Wales has carried out a defence crest level survey that has fed into the St Asaph modelling work. Natural Resources Wales is currently considering the options and a range of solutions to reduce the risk of flooding in the area.

Lower Denbigh Road

The investigation of the flooding from the River Elwy that affected properties south of St Asaph, near Lower Denbigh Road, shows that the flood occurred as a consequence of the river overtopping its banks. Up to 7 properties were flooded, with a further 14 experiencing a 'near miss'. Natural Resources Wales is currently assessing the options available to reduce the risk in future.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which resulted in the River Elwy overtopping its banks and spilling onto the flood plain. There are no formal flood defences in this location and none of the flooded properties had individual property protection.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

The event is believed to have had between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 chance of occurring in any one year.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

Given the relatively small number and the isolated nature of the properties affected, it is unlikely that Natural Resources Wales would be able to justify the cost of providing raised flood defences to protect against a 1 in 100 chance event. However, it might be possible for the risk of flooding to be reduced to an acceptable level by installing individual property protection. In addition, residents should be encouraged to sign up to the Environment Agency's flood warning service (operated on behalf of Natural Resources Wales).

2.2 Brookhouse, Denbigh

The investigation has identified that the River Ystrad overtopped its banks, causing flooding to 7 residential and 1 commercial property at Brookhouse Terrace. A number of properties had already invested in individual property protection, but this was only partially successful during the event. There is also evidence of a backflow of flood water through the drainage system of the adjacent pedestrian tunnel under the A525.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which resulted in the River Ystrad overtopping its banks, exacerbated by backflow up the pedestrian tunnel beneath the A525.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

There is insufficient information available to determine the precise scale of the event. However, the Environment Agency's flood map shows that the properties would flood in a 1 in 100 chance event.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

Natural Resources Wales is currently considering the options available to reduce the risk in future, although these are likely to be limited to individual property protection, due to the probable high cost of formal flood defences. The Council has installed non return valves to prevent backflow at the pedestrian tunnel.

2.3 Llanynys

Three isolated properties were affected when the River Clwyd overtopped its banks. Each property had individual property protection, which worked to varying degrees.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which resulted in the River Clwyd overtopping its banks at multiple locations.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

The event is believed to have had between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 chance of occurring in any one year. The River Clwyd has no formal flood defences at this location, which means that a flood could occur with less than a 1 in 100 chance. The floodwater overtopped the individual property protection installed at one property.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

It is unlikely that formal flood defences would be cost effective to defend a small number of isolated properties, which already have individual property protection installed. However, the affected residents should be encouraged to sign up to the Environment Agency's flood warning service (operated on behalf of Natural Resources Wales).

2.4 Gellifor

The investigation has concluded that the flooding of a single property occurred as a consequence of high quantities of flow coupled with culvert blockages in a ditched watercourse running alongside the public highway. A number of options have been recommended. These include more robust maintenance, by the Council and private landowners, some measures to prevent water entering the property during an extreme event and further studies of road levels and the upstream catchment.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rain leading to high volumes of water entering a culverted watercourse with insufficient capacity to deal with an extreme event.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

No information is available with respect to the scale of the flood event. However, the nearby River Clwyd is understood to have experienced a 1 in 100 to 1 in 200 chance event.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

The Council should contact the riparian landowners to explain their obligation to maintain the culverted watercourse to reduce the risk of flooding. Individual property protection could further reduce the risk of floodwater entering the property during an extreme event. Further studies of road levels and the upstream catchment are also recommended.

2.5 Glasdir, Ruthin

The investigation into the flooding at Glasdir is ongoing at the time of this report. The independent investigators concluded at an early stage in the investigation that a detailed knowledge of the River Clwyd hydrology would be essential to their understanding of why the flood happened, the chances of it occurring again and what

action should be taken to reduce the likelihood of flooding in future. Natural Resources Wales was, at the time of the flood, already carrying out a review of the hydraulic model of the River Clwyd in the Ruthin area. Data recorded during the flood has enabled further calibration and refinement of the model. The work carried out by Natural Resources Wales is currently being reviewed by the independent investigators. It is anticipated that the investigation will be complete by September 2013.

As an interim measure, and following discussions with Natural Resources Wales, the Council has removed the security screens from the 5-way culvert which passes beneath the relief road. A telemetry enabled water gauge has been installed at the entrance to the culvert to improve the flood warning system and a hardstanding has been built above the culverts to allow easy access to remove debris during a flood.

2.6 Park Place/Mwrog Street/Maes Ffynnon, Ruthin

The investigation has identified that a low spot in the flood defence bund at Cae Ddol allowed flood waters to overtop the defence, leading to the flooding of 1 residential and 1 commercial property. This defence has now been raised to the same height as adjacent defences.

Flood water was also observed to be coming from highway gullies in Park Place / Mwrog Street, which is now known to have been caused by the backing up of flows in Mwrog street culvert as a result of high levels in the River Clwyd. The installation of no-return valves to these gullies has been instructed.

A masonry wall, which forms the eastern boundary to properties at Maes Ffynnon and acts as an informal flood defence, was unable to fully retain the River Clwyd behind it and was observed to be permeable during the flood, leading to the unconfirmed flooding of 2 properties. Natural Resources Wales is considering the designation of the wall as a formal flood defence and has commenced work to re-point the wall to reduce its permeability.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which resulted high water levels in the River Clwyd. The river overtopped its defences at Cae Ddol and caused backing up in Mwrog Street culvert. Floodwater also permeated a boundary wall at Maes Ffynnon.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

The event is believed to have had between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 chance of occurring in any one year.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

Work has already been carried out by Natural Resources Wales to increase the height of a local low point in the defences at Cae Ddol. Work by Natural Resources Wales is underway to upgrade the boundary wall at Maes Ffynnon and plans are in place by the

Welsh Government to install non return valves to reduce the risk of floodwater backing up in Mwrog Street.

2.7 Llanbedr DC

One residential property was flooded during the event. The investigation has concluded that the cause of flooding was the inability of the watercourse at Lon Cae Glas and adjacent to the A494 to retain flow within its banks. This was the result of under capacity combined with culvert blockages and collapses. Some repair work has been carried out, with plans in place to increase the capacity of one of the culverts. The Council has submitted details of its investigation to the Welsh Government. This follows the submission of project appraisal report in 2011 which identified a preferred option to significantly reduce the flood risk by replacing or upgrading the majority of the culverts.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which exceeded the capacity of the ordinary watercourse at Lon Cae Glas. This, combined with culvert blockages and collapses led to floodwater flowing along the A494 and entering a property at Smithy Corner.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

No information is available with respect to the scale of the flood event. However, the nearby River Clwyd is understood to have experienced a 1 in 100 to 1 in 200 chance event.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

Denbighshire County Council should seek assurances from the Welsh Government regarding the availability of grant funding to assist the Council in carrying out an improvement scheme and should explore whether short term measures could be carried out to reduce the risk until a scheme is implemented.

2.8 Loggerheads

The investigation has found that the cluster of Denbighshire County Council owned properties at Loggerheads Country Park were flooded when the River Alyn overtopped its flood defences.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which led to water levels in the River Alyn exceeding the level of the flood defences.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

No information is available with respect to the scale of the flood event. However, the nearby River Clwyd is understood to have experienced a 1 in 100 to 1 in 200 chance event.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

Denbighshire County Council should assess whether more robust individual property protection is required

2.10 Corwen

The investigation has found that flooding occurred from the River Dee and affected Green Lane, resulting in a road closure that separated the north and south sides of the town. Flooding at Green Lane is a regular occurrence and will be a difficult issue to resolve. Natural Resources Wales will investigate whether individual property protection is a viable option, although this would do nothing to reduce the impact on Green Lane itself. In addition, there was some surface water flooding of the A5 near the Police, Ambulance and Fire Station, which is under investigation by the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

The flooding of Green lane was caused by high levels in the River Dee which overtopped its banks and entered the flood plain which is crossed by Green lane. The A5 flooding is thought to be the result of surface water being unable to flow away from the area due to high levels in the River Dee.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

Green Lane floods, on average, two to three times every year. It is likely that the A5 could flood with similar frequency if the cause is linked to high levels in the river Dee.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

There is very little that can be done to prevent the flooding and subsequent temporary closure of Green Lane. However, property owners at risk of flooding from the River Dee in the vicinity of Green lane should consider installing individual property protection. Further studies will be required to establish the precise cause of the A5 flooding.

2.10 Glyndyfrdwy

The investigation has shown that two isolated properties were flooded, each related to surface water.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

Why did the flooding happen?

Prolonged and heavy rainfall cause high volumes of surface water flow from private land onto the public highway and subsequently enter the properties.

How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?

There is no information available to determine the scale of the event. Based on the information gathered in relation to the other flooding locations across the county, it would be reasonable to assume that this was an extreme event.

What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

Further studies are required to look at ways to reduce surface water runoff and to direct floodwater away from properties. In addition, advice should be given to the property owners with respect to individual property protection and measures to make the properties more resilient to flooding.

3 Conclusion

The heavy and prolonged rainfall which fell on the already saturated catchments of the Rivers Elwy and Clwyd during the 26th and 27th November 2012, led to the worst flooding in Denbighshire for over a decade.

In the aftermath of the flood event, all of the relevant flood risk management authorities worked closely together to investigate why the flooding occurred and to determine the likelihood of it happening again. The investigation, which was led by Denbighshire County Council as the Lead local Flood Authority and coordinated by a multi agency working group, has, with the exception of Glasdir, been able to make firm recommendations to reduce the risk of flooding in future. Regarding Glasdir, the complex hydrology of the River Clwyd and the circumstances surrounding the flood event mean that the investigation of that particular location is taking longer than was originally anticipated. However, it is hoped to be able to report fully on this final part of the investigation by September 2013.

Looking beyond the site specific recommendations, it has become clear during the investigation that there are some general actions which should be taken to reduce the risk of flooding in future, including:

Overall River Maintenance and Management

- Establish a River Management Partnership, which would bring together a broad range of stakeholders, such as risk management authorities and riparian landowners, to establish guiding principles regarding river management and develop a range of measures which would be implemented through catchment level flood risk management plans. This would also create a forum to discuss the complex issues of roles and responsibilities under relevant legislation and create an opportunity to share knowledge of best practice.

Property Protection

- Encourage property owners in areas at high risk of flooding to consider installing Individual Property Protection. Denbighshire County Council and Natural Resources Wales should continue to build on their established working partnership to ensure that every resident at risk of flooding in Denbighshire is made aware of the options available. Further efforts should be made to encourage the adoption of Community Flood Plans by at risk communities.
- Develop a Denbighshire County Council policy on the use and distribution of sandbags. The Council will currently try to issue sandbags as a temporary protection measure during a flood event, but this is very much dependant on the availability of resources and is difficult to manage, particularly if the whole county is affected by flooding, as happened in November 2012. Sand bags are generally more effective if used to protect multiple rather than individual properties and the policy will need to reflect this. Unfortunately, because sandbags begin to decay once filled, it isn't possible to assemble a stockpile of sandbags "just in case". The policy should also give consideration to the problem of post-flood collection and disposal of sandbags, which are often contaminated through contact with floodwater.

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Flood Risk Management

- Review the flood investigation methodology agreed between Denbighshire County Council and Natural Resources Wales. During the course of the investigation, valuable lessons have been learned regarding the steps and procedures necessary to carry out an effective investigation in accordance with the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act. There is need for further discussion, probably nationally, regarding the criteria for investigating flood events, to ensure that the concerns of rural landowners at risk of flooding are properly considered. Steps should be taken to encourage affected residents to report flooding incidents by highlighting the importance of the information received in developing measures to reduce the risk.
- Ensure that the Denbighshire Flood Risk Management Strategy reflects the lessons learned from the November 2012 floods.

4 Summary of Recommendations

4.1 Location Specific Recommendations

St Asaph

- Short term interim measures should be considered, such as the removal of trees and vegetation to increase the capacity of the river and the localised raising of defences to address low spots.
- Longer term measures, currently under consideration by Natural Resources Wales, should be implemented to reduce the flood risk to an appropriate level.

Rhuddlan, including Sarn Lane

- Improvement works should be carried out on the River Elwy at St Asaph to prevent floodwater overtopping the defences and flowing towards Rhuddlan.
- Options should be considered to divert floodwater away from properties in the event that the defences are overtopped.

Lower Denbigh Road

- Residents should be encouraged to sign up to the Environment Agency's flood warning system and consider installing individual property protection.

Brookhouse, Denbigh

- Natural Resources Wales should continue to explore options to reduce the risk in future, including the installation of individual property protection.

Llanynys

Residents should be encouraged to sign up to the Environment Agency's flood warning service.

Gellifor

- The Council should contact the riparian landowners to explain their obligation to maintain the culverted watercourse to reduce the risk of flooding.
- Individual Property Protection should be recommended to the resident.
- Further studies of road levels and the upstream catchment should be carried out.

Park Place/Mwrog Street/Maes Ffynnon, Ruthin

- Works to reduce the risk have either been carried out, are underway or have been instructed.

Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd

- Denbighshire County Council should seek assurances from the Welsh Government regarding the availability of grant funding to assist the Council in carrying out an improvement scheme and should explore whether short term measures could be carried out to reduce the risk until a scheme is implemented.

Loggerheads

- Denbighshire County Council should assess whether more robust Individual Property Protection is required

Corwen

- Property owners at risk of flooding from the River Dee in the vicinity of Green lane should consider installing Individual Property Protection.
- Further studies should be carried out to establish the precise cause of flooding on the A5 near the Police, Fire and Ambulance Station.

Glyndyfrdwy

- Further studies are required to look at ways to reduce surface water runoff and to direct floodwater away from properties.
- Advice should be given to the property owners with respect to Individual Property Protection and measures to make the properties more resilient to flooding.

4.2 General Recommendations

- Establish a River Management Partnership
- Encourage property owners in areas at high risk of flooding to consider installing Individual Property Protection.
- Develop a Denbighshire County Council policy on the use and distribution of sandbags.
- Review the flood investigation methodology agreed between Denbighshire County Council and Natural Resources Wales.
- Ensure that the Denbighshire Flood Risk Management Strategy reflects the lessons learned from the November 2012 floods.

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Terms of Reference and Commission for Investigation Denbighshire County Council

Flooding events – 26th/27th November 2012

Flood & Water Management Act 2010

Under the terms of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, Denbighshire County Council, acting lead local flood authority intends to undertake an investigation into the flooding events of 26th/27th November 2012. These include flooding at Rhuddlan, St Asaph, Brookhouse and Glasdir, Ruthin.

In commissioning the investigation, the Council wishes to understand:

- Why the flooding occurred
- What the likelihood of recurrence may be
- What can/should be done by all relevant flood risk management authorities to minimise flood risk to properties in future events

The purpose of this report is not to allocate blame or fault but to investigate the cause(s) of the flood in order to determine what actions should be taken.

Terms of Reference

The overall investigation will address the following points:-

- a) The weather conditions during and preceding the flood events.
- b) The degree to which flood defences and other alleviation/management measures operated as intended, including specifically any factors that may have prevented their full operation.
- c) The overall flood risk assessments for the affected areas and the continued adequacy of these in the light of the flood events. This should include assessment of whether changes to river patterns and/or flood management measures have changed flood risks since earlier assessments.
- d) Whether, in the light of the flooding experienced on 26th/27th November 2012, relevant flood risk management authorities should implement modifications or additions to their flood defence, alleviation and management measures to minimise risk of future flooding to an acceptable level.

More detailed questions for the investigation are suggested in Appendix 1

Relevant Flood Risk Management Authorities

For the purposes of this investigation, Denbighshire County Council has identified the relevant flood risk management authorities as:-

- Denbighshire County Council, as flood management authority responsible for surface flooding and minor water courses, and also as Highways Authority for county roads
- Environment Agency Wales, as flood management authority responsible for main rivers

- Welsh Government, as Highways Authority for the A494 & A55 trunk roads

In addition, whilst not a flood risk management authority, Taylor Wimpey North West will require to input to the investigation as currently responsible for the unadopted surface water drainage system at the Glasdir estate, Ruthin.

Additional Independent Investigation – Glasdir, Ruthin

Whilst the impact of flooding across the County on 26th/27th November 2012 was significant, specific complexities and issues pertain to the flooding event at the Glasdir housing development in Ruthin.

To this end, Denbighshire County Council is additionally commissioning an independent investigation of the flooding at Glasdir. As well as addressing the more general points outlined above in relation to Glasdir, the Council wishes the investigator to review specifically:-

- i. The planning process relating to the development of the Glasdir site, Ruthin, including the flood risk and consequence analyses undertaken, the adequacy of these, the degree to which they were incorporated into permissions given, and adhered to during construction.
- ii. The maintenance and management regimes in place for all relevant flood risk management authorities, the adequacy of those arrangements and the degree to which such arrangements were adhered. This should include flood alert and warning systems as well as physical measures in place to mitigate and manage flood risks.
- iii. The conclusions reached by the Environment Agency in its analysis of the possible causes of flooding at Glasdir, Ruthin, and specifically whether any other contributory factors and/or mitigating measures should be taken into account.

The independent investigation report is expected to fully explore the points raised, and any relevant associated issues, and to present findings and conclusions that arise. The report is also expected to make recommendations of any further action advised for relevant flood risk management authorities to minimise to an acceptable level, the risk of significant future flooding events at Glasdir specifically.

All surveys and studies relevant to these Terms of Reference already undertaken by or on behalf of both Denbighshire County Council or the Environment Agency in relation to Glasdir will be made available to the Independent Investigator. Should s/he consider them necessary to answer the points outlined above, the Independent Investigator will also have the power, in consultation with Denbighshire County Council, to commission additional technical studies, surveys or other such analyses.

Independent Review of Findings

While the Council will carry out the investigation of the causes of flooding at locations other than at Glasdir, the Independent Investigator will undertake a review of the findings and conclusions from those investigations, to provide assurance of their adequacy.

Timescale

The investigations are expected to take 3 months to complete. A final report on all parts of the investigation is therefore expected by late April 2013.

Governance

The investigations will be co-ordinated by an officer working group chaired by the Corporate Director for Economic & Community Ambition. Membership will reflect the relevant flood risk management authorities - Highways & Planning services for Denbighshire County Council, Environment Agency Wales and Welsh Government.

The role of the working group will be to investigate the overall flood events and also to support, through the provision of relevant information and evidence, the independent investigation into the specific events affecting Glasdir.

A Stakeholder Reference Group will also be established to ensure relevant interested parties are informed about progress with the investigations and offered the opportunity to contribute and comment. The Stakeholder Reference Group will comprise the following groups:

- Local Members
- Cabinet Lead Member for Environment & Public Realm
- Leader of the Council
- Resident and business representatives from the affected communities
- Representatives from Ruthin, & Rhuddlan Town Councils and St Asaph City Council
- For Glasdir only, Tai Clywd Housing Association & Taylor Wimpey North West Ltd

Reporting

The final report from the Investigations will be presented to full Council at its meeting on 7 May 2013.

Exclusions

The investigations will cover the causes of the flooding events on 26th/27th November 2012, the exercise by the relevant flood risk management authorities of their responsibilities and whether those authorities need to take any specific action to minimise the risk of future significant flooding.

The investigations will not evaluate the emergency response to or recovery from the flooding events. These are separately covered in reviews being conducted by North Wales Resilience Forum. The findings from the Resilience Forum reviews will help to improve the Council and its partners' emergency response to and recovery from any future incidents, and will be reported to Members once completed.

Detailed Questions – Flooding Event, 26th/27th November 2012

Rainfall, Weather and Conditions

1. What were the weather, ground and river conditions that led to the flooding event?
2. Were they exceptional?
3. How likely are they and flooding of this magnitude to recur?
4. Are there any warning signs/triggers for future risk management?

Flood Alert & Risk Management

5. Are flood alert procedures and mechanisms sufficient? Did they operate as expected on 26/27 November?
6. Does the flooding event of 26/27 November raise any particular issues to be addressed by any relevant flood risk management authority?

Flood Protection & Mitigation Measures

7. Who has responsibility for the various flood protection and mitigation measures involved in the flood event?
8. Are current flood protection and mitigation measures adequate? What scale of flood can they be expected to protect against?
9. What level of flood protection is considered to be 'acceptable'? What, if anything, is needed to deliver that level of protection?
10. What was the cause of flooding at each of the affected locations?
11. Is there any evidence that blockages (in culverts or more generally on the river) caused the flood waters to overtop defences?
12. Is blockage/debris inevitable during a flood? Are flood defences designed to operate with an anticipated level of blockage?
13. What (more) can be done to minimise the risk of unmanageable levels of debris/blockage?

Glasdir issues

14. Were planning permissions for the Glasdir development granted in line with recognised practice and in accordance with relevant planning policy, guidance and regulation?
15. Were flood mitigation recommendations appropriately incorporated into the permissions granted?
16. Were the flood mitigation measures required by the planning permissions adhered to during construction?
17. Was the expert advice sought on flood risk adequate?
18. Did the sequential nature of applications for the Glasdir site affect the quality of advice given or flood mitigation measures recommended?
19. Do the culverts have sufficient capacity to manage a 1:1000 event with or without a reasonable level of blockage?
20. Should flood mitigation recommendations have specified works downstream of the culverts to direct the subsequent flow of diverted flood waters?
21. Did the design of the link road exacerbate flooding at Glasdir once the bund had been overtopped?

22. Did the surface water drainage system exacerbate flooding at Glasdir once the bund had been overtopped?
23. Could downstream blockages have contributed to the flooding at Glasdir? Specific reference has been made to the bridge/weir just north of Glasdir.
24. Are there any specific measures that need to be taken to reduce the risk of flooding at Glasdir to an acceptable level?
25. Is protection against a 1 in 1000 flood event at Glasdir achievable?

St Asaph/Rhuddlan issues

26. Did the tide contribute to flooding at St Asaph or Rhuddlan?
27. Did construction works at Foryd Harbour contribute to flooding at St Asaph or Rhuddlan?
28. Could anything more have been done to prevent overtopping of the defences at St Asaph?
29. Are defences/flood mitigation measures at both locations adequate to provide a reasonable level of protection from flooding?
30. Should additional measures be put in place at St Asaph or Rhuddlan?

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DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
FLOOD INVESTIGATION
STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING : 1

Introduction

In its role as Lead Local Flood Authority, Denbighshire County Council is undertaking an investigation into the flooding incidents that took place at a number of locations across Denbighshire on 26/27 November 2012. The investigations are being carried out under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. In carrying out the investigations, the County Council is working in partnership with Environment Agency Wales and North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Authority.

The purpose of the investigation is to clarify:

- Y Why the flooding happened
- Y How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again
- Y Whether any improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future

A copy of the more detailed Terms of Reference is available on request.

The results of the investigation are due to be reported in May.

Conducting the Investigation

The County Council has established a Flood Investigation Working Group to carry out the investigations and compile the final report. The Working Group is chaired by Rebecca Maxwell, Corporate Director for Economic and Community Ambition and comprises officers from the Council's flooding and highways teams, Environment Agency Wales and the Trunk Roads Authority.

The County Council has also commissioned two independent experts, Professor Jean Venables and Clive Onions, to help with the investigations. Their main focus will be the flood event at Glasdir, Ruthin, for which they will conduct a full independent investigation. They will also review the findings from the investigations at the other flood locations and will validate the conclusions and recommendations. Jean and Clive were recommended to the Council by the Institute of Civil Engineers and are highly regarded in their field.

Alongside the Investigation Working Group, a group of key stakeholders has also been identified. While it will not be possible to include stakeholders directly in the investigations themselves, the Council has committed to ensuring they are informed on progress and alerted to any significant issues as they emerge. This briefing note is part of that process.

Progress to Date

The Flood Investigation Working Group has met 5 times since being established in early January. An early task has been to collate the numerous pieces of information relating to the flooding in Denbighshire on 26/27 November 2012. As well as technical information, the Working Group is also interested in receiving photographs, video footage or other eye witness information from the public. Information can be emailed to flood.investigations@denbighshire.gov.uk

The Working Group has also spent time agreeing the criteria for investigation and identifying the relevant flood locations.

Flooding was widespread in November and it would not be feasible to investigate every incident. The criteria agreed by the Working Group are as follows:

- Y One or more properties with internal flooding
- Y Impact on critical infrastructure, for example main roads or utilities infrastructure
- Y A 'near miss' of either of the above

The Working Group is also taking advice on whether flooding of significant areas of agricultural land should also be included and if so, what the trigger should be.

Having applied the agreed criteria, the Working Group has started investigations for the following flood events:

- Y Rhuddlan
- Y St. Asaph, including properties along Lower Denbigh Road
- Y Brookhouse
- Y Gellifor
- Y Llanynys
- Y Llanbedr DC
- Y Park Place / Mwrog Street, Ruthin
- Y Glasdir, Ruthin
- Y Corwen
- Y Loggerheads

An assessment is also underway on whether to also investigate flooding of agricultural land near Bodelwyddan. It is not unusual for flood locations to be identified some time after a flood event has happened. Any potential additional locations or events can be notified to the Flood Investigation Team using their e.mail address above.

The Working Group has also agreed how the investigations for locations other than Glasdir will be carried out. A 4 stage process is being adopted as follows:

- Stage 1:** Information Gathering
- Stage 2:** Public Consultation
- Stage 3:** Analysis and Recommendations
- Stage 4:** Publication

Most investigations are between Stages 1 and 2. Drop in sessions have been held in St. Asaph, Rhuddlan and Glasdir to share early findings of those investigations and seek views from affected residents. The process for public consultation at the smaller flood locations is still being determined but is likely to be on a more 1:1 basis.

Early Findings

Analysis of the rainfall pattern and weather conditions, together with the previous ground conditions around 26/27 November 2012, are suggesting that this was a more unusual flood event. River levels on 26/27 November were among the highest ever recorded and very close to those seen in 2000 when significant flooding was experienced in Ruthin. The persistent rainfall combined with the high river levels and already saturated ground conditions from other heavy rainfall leading up to 26/27 November, are pointing toward a flood risk rating of close to 1:200.

Contributory factors at each location are still being analysed but in overall terms it appears that the volume of water was more than the rivers could cope with, leading to banks being breached and flood defences being overtopped. Specific factors will apply to each location and these are currently being explored in detail to allow individual reports and recommendations to be made.

The investigations appear to have ruled out two suggested causes:

- Y Dŵr Cymru/Welsh Water has confirmed that it did not release water from Llyn Aled and Llyn Aled Isaf Reservoir
- Y River level records demonstrate that the tide was not the cause of flooding at Rhuddlan or St. Asaph

Interim Actions

It is anticipated that the investigations will take 3 months to complete. As well as investigating the causes of flooding at each location, the Working Group has also been identifying whether any interim action can be taken to mitigate flood risk.

So far, the following actions have been taken:

Glasdir:

Safety screens have been removed from either end of the 5 box culvert and a proactive maintenance check has been instigated should a flood alert be received. Installation of a temporary gauge on the culvert channel is also being explored.

Brookhouse:

Anti flood non-return valves have been instructed for the surface water drains into the main river.

Ruthin:

Anti flood non-return valves have been instructed for the Mwrog Street flood alleviation channel. Precise specifications are currently being agreed. The flood bund at Cae Ddol has been topped up at a low point. An informal flood defence at Maes Ffynnon is being surveyed to allow a full schedule of repairs to be implemented.

Next Steps

The next meeting of the Flood Investigation Working Group is scheduled for 27 February. The main focus for the meeting will be to review the findings for all flood locations, agree the public consultation process for the remaining locations and begin examination of possible solutions and recommendations. In the interim, officers will continue to collate and analyse information.

An initial meeting with Professor Jean Venables and Clive Onions will also take place this week. The purpose of this will be to share information gathered to date, understand what additional information may be required and agree how the Working Group will support the independent investigators. A meeting for Jean and Clive with Glasdir residents is also being arranged.

A further Stakeholder Briefing will be issued shortly after the next Working Group meeting on 27 February. It is hoped to be able to provide a summary of early indications of contributory factors for each location in that briefing, together with details of how the public consultation stages will be carried out.

Rebecca Maxwell

Corporate Director : Economic and Community Ambition

11 February 2013

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
FLOOD INVESTIGATION
STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING: 2

This is the second briefing note summarising progress with the Flood Investigation work being carried out by Denbighshire County Council into the incidents of flooding across Denbighshire on 26/27 November 2012. The Council is working in partnership with Environment Agency Wales and North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Authority. The Investigation Working Group has met twice since the last Briefing note.

As a reminder, the purpose of the investigation work is to clarify:

- Y Why the flooding happened
- Y How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again
- Y Whether any improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future

Investigation Criteria

As set out in the first Briefing note, incidents are being investigated if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Y One or more properties with internal flooding
- Y Disruption to critical infrastructure, e.g. roads or utilities
- Y A repeated 'near miss' of either of the above.

NB: The 'near miss' category has been clarified as locations with repeat 'near misses', i.e. where a pattern of new flooding may be emerging.

The Investigation Working Group is exploring whether a criteria should be included to investigate new patterns of flooding of agricultural or other open land. This is proving far from straightforward and is a topic of national, not just local, debate. Environment Agency colleagues have been participating in national discussions with representatives from the farming and private landowner sector, which may help.

The purpose of investigation work is to understand new and emerging risks and/or unexpected incidents that may need to be managed. Any criteria therefore need to be able to distinguish these from historical known and accepted flood risks. Work on this continues.

Flood Incidents under Investigation

On the basis of the agreed criteria, the following flood incident locations are being investigated:

- Y Rhuddlan
- Y St. Asaph, including properties along Lower Denbigh Road
- Y Brookhouse
- Y Gellifor
- Y Llanynys
- Y Llanbedr DC
- Y Park Place / Mwrog Street / Maes Ffynnon, Ruthin
- Y Glasdir, Ruthin
- Y Corwen
- Y Loggerheads
- Y Sarn Lane **NEW** (disruption to critical infrastructure)
- Y Glyndyfrdwy **NEW** (internal property flooding)

Investigations

The investigation work continues at all locations. Initial findings from a number of locations are summarised separately below.

Overall, hydrological and meteorological analysis suggests that the combination of a prolonged period of intense rainfall on already heavily saturated ground in the Clwyd and Elwy river catchment areas created river events with a likelihood of between 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 (or 1% and 0.5%) of happening in any given year and so are quite rare.

Data shows that the River Elwy was at its highest ever recorded level while the River Clwyd recorded its second highest level and the highest since the floods in 2000. There is no evidence that tidal conditions had any impact on the flooding.

A recent Welsh Government Flood Summit confirmed that last November's flooding in Denbighshire was the 11th worst ever recorded in England and Wales.

Initial Findings by Location

(a) Rhuddlan

Initial findings suggest that the flooding in Marsh Road & Station Road was caused by the River Elwy overtopping its banks upstream of Rhuddlan towards St Asaph. The flood water appears to have bypassed the flood defence bunds and instead flowed across agricultural land parallel to the river. The flood water then travelled along Station Road and Marsh Road, flooding lower lying properties as it did.

A total of 10 properties (residential and commercial) have been confirmed as experiencing flooding, with a maximum height of 60 cms flood water recorded in the lower lying properties.

Investigations are now focusing on whether improvements or extensions to the flood defence bunds upstream towards St Asaph are required, and also whether better channelling of potential future flood water away from properties is needed. The requirement for individual property protection is also being reviewed.

(b) St Asaph

As noted above, the River Elwy recorded its highest ever level on 26/27 November 2012. This was due to prolonged heavy rainfall and saturated ground conditions that limited the ability of the open land to absorb that rainfall. As a result the river overtopped both its banks and the flood defence bunds, leading to the flooding. The flood defences were designed to protect against a 1 in 100 likelihood event. Evidence suggests that this event was beyond that.

It is important to note that, due to the severity of the forecast weather, this overtopping was predicted and consequently it was possible to give residents an advance evacuation alert. The pattern of flooding was as anticipated in the Environment Agency's flood models for an event of this magnitude.

A number of residents have asked whether the bridge at Spring Gardens contributed to the flooding. Initial findings suggest that while the bridge does create a 'constriction' on the flow of water, in this instance it did not contribute significantly to the flooding. Data shows that the height of the water was so significantly above the level of the flood defence bunds that they would have been overtopped even if the bridge had not been in place. What is not yet clear is whether flood waters would also have overtopped in a less rare flood event and if so, what can be done to minimise that risk. Investigations on this are continuing.

Investigations have, however, ruled out any connection between operations at Llyn Aled or Aled Isaf reservoirs and the flooding that occurred. Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water has confirmed that there were no releases of water from the reservoirs and that all agreed operating procedures were adhered to.

Initial findings from the investigations of the slightly separate flood incident on Lower Denbigh Road indicate that flooding was as a result of the river overtopping its banks. A total of 21 properties were flooded. All were in known flood risk areas for 1 in 100 probability events.

c) Brookhouse

Flooding occurred to 7 residential and 1 commercial properties on the Brookhouse terrace. Initial findings are that the River Ystrad, a tributary of the River Clwyd broke its bank, with flood water entering properties through their gardens. A number of properties had already invested in individual property protection and while this does seem to

have limited flood depths, water did still enter the properties and further investigation of the reasons for this is required.

Initial findings also suggest that backflow of flood waters through the drainage system of the adjacent pedestrian tunnel under the A525 may have contributed to the incident.

- d) **Gellifor**
1 residential property experienced internal flooding at Gellifor. Initial indications suggest that culverts containing an ordinary watercourse at this location, mostly in private ownership, were not sufficient to cope with the volume of water. Recommendations are likely to include improved maintenance to reduce the risk of future blockage, further studies of road levels and the upstream catchment, and elements of individual property protection.
- e) **Llanynys**
Investigations are at early stages at Llanynys. Letters have been sent to all properties and replies are awaited. No findings are available yet.
- f) **Llanbedr DC**
1 residential property at this location experienced internal flooding, there were 2 near misses and disruption was also caused to the A494 Trunk Road, although it did not require to be closed.

Initial findings indicate that the watercourse in Llanbedr DC was unable to retain flows within its banks due to a number of circumstances. These included both under-capacity and restrictions in some of the older culverts. As a result, both Lon Cae Glas and the A494 flooded. Once on the A494, initial indications are that there was not a clear channel for flood water to return to the watercourse and flood water flowed towards the flooded property. 2 other residential properties were 'near misses'.

There is also a suggestion of a slightly separate flood incident above the village on the A494. There is limited information available on this flooding. The problem may be linked to highway drainage and the Council is currently liaising with the Trunk Roads Agency on possible solutions.

- g) **Park Place/Mwrog Street/Maes Ffynnon, Ruthin**
Initial findings have identified a low spot in the flood defence bund at Cae Ddol that allowed flood waters to overtop the defence. This has since been made good.

There is also an indication that flood waters may have backed up in parts of the Mwrog Street Flood Alleviation scheme leading to the overtopping experienced in Park Place/Mwrog Street. Non return

valves are being arranged for 3 specific gullies in Park Place & Mwrog Street.

h) Glasdir, Ruthin

The independent investigators have received their first batch of information relating to the flooding incident at Glasdir and the history of the site's development. We are awaiting their feedback on estimated timescales for completion of the investigation work.

A first meeting between the investigators and representatives of the Glasdir residents has also taken place.

Whilst not part of the investigation, the Council and Environment Agency supported Taylor Wimpey Ltd in an information session with mortgage valuers. The session was intended to help valuers prepare for how they advise mortgage lenders in the future. All valuers represented confirmed that the results of the independent investigation will be critical in determining their future position and advice, and were pleased that the work was being carried out.

i) Corwen

Flooding occurred from the River Dee and affected Green Lane, resulting in a road closure that separated the north and south sides of the town. Flooding at Green Lane is a regular occurrence and will be a difficult issue to resolve.

A second flood incident on the A5 in front of the Police, Ambulance and Fire Station has now been confirmed and is under investigation. The source of flooding is believed to be different from Green Lane.

j) Loggerheads

A single (Council owned) property has been confirmed as experiencing internal flooding despite individual property protection being fitted. Investigations are continuing.

k) Sarn Lane

Investigations are at an early stage. The location has been added to the investigation due to the impact on the road to Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. The source of flooding is thought to be separate from that affecting St Asaph and Rhuddlan.

l) Glyndyfrdwy

Investigations are at an early stage. The location has been added following confirmation of internal flooding at a residential property.

Other issues

As well as confirming initial findings for each of the locations under investigations, the Flood Investigation Working Group is also starting to consider possible solutions.

For Glasdir, the operating procedures in the event of any future flood warning have been revised and documented. This is of particular importance while we await the outcome of the independent investigations to ensure that risks, particularly of blockage of the culverts, are minimised.

Installation of a temporary water gauge in the culvert channel at Glasdir has now also been agreed to provide early warning of water entering the system, and should be in place by the end of the month.

More generally, the Working Group is sourcing best practice advice on use of individual property protection equipment, including sandbags, investigating options for easily deployable temporary flood protection systems, and understanding from Environment Agency Wales their current position on river maintenance regimes. It is anticipated that the final investigation report will include comments and recommendations on all of the above.

As set out in the first Briefing Note, while the main focus for the independent investigators is the Glasdir flood event, they are also undertaking a review of findings for the investigations carried out by the Council and Environment Agency. Clive Onions, one of the independent investigators, has now started this work for the investigations completed so far.

Timescale

The Investigation Working Group is still working towards a reporting deadline of the Council meeting in May, although this is proving challenging and may slip to June. As noted above, we are awaiting feedback from the independent investigators on the timescale for concluding the Glasdir element of the work.

A progress report will be made to Partnerships Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in April.

Rebecca Maxwell
Corporate Director: Economic & Community Ambition
Denbighshire County Council

13 March 2013

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
FLOOD INVESTIGATION
STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING: 3**

This is the third briefing note summarising progress with the Flood Investigation work being carried out by Denbighshire County Council into the incidents of flooding across Denbighshire on 26/27 November 2012.

There has been a significant gap between the second and third briefing notes, for which apologies. The Investigation Working Group has met several times since the last Briefing note and good progress has been made.

Progress with Investigations

As stakeholders will be aware, the Council is working in partnership with Environment Agency Wales and North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Authority. As a reminder, the purpose of the investigation work is to clarify:

- Why the flooding happened
- How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again
- Whether any improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future

The Working Group is now ready to present the first part of its Investigation Report to Denbighshire County Council at its meeting on 9th July. The report is in the process of being finalised and will include findings, conclusions and recommendations for all locations with the exception of Glasdir, Ruthin.

For reference, the locations covered will be:

- St Asaph, including Lower Denbigh Road
- Rhuddlan
- Sarn Lane
- Brookhouse
- Gellifor
- Llanynys
- Llanbedr DC
- Park Place/Mwrog Street/Maes Ffynnon, Ruthin
- Corwen
- Glyndyfrdwy
- Loggerheads

For all locations, the report will set out our understanding of the extent and cause of flooding at each location and will identify if there are any actions that need to be taken to manage flood risk appropriately in the future.

Due to the scale of the weather event (between 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 annual probability as reported in the previous briefing note) there may not be recommendations for all locations.

As agreed in the original process, the investigation findings, conclusions and recommendations are currently being reviewed by the Independent Investigators commissioned by the Council. It is anticipated that their review will be complete by the time the Council considers the Investigation Report at its meeting on 9th July.

Glasdir, Ruthin

As noted above, the Investigation Report to be presented to Denbighshire County Council at its meeting on 9th July will cover all locations with the exception of Glasdir, Ruthin. Due to the complexity of the flooding at that location, the Council commissioned independent experts, Dr Jean Venables and Mr Clive Onions to conduct the investigation into that particular flooding incident.

It has taken much longer than originally anticipated to develop and calibrate the hydrology and flood models for the Glasdir event and this has delayed completion of the investigation work. It has not, therefore, been possible to include findings, conclusions and recommendations for Glasdir in the report for 9th July. Good progress is now being made, however, and we hope to have an anticipated completion date confirmed with us by Dr Venables shortly.

Meanwhile, the Working Group has spent considerable time assessing potential interim flood protection measures for the Glasdir estate, but unfortunately without much success to date.

We had previously removed the grilles from the culverts by the bund to maximise flow of water through the culverts in any flooding event. We have also now installed a hard standing platform above the culverts to allow mechanical clearance of any debris should flood water start flowing through the culverts. A telemetry enabled water gauge has also now been installed at the culverts to provide additional early warnings and a comprehensive operational response plan has been prepared.

Despite the Working Group's best efforts, however, we have been unable to identify a suitable interim measure for the bund itself but we are continuing to explore options.

Communications

As noted above, the first part of the Investigation Report will be presented to Denbighshire County Council at its meeting on 9th July. The report will be a public document and available from the Council's website for anyone who wishes to read it.

In addition, we will be arranging a drop in session in St Asaph at the request of the residents' representatives, shortly after the Council meeting. A date and venue have yet to be confirmed.

We will arrange a similar session for residents at Glasdir as findings, conclusions and recommendations from Dr Venables' investigation become clear.

Residents at all other locations either have been or will be contacted directly before 9th July to ensure they are aware of the investigation findings and recommendations for their own particular flooding.

An interim report was made to the Council's Partnership Scrutiny Committee in April and again the reports for and minutes of that meeting are publicly available on the Council's website.

Rebecca Maxwell

Corporate Director: Economic & Community Ambition

Denbighshire County Council

21st June 2013

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Report To: Council

Date of Meeting: 9th July 2013

Lead Members: Councillor Hugh Evans, Lead Member Economic Development

Report Author: Rebecca Maxwell, Corporate Director: Economic & Community Ambition

Title: Denbighshire's draft Economic & Community Ambition Strategy – Public Consultation

1. What is the report about?

A Task & Finish Group has been working since February to develop Denbighshire's first Economic & Community Ambition strategy in line with the Corporate Plan priority of developing the local economy. Work is now complete and a final consultation draft has been prepared.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Task & Finish Group has produced a draft Strategy and is proposing public consultation on it before formal adoption of the Strategy and supporting Delivery Plan by Council in October. Approval is sought for the draft Strategy to be made available for public consultation as set out in the report.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Council notes the work undertaken by the Task & Finish Group to prepare the draft Economic & Community Ambition Strategy as attached at Appendix 1 and approves it for public consultation over the summer as set out in Appendix 2.

4. Report details.

4.1 The Corporate Plan identifies Developing the Local Economy as one of its 7 corporate priorities. Revitalising the local economy was named as a key concern by residents during development of the Corporate Plan and seen as a means of achieving a sound base for all other developments.

4.2 Since February, a Task & Finish Group of Members and Officers has been meeting to develop Denbighshire's Economic & Community Ambition Strategy. The Strategy aims to explain how the Council will meet its corporate objective for developing the economy. The Task & Finish Group met 11 times between February and June. Membership achieved a reasonable spread of representation from Councillors

across political groups and MAGs. Details of the Task & Finish Group are attached at Appendix 3 for reference.

- 4.3 The draft Strategy has been developed with a focus on benefits and outcomes. The Task & Finish Group agreed that the overall benefit to be achieved by developing the local economy should ultimately be felt by local residents. The overall outcome behind the strategy has been defined as:

Denbighshire is a county with high levels of employment and good levels of income in all of its towns and communities

- 4.4 From this, the Task & Finish Group created the following Vision Statement for Denbighshire's Economic & Community Ambition:

Developing Opportunities, Creating Confidence

Working together to make Denbighshire a place where:

- ***Businesses, established and new, grow and flourish***
- ***Our towns and communities are vibrant and prosper***
- ***Residents enjoy a good quality of life and can participate in the local economy***

- 4.5 Achieving this vision will require a range of core factors to be addressed. These have been identified as priority areas for action and form the core structure of the Strategy. They are:

- ***The right Infrastructure for Growth***
- ***Businesses that are Supported and Connected***
- ***Maximised Economic Strengths/Opportunities***
- ***A High Quality Skilled Workforce***
- ***Vibrant Towns and Communities***
- ***A Well Promoted Denbighshire***

- 4.6 For each factor, desired outcomes, issues and challenges that will need to be addressed and areas for action have been identified, together with indicators of success against which impact and progress can be assessed. An initial 4 year indicative Delivery Plan has also been developed that aligns with the timescale for delivery of the Corporate Plan. The Strategy itself, however, has a longer timescale and covers the period 2013 – 2023.

- 4.7 The Task & Finish Group has concluded that the outcomes identified and the areas for action highlighted offer the best means of delivering the ambition of both the Strategy and the Corporate Plan. It recommends that these are now tested through consultation with Denbighshire's communities and businesses before the Strategy is presented for formal adoption by the Council in the autumn.

- 4.8 It is proposed that the draft Strategy and Delivery Plan attached at Appendix 1 are made available for public consultation during July & August through a range of opportunities. Details are set out in Appendix 2.
- 4.9 Consultation will take the form of a mixture of direct approaches and more open, drop-in and focus group events. Target audiences will include local businesses and their representative groups/networks, local residents, Town & Community Councils, schools and young people, and partner organisations.
- 4.10 Specific consultation events will be arranged to explore in detail the Strategy in relation to a) Tourism, b) Priority Sectors for Growth, and c) Rural Economic Development. These will be complemented by more generic consultation events arranged on a geographic basis across the county.
- 4.11 The three key questions the consultation will seek to test opinion on are:
- a) Are the Vision, intended outcomes and underpinning principles broadly appropriate for Denbighshire?
 - b) Does the Strategy capture the important issues, challenges and opportunities affecting Denbighshire's local economy?
 - c) Will the headline actions in the Delivery Plan achieve the right impact?
- 4.12 The results of the consultation will be considered by a final meeting of the Task & Finish Group before the final Economic & Community Ambition Strategy, Delivery Plan and Performance Framework are presented to Council for formal approval in October.
- 4.13 Once the Strategy has been approved, oversight of delivery will be provided by the Economic & Community Ambition Programme Board. It will monitor progress and impact, help to resolve problems and barriers to delivery and will recommend changes as necessary during the lifetime of the Strategy to ensure the desired impact can be achieved. A key role for the Programme Board will be to ensure projects and activities deliver their intended benefits. Further information on the proposed composition and role of the Programme Board, and the overall accountability and governance arrangements, is set out in the draft Strategy.

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

Developing the Local Economy was identified as a key corporate priority in the Corporate Plan. The draft Economic & Community Ambition Strategy sets out in more detail how the Council intends to address this priority.

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

The Corporate Plan identified £2M as an indicative allocation towards meeting the costs of implementing the Corporate Priority for the Economy. £160K was allocated in the 2013/14 budget. This was in addition to previous allocations for Regeneration and Town & Area Plans. This new funding, together with existing service budgets and opportunities for external grant funding, will provide the majority of funding required for implementation. As projects and initiatives are developed, full costs will become clearer and can be considered within the context of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

7. What consultations have been carried out and has an Equality Impact Assessment Screening been undertaken?

The draft Strategy has been prepared through the cross party Task & Finish Group. Early consultations were also held with a cross section of local businesses. Feedback from the public on development of the Council's Corporate Plan highlighted the importance of developing the local economy to Denbighshire residents.

The report and Appendix 2 set out proposals for formal consultation on the proposed Strategy and Delivery Plan.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out over the summer.

8. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Developing the Economy in Denbighshire has been identified in the Corporate Plan as one of the Council's priorities and funds have been set aside to begin projects. Any expenditure needs to be contained within these funds or existing budgets.

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

A risk assessment on delivery of the Strategy will be carried out over the summer. The Economic & Community Ambition Programme Board will oversee management of the Risk Register that emerges.

10. Power to make the Decision

Section 2, Local Government Act 2000

Contact officer:

Corporate Director for Economic & Community Ambition
Tel: 01824 706061

Developing Opportunities, Creating Confidence

Denbighshire's Economic & Community Ambition Strategy 2013 – 2023

Working together to make Denbighshire a place where:

- ***Businesses, established and new, grow and flourish***
- ***Our towns and communities are vibrant and prosper***
- ***All residents enjoy a good quality of life and can participate in the local economy***

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce Denbighshire County Council's Economic & Community Ambition Strategy, *Developing Opportunities, Creating Confidence*.

Economic development has been highlighted as one of Denbighshire's top priorities in our corporate plan for the term of this council. There has been both extensive and intensive work carried out over the last 12 months to develop the strategy and I am confident that the emerging priorities are the right ones for Denbighshire.

As we all know the economy, both nationally and internationally, is in difficulty and the strategy highlights our intentions to play our part locally with clarity and conviction, where I firmly believe we have a significant role of enabling growth and developing opportunities.

Our ambition is that Denbighshire is a county with high levels of employment and good levels of income for residents in all of its towns and communities. In order to achieve this we recognise the work that is happening at a regional and national level and will embrace this agenda as part of our strategy.

We sincerely hope that we can develop opportunities and create confidence for the residents of this county and I would like to thank all those that have made a contribution to developing the strategy, and to those who will work with us to make it a reality.

**Cllr Hugh Evans, Leader and Lead Member for Economic Development,
Denbighshire County Council**

INTRODUCTION

Denbighshire County Council has identified ‘Developing the Local Economy’ as one of its 7 Corporate Priorities. In common with communities across Wales, Denbighshire residents and businesses have stressed the importance of reviving the local economy to provide a sound base for all other development. This Economic & Community Ambition Strategy has been developed to explain how the Council will achieve its corporate objective.

By and large, it is businesses that deliver economic growth. As a local authority, however, there is much that Denbighshire County Council can do to create and support the conditions that can allow those businesses to be successful and flourish.

This is in line with Welsh Government policy on Growth and Sustainable Jobs which seeks to “strengthen the conditions that will enable business to create jobs and sustainable economic growth”. Our Economic & Community Ambition Strategy, therefore, focuses on what we can do ourselves and with our partners to support those conditions for growth.

Business success on its own, however, is not enough. Our intention is that economic growth will result in improved outcomes for Denbighshire residents. Our ambition is that Denbighshire is a county with high levels of employment and good levels of income for residents in all its towns and communities.

Welsh Government’s recent regeneration strategy, Vibrant & Viable Places supports this aspiration with a vision that everybody in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life.

This Strategy sets out our ambitions for Denbighshire’s local economy and the benefits that we expect economic growth to achieve for our residents. The accompanying Delivery Plan describes the actions we will take, together with other partners across Denbighshire and North Wales, to realise our ambitions.

It is a long term Strategy and not one that will be delivered overnight. We hope, however, that our actions will have impact and we have identified measures against which we can judge our success. The Strategy does not stand on its own. It complements and is supported by a range of other key strategies, including the recently approved Local Development Plan, the Denbighshire Big Plan, the Rhyl Going Forward Regeneration Strategy and the Modernising Education programme to name but a few.

Ultimately, we intend that our actions under the Economic & Community Ambition Strategy and our other key policy programmes, we will see Denbighshire’s businesses go from strength to strength, offering good quality, well paid and rewarding jobs for our residents and providing them with the means to enjoy a good quality of life in our towns and communities. If we are successful we should expect to see reductions in unemployment, increases in household incomes, improved birth and sustainability rates for businesses, and increased economic activity and participation generally across the county.

OUR AMBITION

Our expectation that local economic growth can lead to improved outcomes for our residents is based on an economic model that links business success with increased opportunities for work, leading to higher levels of income and increased spending power that in turn help to sustain vibrant towns and communities. Vibrant towns and communities themselves encourage consumer demand, leading to more successful businesses and increased opportunities for employment.



We recognise that this is a simplistic view of the economy, nevertheless we believe it is sound.

We also recognise, however, that we cannot look to Denbighshire alone for economic growth. The economy does not recognise organisational boundaries. If we are to achieve the outcomes we desire for Denbighshire residents, we will need to look further afield - to neighbouring economies in North Wales and beyond – to ensure we harness the best opportunities available for our residents and our businesses.

The Strategy, therefore, looks both at what we can do within Denbighshire to stimulate and support economic growth and the creation of jobs, and also how we can help to connect Denbighshire residents and businesses to opportunities outside the county.

Our Strategy has been developed to align with both Welsh Government's overall approach to sustainable economic growth and also the aspirations of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to transform the economy of North Wales, improving productivity, competitiveness and growth, and leading to more prosperous communities for all.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Our location

Denbighshire covers an area of 844 km² and has a population of around 94,000.

The economy of Denbighshire is diverse. In the more urban north of the county, the seaside towns of Rhyl and Prestatyn dominate and the retail, leisure and tourism sectors remain major employers. Also in the north, however, is St Asaph Business Park - home to a growing opto-electronics cluster and a strategically important business park within the region, with good prospects for growth.

Further south, Denbighshire is predominantly rural in nature, characterised by a network of small towns and villages situated within a high quality landscape environment. Tourism and agriculture are key sectors. Smaller industrial and business parks provide space for light industry and businesses across the county.

The recently approved Local Development Plan allocates a further 50 hectares of employment land, including a Key Strategic Site for mixed use development at Bodelwyddan in the north of the county, close to the existing St Asaph Business Park, as well as extensions to St Asaph Business Park itself and other sites in Denbigh, Ruthin and Corwen. It is anticipated that these allocations have the potential to support 8,000 new jobs in the county, not including construction.

North Denbighshire is served by the arterial transport corridors of the North Wales rail line and the A55 trunk road. Transport links within the remainder of the county are less strong. High levels of both inward and outward commuting are key features of Denbighshire's local economy. There is easy access from Denbighshire to 2 international airports (Manchester & Liverpool) and 2 international ports (Holyhead and Liverpool/Birkenhead).

Denbighshire has connections to neighbouring authorities and economies. As well as being an integral part of the North Wales economy with the five other local Councils, Denbighshire is closely linked to the Mersey Dee Alliance economic area. Many communities and businesses in Denbighshire are within easy travel distance of opportunities in the strongly competitive economies of Liverpool and Manchester city regions. Further opportunities are presented within the 7 Enterprise Zones that are within broadly 60 - 90 minutes travel distance from Denbighshire.

Our workforce

Economic activity in Denbighshire generally is slightly above the North Wales level but below that of the UK as a whole. This masks pockets of significant economic inactivity and deprivation however, with areas of Rhyl and Upper Denbigh among the 10% most deprived in Wales. Unemployment is most pronounced for younger residents, with 16 to 24 year olds worst affected.

The recession has seen total numbers of jobs in Denbighshire fall sharply since 2008. The rate of decline has been steeper than the rest of North Wales.

Denbighshire has proved to be a popular retirement area and its population has an older than average age profile. This is predicted to continue to rise. Young people, particularly between 18 and 35 years old, tend to leave Denbighshire, often for employment or further/higher education. A thriving economy needs sufficient people of working age with the right skills for its labour market to function effectively. Access to work, suitable learning and training opportunities and affordable housing opportunities are key factors in attracting and retaining a younger working age population.

Qualification rates within the working age population are similar to those in the rest of the UK, although fewer residents tend to be educated to degree level. Pockets of lower achievement exist, however these are being addressed with significant improvements in the quality of learning and teaching. Denbighshire is a high performing education authority and schools support young people to achieve good qualifications, however the small numbers of young people leaving school without a formal qualification is identified as an area for improvement.

Just over a quarter of Denbighshire's population is Welsh speaking, with significant concentrations in the centre and south of the county. A sizeable and growing proportion of Denbighshire's school students receive their education bilingually or through the medium of Welsh.

The majority of the workforce lives in the urban north of the county. Transport and accessibility can present issues for residents and businesses in some of the more rural areas of Denbighshire.

Our businesses

The leading seven sectors in terms of employment in Denbighshire comprise health, retail, education, public administration, food and beverage services, social work and residential care. Together these seven sectors account for two thirds of the workforce.

The public sector, particularly health and social care, is the dominant source of employment in Denbighshire. The proportion of jobs in the public sector is the highest for any local authority area in the UK. The continuing constraints on public sector funding present a risk for Denbighshire's economy as a result.

Equally, however, public sector investment, particularly in construction projects, continues to offer significant economic opportunities. The North Wales Construction Procurement Framework is intended to help the six North Wales Councils balance the need to ensure best value construction contracts with maximising the impact of the anticipated £200M spend on the local economy.

Jobs in the private sector in Denbighshire tend to be in retail, tourism or leisure, of which many are seasonal and lower paid. There is, however, a growing advanced manufacturing base in the opto-electronics sector and a strong construction and related trades presence in the county as well.

Agriculture also represents an important source of employment in the county. Many of the farms in Denbighshire, however, depend on the EU Common Agricultural Policy for a significant proportion of their income, which will be affected by the changes taking effect from 2014.

There has been a drop in the number of active businesses in Denbighshire since the start of the recession, but the county still has more active businesses by population than Wales as a whole. Significant numbers of these are small and very small businesses (fewer than 50 employees), with correspondingly lower numbers of medium and large businesses. Rates of self employment are in line with the rest of the UK, although higher than in Wales more generally.

There is more that we need to do to understand the business make up of Denbighshire and the needs of its businesses.

Our partners

Along with the other five Councils in North Wales, Denbighshire is a member of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. The Board is committed to working together to transform and grow the economy in North Wales. It has identified three priority areas for focus – the Advanced Manufacturing sector, the Energy and Environment sector, and promoting North Wales for inward investment.

Looking further afield, the Mersey Dee Alliance seeks to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the economic area that spans North East Wales, West Cheshire and the Wirral. Manufacturing, particularly automotive and aerospace, chemical industries, financial services and food are the main components of this economic area, much of which is within easy reach and can present employment and commercial opportunities for Denbighshire's residents and businesses. We anticipate that Cheshire West LEP will become an increasingly important partner.

Further and Higher Education opportunities are available locally through Coleg Llandrillo, Coleg Cambria, and Glyndwr, Bangor and Chester Universities.

The Local Service Board for Conwy & Denbighshire has identified a thriving and sustainable economy and skilled workforce as one its priority outcomes.

Whilst there are local networks of businesses across Denbighshire, our engagement with the business community at a wider, more strategic level needs more attention.

The performance of our economy

- We have a lower Gross Value Added (GVA) than the rest of the UK, a trend that has widened since the recession. Levels are also lower than neighbouring economies to the east (Flintshire/Wrexham).
- Business birth, death and survival rates have worsened since the start of the recession with a widening of the gap between Denbighshire and the rest of the UK. We no longer outperform the rest of North Wales on this measure.
- Our unemployment rate is similar to UK average levels, however the numbers of people who are economically inactive due to ill health or retirement are higher.
- Our overall average performance masks pockets of significant deprivation in Rhyl and Upper Denbigh
- Median household incomes are lower in Denbighshire than most other Welsh authorities. The gap between income levels across the county is widening.
- Employment in Denbighshire is dominated by the public sector, with private sector employment dominated by often seasonal and lower paid jobs in the tourism, retail and leisure sector.
- There has been a sharp decline in the number of jobs in Denbighshire since the start of the recession. The decline has been steeper than in the rest of North Wales.
- The sectors providing the majority of employment in Denbighshire are generally not those with strong prospects for growth.
- Areas of strong economic growth within easy reach offer commercial and supply chain opportunities for Denbighshire businesses and employment opportunities for Denbighshire residents. High levels of both inward and outward commuting are a feature of Denbighshire's economy.
- The recently approved Local Development Plan has allocated an additional 50 hectares of employment land, estimated to be capable of supporting 8,000 new jobs. The allocation of 7,500 housing units will provide additional homes to attract and retain working age population in the county.
- The North Wales economy as a whole is estimated to be worth around £10bn per year and to represent around 25% of the economy of Wales as a whole. North Wales companies account for almost 30% of the manufacturing output of Wales.
- More broadly, the scale of the economy running along the M56/A55 corridor from Manchester to Holyhead is estimated to generate an output of £31bn per year. The economy around Merseyside is also growing and will offer additional opportunities.
- Denbighshire is well placed geographically to take advantage of these areas of economic growth, both through jobs for its residents and commercial opportunities for its businesses.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Our ambition is not a quick fix. It is a long term vision that will take time and effort to deliver. It is also aspirational and we may not be able to achieve it all in the lifetime of this plan.

If we are to make progress towards achieving the vision set out in our Economic & Community Ambition Strategy, we need to ensure a range of core factors are addressed. These have been identified as priority areas for action and are the **Themes** around which the Strategy and Action Plan is structured.

We believe that Denbighshire will be better placed to achieve its vision for Economic & Community Ambition if we concentrate our efforts, and those of our partners, into working to deliver:

- *The right **Infrastructure for Growth***
- *Businesses that are **Supported and Connected***
- *Maximised **Economic Strengths/Opportunities***
- *A **High Quality Skilled Workforce***
- ***Vibrant Towns and Communities***
- *A **Well Promoted Denbighshire***

We do not have the resources to do everything. The **Delivery Plan** accompanying this Strategy describes in more detail the actions we will focus on over the next 4 years to move us towards our longer term vision.

In developing the Delivery Plan, we have worked hard to identify and prioritise those actions we believe will have most impact in addressing the issues and challenges facing Denbighshire's economy, and are most likely to deliver the benefits we seek for our residents.

We have also been guided by the following underlying **principles**:

- **Inclusive.** The strategy is intended to have impact county wide and to deliver economic and community ambition across Denbighshire's many communities.
- **Differentiated.** At the same time, differing needs across the county will be recognised and addressed.
- **Holistic.** The strategy aims to deliver jobs/opportunities at all levels – from entry level to advanced - and across economic sectors. We will work to avoid over-reliance on one sector.
- **Balanced.** The strategy is intended to support both new and established businesses. Options for economic growth will be explored both through indigenous business growth and inward investment.
- **Sustainable.** The strategy aims to deliver a local economy that is sustainable and resilient to change in the long term
- **Outcome focused.** We will focus our efforts on actions that we assess will have the biggest impact on the issues we consider to be the most important to address. We will prioritise accordingly.

THEME 1: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR GROWTH

Outcomes:

1. We have effective transport connections that enable people to access jobs, and businesses to access markets/customers
2. We have modern digital and voice communication networks that meet the needs of businesses, residents and visitors
3. We have a good and readily available supply of appropriate business premises and land that supports established businesses to grow and new businesses to start up

Having the right infrastructure in place is critical to ensuring that businesses can locate in the right place, with easy access to a relevant workforce and the ability to deliver goods and services to relevant customers and markets. For residents, the right infrastructure can help with connections to employment, learning and services. Infrastructure can take many forms. For the purposes of this strategy, we have focused on transport, communication networks and business land and premises.

Infrastructure planning, particularly for transport, takes place largely at regional level. Denbighshire County Council is an active participant in the TAIH regional transport consortium and has recently contributed to the North East Wales Integrated Transport study. The North Wales Regional Transport Strategy is due for renewal in 2014 and presents an opportunity for us to promote the need for investment in key transport infrastructure to support the county's economic growth.

Issues & Challenges

Our analysis has identified the following key challenges we believe need to be addressed to ensure we have the right infrastructure for growth:

Transport

1. Transport infrastructure network has significant weaknesses, particularly for North-South road connections. Mainline rail services are restricted to the coastal North and are relatively limited in frequency. The A55 trunk road provides good East-West connections but also risks by-passing Denbighshire's towns and communities. Significant investment in the strategic road network in and around Denbighshire does not currently appear as a priority in regional or national investment plans.
2. Public transport services are limited in more rural areas and fragmented across the county as a whole. Public transport does not currently represent a realistic choice for many residents as a means of travel to work. Journey times, particularly to destinations outside the County, can be long with only very limited direct services available to key employment locations.

3. Transport costs are increasingly expensive. Bus and rail fares are expected to rise faster than general inflation and fuel costs will continue to be affected by the volatile petroleum market. Changes to the subsidies available to bus operators risk both prices and coverage of bus services. Anecdotally, difficulty with travel arrangements is limiting the ability of businesses to recruit and residents to find suitable employment.

Communications

4. Mobile and broadband performance and availability lags behind other areas of the UK. Our overall rating for broadband coverage is 4 (with 5 being the worst score) and while the Superfast Cymru Fibre Broadband roll out will improve performance overall, it is likely that a number of our more rural communities will be hard to reach and remain poorly served. Equally, as a rural county, Denbighshire experiences significant problems with mobile coverage in a number of communities.
5. A strategic vision for digital needs and opportunities in Denbighshire is lacking. Compared with other areas, Denbighshire's vision for how digital technology can benefit both its businesses and its residents is underdeveloped.

Business Land & Premises

6. Current financial climate is limiting developer interest in creating new commercial and business space. The days in which investors would support speculative development schemes have gone. In addition, lack of key infrastructure to allow development to start – access, utilities etc – can affect timing and ultimately viability of site development.
7. There is low availability of serviced business land and premises in many areas across the county. The Local Development Plan analysis identified a land supply need of 50 ha up to 2021. The need is spread across the county but with stronger demand along the A55 corridor.
8. Allocated employment sites are at risk from 'mixed use' developments. Understandably, developers are seeking to maximise their returns from any site development. As a result there has been a trend towards more mixed use development on sites officially reserved for employment use only. Balancing loss of employment land with the prospect of no development at all is a significant challenge.
9. Competition for investment from Enterprise Zones and business parks in counties along the A55 and in North West England may reduce Denbighshire's attractiveness as a business location.

Headline Actions

We aim to address the issues and challenges, and make progress towards our strategic outcome for Infrastructure by focusing on the following areas:

Workstream 1.1: Transport

- a) Identify the elements of the local transport infrastructure and network that act as limits on local economic development and ensure these are reflected in a revised Regional Transport Strategy and other infrastructure investment plans as appropriate

- b) Contribute to the business case for modernisation/electrification of rail services in North Wales
- c) Improve integration of local public transport services and information to make them more easily accessible as a realistic option for travel to work
- d) Explore options for reducing or subsidising travel costs for certain groups of residents, with a particular focus on young people

Workstream 1.2: Digital & Mobile

- a) Develop a 'Digital Denbighshire' Plan, including:
 - i. Comprehensive mapping of broadband and mobile communications provision across the county
 - ii. Detailed understanding of 'not spot' areas
 - iii. Targeted infrastructure improvements, including encouragement of investment by infrastructure providers
 - iv. Skills development for individuals and businesses
 - v. Stimulation of use and uptake
 - vi. Identification of Digital Champions/Ambassador businesses to celebrate success, share good practice and promote Denbighshire as a location for digital businesses

Workstream 1.3: Land & Premises

- a) Create a live directory of available business land and premises across all sectors
- b) Encourage and facilitate activation of strategic development sites to make them 'shovel ready'
- c) Undertake a review of the industrial and commercial property portfolios of public agencies locally (DCC, WAG, BCUHB etc) leading to creation of a strategic investment and development plan
- d) Explore demand for and encourage development of incubator and 'move on' business units
- e) Consider options for incentive schemes to attract businesses and/or developers

Indicators of Success

If we are successful in our work to deliver the right infrastructure for growth in Denbighshire, we should expect to see:

- Fewer people and/or businesses reporting that travel difficulties present a barrier to employment
- More businesses selling goods and services to a wider area
- An improvement in overall broadband performance
- Good mobile network coverage – both 3G and 4G – with more premises able to receive signals from a range of network providers
- Fewer broadband and mobile 'not spot' locations across the county
- Better access to WiFi for visitors to Denbighshire
- More businesses active in e-commerce
- Key strategic employment sites either in use or ready to be developed
- Better use and availability of business premises across Denbighshire

THEME 2: SUPPORTED & CONNECTED BUSINESSES

Outcomes

1. We have easy to understand, accessible and high quality business support services available for established and new businesses
2. We have a strong local business community that benefits from being well connected, both within Denbighshire and to opportunities outside the county
3. Denbighshire County Council's procurement activity benefits local businesses and residents

Businesses, particularly small and medium sized businesses, have been significantly affected by the current global financial situation. The Voice of Small Business Index from FSB Wales continues to report that small and medium sized businesses in Wales are significantly less optimistic about their business prospects than their counterparts in the rest of the UK. Business birth and survival rates in Denbighshire have both been adversely affected by the current global financial situation.

By and large, it is businesses that deliver economic growth. As a rural area, Denbighshire has more small and very small businesses than more urban economies. Anything which constrains the ability of our local businesses to be successful will have a significant impact on our local economy.

Other sections of this Strategy address some of the factors that can affect the success of a business – availability of a suitable workforce, infrastructure to support business operations, and activities to stimulate demand. This section focuses on support to businesses themselves, as well as on ways to improve connections between businesses – both for market opportunities and to learn from each other.

Issues & Challenges

Our analysis has identified the following key challenges we believe need to be addressed to ensure we provide the right support for businesses and enable them to be better connected – to each other and to opportunities for growth:

1. Business support and advice services are seen as complex, confusing and hard to access with a wide range of competing providers. There is a complex landscape of agencies offering support and advice to businesses and many different initiatives and programmes in which businesses would participate. Businesses have told us that navigating this maze is extremely difficult and that the system rarely seems to be working together.
2. Access to business finance and credit continues to be problematic. The FSB continues to find poor access to finance operating as a barrier to growth for its members. Cost of finance has also proved problematic for many small businesses. Cash flow continues to be challenging for businesses, particularly small and very small businesses.

3. Many businesses find business rates both expensive and confusing. The Council has very little influence over business rate policy with Welsh & UK Government setting the agenda. We do, however, have the opportunity to make representations and will continue to lobby for greater flexibility and more local determination of business rates.
4. Business engagement and networking across Denbighshire is patchy and fragmented. We have a large number of local and regional networks to which Denbighshire businesses can belong but we have no obvious central point of contact or umbrella body. As a result we do not know how comprehensive the coverage of existing networks is or how many of our businesses are participating.
5. Council regulatory services are seen by many businesses as complex and overly bureaucratic, and a barrier to growth. A UK Taskforce identified complex regulation and 'red tape' as an unnecessary burden on businesses and the economy. Since then administrations across the UK have sought to introduce a more streamlined approach based on the principles of proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency and targeted action.
6. The Council's ability to direct its procurement activity to local businesses is constrained by procurement regulations and the need to deliver value for money from cheaper contracts. Council procurement activity is not only driven by a desire to support the local economy, but also by the need to achieve value for money from public spend. Balancing these potentially competing priorities can be challenging.
7. Levels of local procurement are also constrained by the ability of local businesses to meet the Council's supply needs.

Headline Actions

We aim to address the issues and challenges, and make progress towards achieving our strategic outcome for Supported & Connected Businesses by focusing on the following areas:

Workstream 2.1: Business Support

- a) Work with all existing agencies and providers to establish a multi-agency Business Advice and Support Partnership that will operate a One Stop Shop approach for businesses seeking advice and support
- b) Explore the potential for additional business grants and/or loans as part of the Advice & Support Partnership discussions
- c) Ensure Council regulatory services adopt a more business friendly approach to their operations ensuring that as far as possible, regulation is proportionate, consistent, accountable, transparent and targeted.

Workstream 2.2: Local Business Connections

- a) Support and facilitate effective business networking across Denbighshire
- b) Support and encourage business to business mentoring across Denbighshire
- c) Consider establishing Denbighshire Business Week and Denbighshire Business Awards scheme

- d) Undertake analysis of local supply chain/business to business purchasing within Denbighshire to identify areas for further action
- e) Consider how to achieve effective strategic engagement with Denbighshire's Business community

Workstream 2.3: DCC Procurement and Economic Impact

- a) Revise DCC's procurement policy to adopt an effective Local Procurement/Community Benefits approach that supports local businesses and provides employment opportunities for local residents
- b) Undertake effective Supplier Development and Engagement activity to improve the ability of local businesses to participate effectively in public procurement opportunities
- c) Develop a 'Business Friendly' culture across all Council Services

Indicators of Success

If we are successful in our work to enable better supported and connected businesses in Denbighshire, we should expect to see:

- More businesses finding it easier to get Business advice & support, and benefiting from the advice and support received
- More effective business networks across the county, delivering quantifiable benefit to their members
- Local businesses winning more business from Denbighshire County Council and other public procurement contracts
- More businesses and residents benefiting as a result of Social Benefit clauses in Denbighshire County Council contracts

THEME 3: OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Outcomes

1. We build on the strength of our tourism sector and ensure it makes an increasingly strong contribution to Denbighshire's economy
2. We exploit new opportunities for growth, with a focus on the Manufacturing and Energy & Environmental Technologies sectors
3. We encourage growth in the Social Enterprise sector to deliver alternative and complementary opportunities for businesses and jobs

The economy does not recognise organisational or political boundaries. Economic growth is dependent on businesses being able to connect with and grasp economic opportunity wherever it is located – within their existing markets but with a wider reach, and potentially through diversification into new market/product areas.

Denbighshire is geographically well positioned to take advantage of economic growth opportunities in neighbouring economies, and also to act as a location for new business growth itself. This section of our Strategy focuses on understanding our existing strengths and how they can be made to work harder, our potential strengths and what sectors we might be well placed to attract growth in, and also the threats to our economy from our existing business and employment profile and how we should seek to minimise those threats.

Emerging research suggests that economies that are most likely to be resilient in the future and best able to adapt to social, economic, environmental and demographic change are those that have high levels of diversity in the local economy, a balance between private, public and third sector economies, effective public services and a robust public sector offering vision, guidance and leadership, a close integration between land use planning and economic development and strong provision for young people.

Whilst we will look to neighbouring economies for opportunities, our recently approved Local Development Plan does make important allocations of both employment and housing land that will support economic growth within the county, providing much needed business land and housing for local workers. The commercial opportunities for the local construction sector are also considerable.

Issues & Challenges

Our analysis has identified the following key challenges we believe need to be addressed to ensure we maximise the opportunities for growth for Denbighshire's economy:

1. Denbighshire's economy is currently heavily reliant on the public sector and tourism for employment. The public sector accounts for much of the employment in the county. It is one of the highest rates in the UK.

There is a risk that this high level of public sector employment reduces the pool available for the private sector. Also, with reductions in public finances likely to continue for the foreseeable future, the risk of job losses from this sector cannot be ignored. The skilled workforce associated with the mainly professional public sector services could, however, be an asset for the county.

Tourism accounts for 10% of employment in Denbighshire. Generally jobs in this sector tend to be seasonal and lower paid. Diversification into higher value parts of the sector may help to increase the value of employment and stimulate formation of new businesses.

Other sectors are under-represented in Denbighshire's employment and business base; however the demographics of a growing elderly population suggest that the Health and Care sector may become increasingly important in future.

2. There are high levels of inward and outward commuting for employment. An estimated 13,200 people commute into Denbighshire for work each day, while an estimated 12,700 Denbighshire residents commute out to work outside the county. Much of this commuting will be by private car given the weaknesses in the local public transport infrastructure. Approximately 13% of Denbighshire residents commuting to work elsewhere travel more than 30km.
3. There are currently poor connections with supply chain and employment opportunities in neighbouring economies with the potential for significant economic growth. The economy running along the M56/A55 corridor from Manchester to Anglesey has been calculated to generate an output of £31bn. A significant element of this is Manufacturing. There are 6 Enterprise Zones and 2 City Regions within easy reach of Denbighshire. Better connections to these opportunities have the potential to offer benefits to both businesses and residents.
4. The value derived from Denbighshire's tourism offer is lower than neighbouring areas. For Denbighshire as a whole, the revenue from tourism continues to show a small increasing trend, although with revenues from coastal tourism less buoyant than those from rural tourism. Overall revenue generated from tourism for Denbighshire in 2011 was £304.2M. The comparable figure for Conwy was £623.2M.

Headline Actions

We aim to address the issues and challenges, and make progress towards achieving our strategic outcomes for maximising Opportunities for Growth by focusing on the following areas:

Workstream 3.1: Tourism

- a) Explore and promote opportunities for growth/diversification, with a particular focus on:
 - i. Outdoor and activity tourism
 - ii. Food and drink tourism
 - iii. Welsh language, culture and heritage
- b) Work with accommodation providers to improve the quality and quantity of visitor accommodation across the county

- c) Deliver improved support to tourism businesses, with a particular focus on tourism skills development
- d) Complete the Coastal Facilities business case and strategy
- e) Develop a Denbighshire Events strategy, integrating both major and local events

Workstream 3.2: Growth Opportunities

- a) Assess realistic growth opportunities and sectors to which Denbighshire may be attractive, and also emerging challenges/threats to be managed
- b) Develop local supply chain connections into the Manufacturing and Energy & Environmental Technologies sectors
- c) Promote St Asaph Business Park, in particular as a location for Advanced Manufacturing (Opto Electronics)
- d) Work with Glyndwr University to further exploit the potential of OpTiC as a high tech incubator hub
- e) Explore the growth potential for businesses and employment from Renewable Energy businesses, particularly on & off-shore wind farms

Workstream 3.3: Social Enterprise

- a) Develop a local Social Enterprise Network to offer tailored support and advice to Social Enterprises to enable them to provide a realistic alternative economic growth and jobs creation option
- b) Explore opportunities for delivering services through social enterprise/mutual/co-operative business models

Indicators of Success

If we are successful in our work to maximise opportunities for economic growth in Denbighshire, we should expect to see:

- More revenue generated from Tourism
- More businesses and more jobs in the tourism sector
- More Denbighshire businesses operating and more Denbighshire residents employed in the Manufacturing and Energy & Environmental Technologies sectors
- Diversification of the business base in Denbighshire
- More successful social enterprises offering more job opportunities

THEME 4: HIGH QUALITY SKILLED WORKFORCE

Outcomes

1. Denbighshire's residents are well skilled, and equipped to benefit from jobs and opportunities that arise
2. Employment rates across Denbighshire are improved, with significant reductions in youth unemployment in particular
3. Denbighshire's businesses have easy access to a workforce with the skills needed for businesses to be successful and grow
4. Denbighshire has a strong culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship

Ready access to a high quality and appropriately skilled workforce is an important factor for businesses. It can help existing businesses to be more successful and grow, and can be a key factor in attracting a new business to locate in an area.

Equally, for residents having the right skills and experience can leave them better positioned to take advantage of opportunities for employment that arise, both locally within Denbighshire and in neighbouring economies. The North Wales Economic Ambition has identified skills development as a key priority and is currently working to establish a regional Skills Development Plan.

The Working Futures Database demonstrates a growing trend of increasing demand for higher level qualifications and a declining demand for lower level qualifications. The two identified potential growth sectors for North Wales and Denbighshire (Advanced Manufacturing and Energy & Environmental Technologies) are heavily dependent on higher skilled occupations. These present both a challenge and an opportunity for Denbighshire.

Understanding the demand for employees and the demand for skills at all levels will be important in enabling us to work with partners to improve skills development and improve access to employment for all, including those who are furthest from the workplace. Understanding barriers to employment will also be critical. There remains a significant pool of unemployed residents within Denbighshire, for whom outcomes could be improved and who may represent a pool to meet the needs of expanding businesses across Denbighshire and beyond.

Issues & Challenges

Our analysis has identified the following key challenges we believe need to be addressed to ensure we have a high quality and highly skilled workforce available for employers in Denbighshire and beyond:

1. We have a strongly performing education service. Denbighshire performs well on school attainment compared to other Welsh Authorities but we compare less well with other neighbouring economies in North West England. The results, however, are mixed. Our results at A level are above average the cohort median but we also

- have the highest proportion of students who leave education, training or work based learning without an approved qualification.
2. There are pockets of significant deprivation with high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity, high proportions of low or no qualifications and low participation in education or training. Parts of West and South West Rhyl and Upper Denbigh experience levels of deprivation among the most extreme 10% in Wales. There is evidence of extremely low levels of basic literacy and numeracy skills in these areas. A focus on addressing barriers to work, including skills development, in these communities will improve outcomes for individual residents and households, and will also improve the vibrancy of Denbighshire's economy as a whole as income levels rise.
 3. Demands for higher levels of qualification across occupations and industry are not matched by qualification levels. The most recent census suggests that Denbighshire occupies broadly the middle ground in terms of the proportion of residents with qualifications of level 4 and above in comparison with neighbouring economies. Demand for higher level qualifications in potential growth sectors is expected to increase, with 28% of those in the manufacturing sector and 26% in the construction sector expected to require qualifications of level 5 or above.
 4. As yet, we have an incomplete understanding of employer needs with much information either anecdotal or inferred from surveys for other purposes. A closer engagement would help Denbighshire understand its skills demand for businesses locally and tailor support accordingly.
 5. There is an extremely complex landscape of support organisations, programmes and projects available to get people into work, education or training with significant potential for duplication, fragmentation and conflict
 6. Youth unemployment rates across Denbighshire remain stubbornly high, with significant concentrations in the more deprived communities in the county.

Headline Actions

We aim to address the issues and challenges, and make progress towards achieving our strategic outcomes for ensuring a high quality skilled workforce in Denbighshire by focusing on the following areas:

Workstream 4.1: Skills for Work & Life

- a) Review the current programmes to support literacy & numeracy both in schools and community settings, and identify any areas for improvement
- b) Ensure 'Soft'/employment skills are fully incorporated in the school curriculum
- c) Consider whether creation of a Skills Development Partnership would help to achieve better co-ordination and integration of activities and programmes
- d) Improve the availability of apprenticeship opportunities
- e) Explore how to build stronger links between schools, colleges & employers

- f) Review the current programmes to support ICT literacy/skills development both in schools and community settings, and identify any areas for improvement

Workstream 4.2: Connecting People with Jobs

- a) Work with Careers Wales to improve the Careers advice available to young people in schools
- b) Improve the range, quality and availability of work experience opportunities
- c) Develop a county wide Job Brokerage scheme to connect people with employment opportunities, and businesses with employees
- d) Assess the factors that present barriers to work for Denbighshire residents, particularly young people, and identify priority areas for action
- e) Consider whether creation of an Employability Partnership would help to achieve better co-ordination and integration of activities and programmes

Workstream 4.3: Advanced Skills for Growth

- a) Identify and promote career pathways in growth sectors, with particular focus on Manufacturing and Energy & Environmental Technologies
- b) Explore how to achieve better engagement with employers to understand skills needs/gaps
- c) Ensure the advanced skills needed for growth sectors are addressed effectively through school/college curriculum
- d) Assess the range and provision of business skills development for businesses, and identify priority areas for action

Workstream 4.4: Enterprise & Entrepreneurship

- a) Review and evaluate how enterprise and entrepreneurship are promoted, both in schools and community settings and identify priority areas for action. These may include:
 - i. Further development of Enterprise Hubs/Clubs/Resource Centres
 - ii. Enterprise/Entrepreneur mentoring scheme
 - iii. Enterprise/Entrepreneur incentive/bursary scheme

Indicators of Success

If we are successful in our work to develop a high quality skilled workforce in Denbighshire, we should expect to see:

- Fewer people with no qualifications
- More people with higher levels of qualifications
- No 16 – 25 year olds Not in Employment, Education or Training
- Fewer unemployed people, with a significant reduction in youth unemployment
- Fewer vacancies left unfilled due to lack of suitable applicants
- An increase in enterprise and entrepreneurship, with more people setting up their own businesses

THEME 5: VIBRANT TOWNS & COMMUNITIES

Outcomes

1. Denbighshire's towns are vibrant and prosperous, and ready to meet the challenges of the future
2. Denbighshire's rural communities are economically sustainable, now and in the future
3. Additional support is targeted to areas and households experiencing significant deprivation to ensure all residents have the opportunity to participate in the local economy

Vibrant and healthy towns and communities are important for a number of reasons. They are likely to be more attractive places to live with pleasant environments and access to a range of services and facilities therefore delivering a higher quality of life for the people who live there.

More attractive places to live can help to reduce outward migration, particularly of young people. It is also recognised that places that are good to live are often also the places that are good to visit.

Vibrant towns and communities are likely to offer access to employment in the services and facilities they support, and to provide opportunities to retain residents' and visitor spend in the local economy.

Issues & Challenges

Our analysis has identified the following key challenges we believe need to be addressed to ensure our Towns and Communities are vibrant and have the best chance of being resilient to changes in the future:

1. Traditional Town Centres are at risk from changes in retail and purchasing habits. The general trend across the UK is for a relative decline in town centre retail, largely due to out of town and online retail opportunities. Lower access to personal credit is also likely to have had an impact as incomes have been squeezed in the current financial circumstances. Town Centres increasingly need to become more than merely retail areas, offering opportunities for leisure and entertainment, as well as live and work.
2. Business rates in some towns are seen as too high, overly complex and a pressure on businesses. This is a concern common to towns and town centre businesses across the UK. Business rates are a significant source of income to Governments, in Wales accounting for £1 billion of revenue. At the same time, however, they can be a significant cost to individual businesses. Local options for reducing this impact within the current regulatory framework are extremely limited.
3. A number of reports, including the 2011 Portas Review, have highlighted the need for a more coordinated policy approach to managing Town Centres. Varying operational services need to be encouraged to work together and to see the Town Centre as a

- cohesive functioning area rather than separate areas of roads, shops, businesses, public open space etc.
4. Weaknesses in infrastructure and services in some rural communities can risk future sustainability. Poor transport and ICT infrastructure, coupled with availability of affordable housing and lower access to services in rural communities can contribute to making them less attractive as places to live for some residents and consequently for businesses to invest.
 5. At the same time, balancing development with protection of the natural environment and rural context is challenging. Many people choose more rural locations precisely for the quieter, less busy pace of life.
 6. Pockets of significant deprivation in Rhyl & Upper Denbigh remain key issues, impacting on outcomes for individual residents and the overall success of Denbighshire's economy as a whole
 7. Levels of rural deprivation may be masked and poorly understood. There is a growing understanding that some of the more standard measures of deprivation can underestimate levels in more rural areas. In part this can be due to more dispersed populations, with lower concentrations of deprived households masking the significant personal impacts that can arise. There is also evidence that some issues can disproportionately affect people in rural areas – income and housing, access to services, and poor transport connections – risking a 'spiral of rural disadvantage'.
 8. Outward migration of younger population risks future sustainability of Denbighshire's communities.

Headline Actions

We aim to address the issues and challenges, and make progress towards achieving our strategic outcomes for ensuring vibrant Towns and communities across Denbighshire by focusing on the following areas:

Workstream 5.1: Town and Area Plans

- a) Continue our work to broaden Town Plans into Area Plans covering all areas of the county, and deliver against the priorities set in each Plan
- b) Ensure Service Planning and Grant Funding processes give due regard to the Town and Area Plans when setting service priorities and allocating resources
- c) Develop and implement a co-ordinated approach to tackling identified eyesore sites across the county

Workstream 5.2: Town Centres & High Streets of the Future

- a) Consider how to support effective Town Team/management approaches across Denbighshire's main towns.
- b) Review parking/traffic management in all towns to ensure a holistic and supportive approach to supporting the Town Centre
- c) Explore schemes for promoting temporary uses for empty shops
- d) Work to attract more independent traders to Denbighshire's High Streets
- e) Improve support and advice for retail businesses across the county

- f) Identify options for improving the evening and night time economies in Denbighshire's towns
- g) Consider the suitability of Business Improvement Districts across the county
- h) Explore alternative uses and diversification in town centres

Workstream 5.3: Rural Denbighshire

- a) Explore and promote opportunities for diversification to support growth in rural areas, especially agricultural businesses
- b) Develop a programme to promote local food production/selling, including the option of establishing a network of markets across Denbighshire's towns
- c) Identify and explore options for addressing rural areas at risk of being digital and/or mobile 'not spots'
- d) Assess accessibility of services in rural areas, including the availability of community transport options
- e) Encourage businesses to consider adopting mobile delivery models, including exploring the potential for an incentive scheme

Workstream 5.4: Tackling Deprivation & Poverty

- a) Deliver the priority projects within the Rhyl Going Forward programme workstreams
 - i. Coastal Tourism
 - ii. Town Centre
 - iii. West Rhyl Housing/Neighbourhood Improvement
 - iv. Live & Work in Rhyl
- b) Work with and support North Denbighshire Communities First Cluster to address the causes of deprivation and improve outcomes for residents in Rhyl & Upper Denbigh
- c) Develop a county wide approach to understanding and tackling deprivation and poverty, with specific focus on responding to Welfare reform

Indicators of Success

If we are successful in our work to ensure vibrant and resilient Towns and communities across Denbighshire, we should expect to see:

- Fewer vacant units and increased footfall in our town centres
- More residents happier with their town centre
- More residents in rural areas happier with where they live
- More businesses – town centre and rural - feeling confident about the future
- Reduced deprivation, lower unemployment rates and higher levels of average income across Denbighshire

THEME 6: WELL PROMOTED DENBIGHSHIRE

Outcomes

1. Denbighshire is recognised as a great place to live and is successful in attracting people to move to or remain living in its towns and communities
2. Denbighshire is recognised as a great place to visit and plays a key role in making North Wales a top 5 UK visitor destination
3. Denbighshire is recognised as an attractive place for businesses to be located and is successful in attracting new and retaining existing growing businesses

Throughout our early consultations on what was needed to develop the economy in Denbighshire, one of the most common comments was that Denbighshire did not do enough to promote its many assets as effectively as it could.

Traditionally, most effort has been put into promotion of Denbighshire's offer for visitors, but even then there are concerns that key opportunities and emerging new markets are being missed. Little, if any, attention has been given to promotion of Denbighshire as a location for business/inward investment or as a great place to choose to live.

For marketing and promotion to be effective, a number of things need to be in place. We need to understand clearly who we are marketing to and why. We then need to tailor our message to make it as effective as possible and ensure we use the right methods, channels and media to get our message across. Quantity of promotion is secondary to its quality.

As well as ensuring our promotional activity is effective, however, we also need to make sure that the reality of our product (Denbighshire) matches up to our promise.

Issues & Challenges

Our analysis has identified the following key challenges we believe need to be addressed to ensure Denbighshire is well promoted to all target audiences:

1. We need to agree target audiences/markets and tailor our promotion activity accordingly. It is not clear that we understand this currently and our messages, therefore, can be confused and ineffective.
2. Messages for inward investment/business relocation (high tech, vibrant environment) may conflict with those for visitors (natural environment, peaceful surroundings). Both are and can be right. We need to understand how to manage these multiple messages without contradicting or causing confusion.
3. Denbighshire's brand may not be enough on its own. Integration with broader promotional campaigns is essential.

4. Destination (product) management is as important as effective promotion to ensure the experience meets expectations. Destination Management is already a concept well understood in the visitor/tourism sector, however it applies equally to fulfilling the 'promise' behind inward investment promotional activity. Further consideration of this will be needed if our activity is to be successful.
5. Methods of promotion are changing and multi channel approaches will need to be adopted. In particular, we will probably need to place less reliance on traditional print based media, and make more – and more effective – use of social media channels and PR opportunities. Forms of 'word of mouth' promotion are also known to be effective and will need to be explored.

Headline Actions

We aim to address the issues and challenges, and make progress towards achieving our strategic outcomes for effective promotion of Denbighshire by focusing on the following areas:

Workstream 6.1: Effective Promotion

- a) Understand and identify target audiences/markets and tailor our promotions accordingly
- b) Identify and exploit opportunities for collaborating with others on marketing and promotion of Denbighshire
- c) Develop effective multi channel promotion of Denbighshire, incorporating both traditional and newer modes of communication, in particular social media and PR
- d) Consider establishing 'Ambassadors' for Denbighshire to promote it as a great place to live, to work, to operate a business and to visit
- e) Target employers and estate agents to encourage promotion of Denbighshire as a desirable place to live
- f) Increase the knowledge of local Denbighshire and other Welsh residents about Denbighshire as a place to visit.
- g) Establish a co-ordinated approach to ensure a professional and seamless response to Inward Investment enquiries
- h) Target appropriate industry events to promote Denbighshire to visitors and potential businesses

Workstream 6.2: Fulfilling the Promise

- a) Ensure strategies, policies and funding are in place to deliver high quality public services, a clean, tidy & safe environment, a good supply of affordable housing and local employment opportunities
- b) Encourage and promote a good range of local cultural, retail and leisure opportunities across Denbighshire
- c) Invest in 'big ticket' attractions
- d) Complete a Destination Management Plan for Denbighshire & consolidate the Destination Denbighshire Partnership
- e) Explore options for reducing risks for investors

Indicators of Success

If we are successful in our work to ensure effective promotion of Denbighshire, we should expect to see:

- A healthy level of house sales and new house build completions
- More people moving into the area
- Increased visitor numbers
- More successful businesses
- More businesses seeking to locate in Denbighshire
- More residents happier with where they live

DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

Taking Action

Accompanying this Strategy is a Delivery Plan. It sets out the actions the Council intends to take over the next 4 years to start realising our Economic & Community Ambition for Denbighshire.

At this stage, much of the activity is focused in the first 2 years, with many of the early actions aimed at better understanding the challenges and opportunities facing Denbighshire's economy and how they can be best addressed. As the Delivery Plan is implemented, actions may be added, amended or removed as circumstances change and initiatives are delivered.

Resourcing the Actions

In common with most other public sector organisations, Denbighshire County Council faces a tough financial position over the coming years. Despite this difficult situation, the Council has set out its aspirations and ambitions in its Corporate Plan and has included within the Plan a financial strategy to support its implementation.

Overall, the Corporate Plan estimates that £134M investment will be required to realise the ambitions of the Corporate Plan as a whole, of which £2M has been allocated to developing the local economy. The Corporate Plan recognises, however, that this funding cannot be guaranteed and should the Council's financial position change over the next 5 years, then we may need to adjust our forecasts and investment plans.

The 2013/14 budget allocated an additional £160K for delivery of the economic development priority within the Corporate Plan. This was in addition to extra funding provided in 2011/12 and 2012/13 to support implementation of the Council's regeneration activities and its new Town & Area Plans.

Together with existing service budgets and opportunities for external grant funding from the EU, Welsh Government and other sources, this additional funding will go a long way towards delivering the Council's Economic & Community Ambition as set out in this Strategy. As individual projects and activities are developed, it will be clear if additional funding will be required and this can then be taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

A key resource available to the Council will be the time and work of its employees. The Economic & Community Ambition Strategy and its Delivery Plan is not the preserve of any one Council service and will require contributions from all teams and departments if we are to be successful in realising our aspirations.

The Delivery Plan attached to this Strategy identifies the teams we believe need to lead individual pieces of work.

Whilst delivery of the Strategy does not belong to just one part of the Council, some teams will be more heavily involved than others. This year, the Council has undertaken a root and branch review of its support to business and economic development. The review found that while officers worked hard to support economic growth, organisational structures got in the way and were often difficult to understand, particularly for businesses the teams were trying to support. Feedback from a selection of local businesses described the Council as complex, bureaucratic and reactive to deal with.

As a result, a new service has been developed with a single Economic & Business Development Manager leading 3 geographically focused teams (Coastal, North & South) and supported by a specialist European and Other Funding Team. Staff will be deployed within the teams to deliver localised support to businesses and take forward actions identified within this Strategy. The new structure is intended to achieve better flexibility in the deployment of staff resources and enable greater capacity and capability at the front line to deliver key projects and priorities.

At the same time, Tourism support has been incorporated into the Council's wider Marketing and Events activity through a new Tourism, Marketing and Events Team. This will allow a more proactive and co-ordinated approach to promoting Denbighshire and its opportunities.

The Service Plans for both teams will reflect the priority actions agreed through the Economic & Community Ambition Strategy.

Monitoring Progress

A robust monitoring and evaluation regime will underpin the Strategy and Delivery Plan. A suite of indicators have been identified against which the impact of our actions will be measured. During the first year of the Strategy, a full baseline of the outcome indicators will be collated to allow progress to be assessed as the actions are implemented.

Monitoring and evaluation should not just be a process of reflection at the end of the Strategy implementation. To be effective, it must be a live activity that provides information to inform decisions and allow changes to be made as required. Throughout its life, an annual review of the Strategy, its implementation and its impact will be produced to assess progress and identify any changes that may be required to ensure the overall Ambition is realised.

Implementation of the Strategy actions will be controlled through the Council's project and programme management system, with delivery confidence for individual elements of the Delivery Plan reviewed at least quarterly within the Council's overall performance reporting system.

The Delivery Plan will be maintained on a 4 year rolling basis dependent on overall progress and resources.

Governance and Accountability

The Economic & Community Ambition Strategy is a comprehensive and wide reaching document, with implications across many Council services and portfolios. It is cross cutting in its implementation and impact.

The Lead Member for Economic Development has overall political responsibility at Cabinet level for development and delivery of the Economic & Community Ambition Strategy. The Lead Members for Tourism, Youth & Leisure, Public Realm, Education and Customers & Communities also have political responsibility for important components of the overall Strategy. The Corporate Director, Economic & Community Ambition is responsible for ensuring overall co-ordination and delivery of the Economic & Community Ambition Strategy and its implementation.

To assist with governance, an Economic & Community Ambition Programme Board has been established. Its role is to develop, organise, direct and oversee implementation of the range of projects and activities set out in the Strategy Delivery Plan. It will monitor progress and impact, help to resolve problems/barriers to delivery, and will recommend changes as required during the lifetime of the Strategy. A key role for the Programme Board will be to ensure that the projects and activities deliver their intended benefits.

The Programme Board will also be responsible for identifying risks that may impact on successful delivery of the Strategy. During the first year of the Strategy, a Risk Register will be developed to enable the Programme Board to undertake this task effectively.

Initial membership of the Programme Board has been established as:

- Corporate Director, Economic & Community Ambition (Chair)
- Lead Member, Economic Development
- Lead Member, Tourism, Youth & Leisure
- Lead Member, Public Realm
- Head of Service, Housing & Community Development
- Head of Service, Highways & Environmental Services
- Head of Service, Communications, Marketing & Leisure
- Head of Service, Finance & Assets

Membership will be reviewed as the suite of projects comprising the overall Economic & Community Ambition Programme develops.

Scrutiny will take place both through the regular performance reports made every 3 months covering implementation of the Corporate Plan and presented to both Cabinet and Performance Scrutiny Committee, and through the opportunity for review by Communities Scrutiny Committee on individual projects or activities as appropriate.

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Target who? (key stakeholders)	Why? (objective)	With what additional key questions / messages?	How?
Businesses direct	Because it is businesses that will deliver the economic growth supported by the strategy. To gain feedback on the relevancy of our proposed workstream actions from key new & existing businesses in our strength and opportunity sectors (Tourism, Manufacturing, Energy & Environment, Social enterprise).	Positive impact we want it to make Your role in making it happen How can you help to deliver the strategy? Please spread the word about the consultation opportunities	Targeted mailing to business directory Focus groups – geographical & sector specific (Tourism, Manufacturing/ Energy & Environment, Rural) DCC Members promoting consultation opportunities direct to their local businesses Geographical drop-in days open to business and general public Website + Survey Monkey
Business Organisations FSB Business In the Community	Communicate our Vision and promote our priorities to a wider business audience, sign up business organisation support for the strategy.	Positive impact we want it to make Your role in making it happen How can you help to deliver the strategy? Please spread the word about the consultation opportunities Please provide written feedback	Direct mailing Offer to attend their own meeting (branch meetings) Website + Survey Monkey
Business Networks Network She Denbighshire BN	Gain feedback - especially on workstream 2.2 (Local Business Connections) which is about them.	Positive impact we want it to make Your role in making it happen How can you help to deliver the strategy? Please spread the word about the consultation opportunities	Business breakfasts Offer to attend their own meeting Website + Survey Monkey
Social Enterprises	Focus their attention on our challenges / issues, gain feedback on workstream 3.3 (Social Enterprise) which is about them.	Positive impact we want it to make Your role in making it happen How can you help to deliver the strategy?	Focus groups Direct mailing (DVSC) DVSC blog Website + Survey Monkey
Voluntary sector organisations	To highlight opportunities for working together and elicit feedback across the proposed workstreams.		Direct mailing (DVSC) DVSC blog Health & Social Care network meet Website + Survey Monkey
General public	To communicate our Vision and proposed areas of work. To highlight that DCC is progressing work on the Corporate Plan.	Please provide feedback on whether Strategy will address issues in your community	County Voice - July Website + Survey Monkey Social media Press & PR Geographical drop-in days open to business and general public
Partner agencies TPNW DEA Cadwyn RSLs NWEAB NWEF Flintshire CC Wrexham CBC Conwy CBC TAITH WEFO Rhyl City Strategy Communities 1 st AONB Strategic PB RDP Partnership Betsi Cadwaladr DWP Welsh Govt BETS FE & HE	Highlight and gain feedback on the areas of work in which we will be seeking to jointly plan, develop and deliver actions resulting from the strategy. To highlight areas of overlap / joint working for efficiency across the workstreams.	Your role in making it happen How can you help to deliver the strategy? Please spread the word about the consultation opportunities Please provide written feedback	As part of the LSB engagement phase 1 for developing Big Plan 2 (to include specific consultation with groups who have protected characteristics) Focus Group Direct mailing Offer to attend their own meeting Website + Survey Monkey
Mersey Dee Alliance / NWEAB / Energy Island	These are key strategic initiatives that offer opportunities for our businesses / residents and may commission regional projects that support our outcomes.	How can you help to deliver the strategy? Please provide written feedback	Direct mailing Offer to attend their own meeting Website + Survey Monkey

Target who? (key stakeholders)	Why? (objective)	With what additional key questions / messages?	How?
Politicians AMs MPs MEPs	To demonstrate that we have an ambitious strategy which supports regional economic growth and requires investment		Direct mailing from Leader Website + Survey Monkey
Town Councils	Because we need TCs to support the Vision and in particular to engage enthusiastically in Theme 5 (Vibrant Towns & Communities) & Theme 6 (Well Promoted Denbighshire). Also to provide feedback on workstreams.	How can you help to deliver the strategy? Please spread the word about the consultation opportunities Please provide written feedback	Direct mailing to notify up-coming consultation Direct mailing DD T&CC Cluster meetings Website + Survey Monkey
Community Councils	Because we need CCs to support the Vision, engage enthusiastically in Theme 5 (Vibrant Towns & Communities) and feedback on the workstreams within the strategy.	Please spread the word about the consultation opportunities Please provide written feedback	Direct mailing to notify up-coming consultation Direct mailing T&CC Cluster meetings 17/23/29 th July Website + Survey Monkey
Children & Young People direct	Because they are the future workforce and we want to nurture their entrepreneurialism. To gain feedback on Theme 4 (High Quality Skilled Workforce).	Specific communication around theme 4 activities and views on employment / entrepreneurship?	Denbighshire Youth Council Focus groups with children involved in current enterprise activities Website + Survey Monkey
School Head Teachers & FE Providers	Heads must be supportive of Theme 4 workstreams in order to achieve the desired outcomes for Theme 4 (High Quality Skilled Workforce).	Specific communication around theme 4 activities and views on employment / entrepreneurship related activities?	Curriculum Group 26th June 14-19 Network 27 th June Teachers focus group on ECA themes Website + Survey Monkey
Councillors	Members are responsible for communicating the Councils Vision. To enable this the Vision must be clearly understood, backed up by a firm indication of how we propose to achieve change on the ground.	Please spread the word about the consultation opportunities Please provide feedback on whether Strategy addresses issues in your area.	Full Council 9 th July July MAGS 8 th Denbigh, 11 th Prestatyn & Meliden, 19 th Elwy, 24 th Rhyl, 29 th Ruthin, 29 th Dee Valley Website + Survey Monkey
DCC Staff, Service areas & Programme Boards	Staff in Service areas will implement the strategy through detailed work on projects and adjustments to service delivery. Their effective engagement is critical. Programme Boards are responsible for coordinating projects & activities to deliver the outcomes and benefits in the Corporate Plan and ECA Strategy.	These are the Councils key priorities. They'll be delivered via changes to how we deliver services and work in partnership. Projects will be directed by the ECA Programme Board and we will use the corporate project methodology / Verto to support this. Please provide feedback on deliverability of proposed actions	Senior Leadership Team meeting 20 th June Middle Managers Conference display 24 th July Staff meetings Joint Programme Boards workshop? Website + Survey Monkey
Local Media	To keep informed of upcoming consultation opportunities and demonstrate that we are proactive about the economy and our Corporate Plan	Not a quick fix but a sensible, long term strategy that we want feedback on	Direct mailing At full Council 9 th July Interview Press release

Key questions to be asked of all Stakeholders:

- a) Are the Vision, intended outcomes and underpinning principles broadly appropriate for Denbighshire?
- b) Does the Strategy capture the important issues, challenges and opportunities affecting Denbighshire's local economy?
- c) Will the headline actions in the Delivery Plan achieve the right impact?

Economic & Community Ambition Task & Finish Group

Membership

Hugh Evans	Lead Member, Economic Development Ruthin MAG
Huw Jones	Lead Member, Tourism, Leisure & Youth (including Rural Development) Dee Valley MAG
David Smith	Lead Member, Public Realm Ruthin MAG
Julian Thompson-Hill	Lead Member, Finance & Assets Prestatyn MAG
David Simmons	Rhyl MAG
Win Mullen Jones	Rhyl MAG
Gareth Sandilands	Prestatyn MAG
Jason McLellan (from Workshop 4)	Prestatyn MAG
Arwel Roberts	Elwy MAG
Dewi Owens	Elwy MAG
Colin Hughes	Denbigh MAG
Gwyneth Kensler	Denbigh MAG
Martyn Holland	Ruthin MAG

Officers (core members)

Rebecca Maxwell	Corporate Director
Peter McHugh	Head of Housing & Community Development
Paul McGrady	Head of Finance & Assets
Mark Dixon	Strategic Regeneration Manager
Joanna Douglass	Business Support & Tourism Team
Mike Horrocks	Programme Manager, Business Planning & Performance
Dai Morgan	Corporate Research & Intelligence Coordinator, Business Planning & Performance
Mike Learmond	Federation of Small Businesses

Task & Finish Group Schedule of Meetings

	Topic	Additional input
12 th Feb 2013	Vision, Themes & Underpinning Principles Agreeing the Task & Finish group approach	
20 th Feb 2013	Workshop 1: Infrastructure for Growth	TAITH, Highways, Planning
6 th March 2013	Workshop 2: Supported & Connected Businesses	Procurement, Denbighshire Enterprise Agency
20 th March 2013	Workshop 3: Economic Strengths & Opportunities	Leisure, Social Care, DVSC, North Wales Economic Ambition Board projects
5 th April 2013	Workshop 4: High Quality Skilled Workforce	Education, FE/HE providers, Rhyl City Strategy, DWP
17 th April 2013	Workshop 5: Vital & Vibrant Towns & Communities	Rhyl Going Forward, Communities First
30 th April 2013	Workshop 6: Promoting Denbighshire	Communications & Marketing, Destination Denbighshire, North Wales Tourism Partnership
15 th May 2013	Review Workshop 1: Draft Strategy & Action Plan	
28 th May 2013	Review Workshop 2: Action Plan & Indicators	
26 th June 2013	Review Workshop 3: Finalising the Consultation Draft	

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
1. Infrastructure for Growth					
1.1: Transport					
a) Transport infrastructure barriers to growth			Infrastructure implementation to follow?	EBD/ Highways	£
b) Rail Modernisation Business Case				NWEAB/ EBD	£
c) Integrated Public Transport				Transport	£(£?)
d) Subsidised travel				Transport	££
1.2: Digital & Mobile					
a) 'Digital Denbighshire' Plan			Infrastructure implementation to follow?	EBD	££
1.3: Land & Premises					
a) Live Directory of available space				Property	££
b) Shovel ready sites		Implementation to follow		Planning	£
c) Commercial property estates review				Property	£
d) Incubator and Move On units				Property/ EBD	£
e) Incentives scheme				Property/ Finance	££(£?)
Notes:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions 1.1a-c will require close liaison with TAITH regional work – focus to be on Denbighshire contribution • Action 1.2a is a large scale project with many components/sub projects 					
EBD = Economic & Business Development team					
NWEAB = North Wales Economic Ambition Board					

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
2. Supported & Connected Businesses					
2.1: Business Support					
a) Business Advice and Support Partnership				EBD	£ (£?)
b) Additional business grants and/or loans				EBD	££
c) Adopt a 'Better Regulation' approach				Planning Public Protection	£
2.2: Local Business Connections					
a) Facilitate better business networking				EBD	£ (£?)
b) Business to business mentoring				EBD	£ (£?)
c) Denbighshire Business Week and Awards				EBD	££
d) Local supply chain promotion				EBD	£ (£?)
e) Strategic engagement - business community				EBD	£
2.3: DCC Procurement Economic Impact					
a) Community/Local benefits in procurement				Procure- ment	£
b) Supplier Development and Engagement				Procure- ment	£ (£?)
c) 'Business Friendly' across Council services				HR	£
Notes:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 2.1a should be about making better use of existing resources across all partners • Action 2.2e – first question to consider is why strategic engagement may be needed and then what works best • Early action in 2.1a should be to map out what's available (including grants schemes) and publicise better 					

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
3. Strengths & Opportunities					
3.1: Tourism					
a) Tourism Growth & Diversification				TM&E	£
b) Tourist accommodation				TM&E	£
c) Support to tourism businesses/skills devt				TM&E EBD	£ (£?)
d) Coastal Facilities business case and strategy		Implementation to follow		CML EBD	£ (£££)
e) Denbighshire Events strategy				TM&E	££
3.2: Growth Opportunities					
a) Assess realistic growth opportunities and emerging challenges/threats				EBD	£
b) Local supply chain Manufacturing/Energy & Environment				EBD	£
c) Promote St Asaph Business Park				EBD	£ (£?)
d) Exploit the potential of OpTiC				EBD	£
e) Growth potential from Renewable Energy				EBD	£
3.3: Social Enterprise					
a) Develop local Social Enterprise Network				DVSC	££
b) Explore opportunities for mutualisation				EBD?	£
Notes:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & Care will be considered/explored as a potential economic growth sector <p>TME = Tourism, Marketing & Events team CML = Communications Marketing & Leisure service</p>					

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
4. Skilled Workforce					
4.1: Skills for Work & Life					
a) Specific focus on literacy & numeracy				Education Lifelong learning	£
b) 'Soft'/employment skills				Education	£
c) Skills Development Partnership	Review need for		Implementation	Education ?	££
d) Improve apprenticeship opportunities				<i>To be decided</i>	£ (£?)
e) Stronger links schools, colleges & employers				Education	£
f) Specific focus on ICT literacy/skills				Education	£
4.2: Connecting People with Jobs					
a) Careers advice in schools				Education EBD	£
b) Work experience opportunities				Education	££
c) Job Brokerage scheme				EBD	££ (£?)
d) Explore barriers to work to identify priorities for action				???	£
e) Consider Employability Partnership				???	£
Notes:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions 4.1a and 4.1e – early actions are evaluations of existing programmes to identify gaps in provision • Much of this activity may be applicable for EU Funding – need to ensure proposals are tailored to priorities from Strategy • Action 4.2c - Rhyl City Strategy already operates a Job Brokerage scheme – evaluate and expand? • Action 4.1a needs to focus on post school/adult literacy and numeracy for early impact 					

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
4.3: Advanced Skills for Growth					
a) Career pathways in growth sectors				Education NWEAB	£
b) Engage with employers - skills needs/gaps				Education EBD	£
c) Skills for growth sectors in curriculum				Education	£
d) Business skills for businesses				EBD?	£ (£?)
4.4: Enterprise & Entrepreneurship					
a) Review/evaluate existing enterprise & entrepreneurship development activity & identify gaps					
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas for consideration in Action 4.4a may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enterprise Hubs/Clubs/Resource Centres - Enterprise/Entrepreneurship mentoring schemes - Enterprise/Entrepreneurship incentive/bursary schemes 					

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
5. Vibrant Towns & Communities					
5.1: Town and Area Plans					
a) Broaden Town Plans into Area Plans				EBD	£
b) Embed Area Plans				EBD	£
c) Co-ordinated response to eyesore sites		Implementation		Planning	££
5.2: Town Centres/High Streets of the Future					
a) Town Teams/management				EBD	£(£)
b) Parking/traffic management				Highways EBD	£ (£)
c) Temporary uses for empty shops				EBD	£ (£)
d) Attracting (more) independent traders				EBD	£ (£)
e) Retail skills development/support/advice				EBD	£ (£)
f) Evening and night time economies				EBD	£ (£)
g) Business Improvement Districts				EBD	£
h) Alternative uses/diversification in town centres				EBD	£
Notes:					

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
5.3: Rural Denbighshire					
a) Diversification to support growth				EBD	£
b) Food production/selling, network of markets				EBD	£ (£)
c) High quality digital infrastructure				EBD	£ (££)
d) Accessibility of services in rural areas				Partnerships Tm	£
e) Incentive scheme - mobile delivery models				EBD	£ (£)
5.4: Tackling Deprivation & Poverty					
a) Rhyl Going Forward programme				EBD	£££
b) N Denbighshire Communities First Cluster				Partnerships Tm	???
c) County wide approach - deprivation & poverty				?EBD	£ (££)
Notes:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 5.3c is a subset of the broader Digital Denbighshire project under Workstream 1.2 • Unclear who is best placed to lead on Action 5.3d • Unclear as yet what the contribution from DCC needs to be to Action 5.4b – needs to be scoped • Action 5.3a to include review of planning policies to encourage/facilitate diversification 					

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION STRATEGY – DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

Tasks in red indicate priorities for that workstream

	0-12 months	12-24 months	Years 3 - 4	Lead	Resources
6. Well Promoted Denbighshire					
Workstream 6.1: Effective Promotion					
a) Identify target audiences/markets				TME	££
b) Identify cross-marketing opportunities				TME	£
c) Multi channel promotion				TME	£ (£)
d) 'Ambassadors' for Denbighshire				TME?	£
e) Target employers and estate agents				TME	£
f) Target domestic Welsh/local visitor market				TME	££
g) Co-ord'd Response Team – inward investors				EBD	£
h) Target appropriate industry events				TME	££
Workstream 6.2: Fulfilling the Promise					
a) Ensure high quality public services				All services	£££
b) Cultural, heritage, retail and leisure opportunities				CML	?££
c) Invest in 'big ticket' attractions				TME EBD	£££
d) Destination management				TME	££
e) Reduce risks for investors				EBD	£ (£)
Notes:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 6.1d to include link to Volunteering Strategy 					

Report To: County Council

Date of Meeting: 9th July 2013

Lead Member / Officer: Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill /Paul McGrady

Report Author: Richard Weigh, Chief Accountant

Title: Finance Report – Final Revenue Position 2012/13

1. What is the report about?

Cabinet have received regular monitoring reports throughout the financial year on the performance of expenditure against budget and savings agreed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan. The final outturn report was accepted by Cabinet on 25th June 2013. This report details the final position at financial year end for County Council to consider and approve the treatment of reserves and balances proposed.

The first draft of the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2012/13 will be submitted to the external auditors on 28th June. The audited accounts will then be presented to the Corporate Governance Committee in September for formal approval.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide an update of the final revenue position and the proposed treatment of balances. The Council's constitution requires full Council to approve the establishment, use of and contributions to, financial reserves.

3. What are the Recommendations?

To approve the final revenue outturn position for 2012/13.

To approve the treatment of reserves and balances detailed in this report.

4. Report details

The overall financial outturn position for 2012/13 is an under spend against the approved budget, which together with an increase in the yield from Council Tax strengthens the financial position of the Council. As a consequence it is possible to make recommendations for the transfer of funds to specific reserves that will continue to assist the Council in addressing the severe financial pressures of the next few years and begin to establish the cash resources required to deliver the Corporate Plan.

The final Revenue Outturn figures are detailed in Appendix 1. The final position on service and corporate budgets is an under spend of £1.525m (1.3% of the net revenue budget).

The outturn position for services and corporate budgets was £530k higher than previously reported to Cabinet in March. The most significant movement is within **School Improvement & Inclusion** (£223k) where lower recharges for services from external providers and successful resolution of disputed placement fees contributed to the positive movement. The final position for **Legal and Democratic Services** improved by £76k which was due to external fees in relation to the retail development in Prestatyn being paid at the end of March, rather than in 2013/14 as had been assumed in previous forecasts. Additional grant funding of £80k in relation to Benefit administration was received in March. The position on **corporate budgets** has improved by £113k from the forecast reported in March. The main reasons for the improvement are that expenditure on corporate pension costs and the subsidy provided to the School Meal service being less than anticipated.

Services continue to be proactive in planning for savings for future years, and the financial impact of some of those proposals began to take affect toward the end of 2012/13. Services reported commitments against balances of £849k in March. The majority of the balances had been forecast because of timing issues (e.g. delays in implementing service changes or specific expenditure commitments being delayed until 2013/14). Committed service balances now stand at £1.139m with further details shown below.

Expenditure on schools was £1.069m below the delegated budget. This represents a movement from the position reported in March of £774k. Special schools improved by £490k which forms the majority of the total movement. The movement on special schools relates to the following factors:

- The finalisation of the recoument charges to other local authorities for Out of County children.
- Delay in projected investment in IT due to decision to purchase equipment outright with a new provider which means the expenditure will now fall in the new financial year.
- Delay in planned development of a plot of land at the Gwynfryn site as a vocational training resource

Special Schools have planned to increase their balance in order to better cope with variations in income levels each year relating to local authority recoument and the need for annual investment in school resources to provide for the year on year changing needs of the pupils. School balances now stand at £2.870m which equates to an average of £190 per pupil and 4.25% of the net schools budget. School balances are detailed in Appendix 4.

The council budgeted to make a contribution to balances of £300k which in keeping with previous reports is assumed in the final outturn position. The council also budgeted to make contributions to the funding of the Corporate Plan. The Plan requires around £25m of cash and £52m of borrowing to

deliver the council's ambitions. Part of this strategy has been and will continue to be identifying revenue budget resources to generate cash to fund capital expenditure. The 2012/13 budget assumed £2.073m would be generated through priority funding allocated to services and budgeted provisions within corporate budgets.

Further information regarding final service outturn is as follows:

Business Planning & Performance – the final position is an under spend of £60k. The under spend arose because of lower than expected ICT costs (mapping software) and recharges being higher than anticipated. As has previously been reported to Cabinet, it is proposed that the under spend be used to fund a corporate EDRMS project and contribute to the funding of a post dealing with Freedom of Information requests.

Grant funding awarded in March contributed to the **Finance & Assets** under spend of £16k. The proposal is to use the balance to fund costs in 13/14 arising from proposals to create a sub-regional procurement service.

The **Highways & Environment** position (£278k under) has improved by £15k from the forecast in March. The net under spend is made up of numerous variances including benefits from recycling contracts (£69k), use of balances carried forward from 2011/12 (£50k) and £36k relating to a funding agreement with the Welsh Government which will be utilised in 2013/14 to invest in local transport provision. Approximately £123k of the under spend relates to delays in the procurement of equipment and it is proposed that this be carried forward. In addition the service is proposing to carry forward £50k to facilitate the transfer of coastal facilities and £40k to invest in replacement car parking machines.

Additional income generated from fines (for example, littering and dog fouling) contributed to the small under spend (£6.5k) in **Planning & Regulatory** and is proposed to be used to fund restructuring costs as part of delivering savings for 2013/14.

The **Adults & Business Service** is shown as achieving the budget. However, as part of a long-term strategy to deal with in-year cost pressures, any balance is funded from the Supporting People Reserve and the contribution made in 2012/13 was £40k.

The final position for the **Children & Family Service** is £148k which is £10k higher than reported in March. As reported to Cabinet previously, the majority of this related to adoption fees assumed in 2012/13 but that will be paid in 2013/14 and a more favourable resolution of a disputed care funding arrangement. In addition to proposing to carry forward balances to fund the fostering fees, the Service is proposing to carry forward £20k to fund a fostering recruitment campaign.

The under spend of £9k within **Housing & Community Development** has arisen because a review of external grant funding at the end of the year highlighted additional claimable costs. This also accounts for the movement between the forecast in March and the final position.

Communications, Marketing & Leisure - the final outturn position is an under spend of £37.5k (£25k reported at the end of March). The £25k related to a rolled forward under spend from 11/12 on the Communications & Marketing budget, intended to be used as part of the restructuring of that service. Unfortunately there has been a delay in the review and this will not be completed until early in 2013/14. The improvement in the overall position is because spend on the Community Buildings (Town Halls) budget was £7k less than anticipated and the Rhyl Pavilion Theatre final outturn came in £5k under budget. Changing the trading performance of the latter facility by £150k (20% of budget) in one year and bringing the operation 'under budget' for the first time in several years is a significant achievement. It is proposed that the service under spend of £37.5k is earmarked for the restructuring of the Destination Marketing & Communication service that is currently underway.

The **ICT/Business Transformation** budget is under by £108k (£95k reported in March). The main reason for the under spend is lower than anticipated software licensing costs. The service proposal is to use the balance in 2013/14 to contribute to the delivery of Phase 2 of the ICT Strategy.

The final position for **Customers and Education Support** is an under spend of £245k (£232k reported in March). As previously reported, the under spend has arisen due to ongoing service reviews resulting in temporary vacancy savings and delayed reorganisation costs. The service proposal is to use the balance to fund investment in ongoing school and departmental reorganisation and service modernisation costs in 2013/14.

The final position for **School Improvement** is an under spend of £349k. Some £230k relates to inter-authority recoupment for out of county children which is a budget that can fluctuate each year depending on pupil numbers and the complexity of need. Temporary vacancy savings and an under spend relating to lower than projected claims by Early Years Providers for funded places account for most of the remaining position. As previously reported the service proposal is for £126k to be used to contribute to the funding of the protection for schools affected by the recent changes to the funding formula. It is also proposed that £25k is used to fund an existing post from August to March due to a temporary reduction in grant funding.

The position on the yield from **Council Tax** is impacted upon by the number of dwellings in the County, together with a very high level of tax collection (over 98% which is likely to be the second highest in Wales). Assumptions when the budgets were set had taken account of a likely drop in collection rates as a result of the continuing difficult economic picture generally but the council still successfully maintained a high collection rate, which is a considerable achievement.

As reported throughout the year to Cabinet, the final level of Council Tax yield was thought likely to exceed the original estimates used when setting the budget. The final yield is £315k (0.8%) higher than the original estimate and the Council therefore has a one off benefit. The assumption throughout the year and the proposal now is that this is used to contribute to the funding of the Corporate Plan.

Given the position overall within services, it is proposed at this stage that departments carry forward any net under spends in full to help deliver the 2013/14 budget strategy and meet existing commitments. Services will be required to outline in more detail how the balances brought forward have been used in 2013/14 in the Finance Report to Cabinet in October.

The final position means that the council has £651k cash funding available. This is a significant achievement and the council must ensure that the funding is used in the most effective way. It is proposed that this be used to contribute to the cash reserves required to fund the Corporate Plan.

The Council decision to embark on an ambitious scheme of capital investment through the Corporate Plan requires that a significant amount of cash resource is required as part of the overall financing strategy. Approximately £25m of cash is required and a Corporate Plan Reserve has been established for this purpose.

In March, the Chief Finance Officer completed a review of current funds to determine whether the current levels of balances and reserves were reasonable and whether some reserves could be moved into the Corporate Plan Reserve. The results of this review were reported to the Corporate Governance Committee in May and concluded that it would be appropriate to transfer £6.274m from existing reserves to the Corporate Plan Reserve.

Details of all earmarked reserves are enclosed as Appendix 2 and a summary of the transfers proposed as reported to the Corporate Governance Committee are included as Appendix 3.

A number of other contributions to and from Reserves and Provisions have been allowed for within the accounts. These are detailed in Appendix 2 and require approval by full Council. Major movements to reserves not already highlighted include:

- £562k has been earmarked to fund protection for schools adversely impacted by the recent formula funding changes
- £185k has been added to the Insurance Reserve to cover ongoing liabilities in respect of MMI (former insurer of Denbighshire's predecessor authorities) and other potential claims.
- Funding has moved from the Single Status reserve to a provision to fund equal pay claims

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

Effective management of the council's revenue and capital budgets and delivery of the agreed budget strategy underpins activity in all areas, including corporate priorities.

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

The council's net revenue budget for 2012/13 was £177m. The final position excluding schools was a net under spend of £1.5m (1.3%). Included within this position is the impact of grant funding confirmed late in the financial year and the budgeted contribution to reserves and balances. It is proposed that those services that achieved an under spend carry the net balance forward to 2013/14. The position within each service and intended use of balances will be reviewed in 2013/14.

The final outturn position will inform discussions about future budget savings.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?

Individual services are responsible for carrying out impact assessments on their saving proposals contained within the budget. A summary EqIA was submitted to Council in February 2012 as part of the budget approval process.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Service challenges were held with each head of service and each challenge included representatives from scrutiny committee and Cabinet. Corporate Plan and Budget workshops were held with members in September, November and December. The capital plan was approved by council following scrutiny by the Strategic Investment Group and recommendation by cabinet.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The council has delivered revenue budgets savings of £3.4m in 2012/13 which is a considerable achievement. Services continue to be both prudent and effective in identifying savings going forward, some of which had begun to have an impact in 2012/13. This along with the determination of some grant funding late in the year and an improved council tax yield has again delivered a strong budget performance.

The final position means that the contributions required from 2012/13 to fund the Corporate Plan can be made. The Plan cannot be delivered unless the required cash resources are earmarked for investment in schools, social care and other priorities.

Protection offered to schools affected by the recent funding formula changes will be reviewed in the context of the contributions to school balances made at the end of 2012/13.

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

This is the most challenging financial period the council has faced and failure to deliver the agreed budget strategy will put further pressure on services in the current and future financial years. Effective budget monitoring and control will help ensure that the financial strategy is achieved. The Council has committed to delivering an ambitious Corporate Plan that requires significant resources. It is crucial that the agreed strategy to build specific reserves to contribute to the funding of the Plan is maintained.

11. Power to make the Decision

Local authorities are required under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.

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APPENDIX 1

	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Schools Position	Committed Service Balances:		Corporate Plan Balances
					<i>Reported March</i>	<i>Final</i>	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Services							
Business Planning & Performance	1,371	1,310	-60		-60		
Legal & Democratic Services	1,512	1,436	-76			-76	
Finance & Assets	6,146	6,130	-17		#	-17	
Highways & Environmental Services	20,899	20,620	-278		-207	-71	
Planning & Regulatory Services	2,621	2,614	-7			-7	
Adult & Business Services	32,080	32,080	0				
Children & Family Services	8,914	8,765	-149		-103	-46	
Housing & Community Development	2,102	2,093	-9			-9	
Communication, Marketing & Leisure	5,699	5,661	-38		-25	-13	
Strategic HR	901	901	0				
ICT/Business Transformation	1,934	1,825	-109		-95	-14	
Customers & Education Support	1,983	1,737	-246		-232	-14	
School Improvement & Inclusion	4,452	4,103	-349		-126	-25	-198
Total Services	90,613	89,276	-1,337		-848	-290	-198
Schools	61,962	60,893	-1,069	-1,069			
Corporate Budgets							
Corporate	7,587	7,099	-488				
Budgeted Contribution to Balances		300	300				
Total Corporate Budgets			-188				-188
Capital Financing/Investment Interest	12,656	12,656	0				
Levies	4,569	4,569	0				
Total Services & Corporate Budgets	177,387	174,794	-2,593				
FUNDING							
Welsh Government Funding:							
RSG	110,975	110,975	0				
NNDR	26,467	26,467	0				
	137,442	137,442					
Use of Reserves	50	0	50				
Council Tax	39,895	40,210	-315				
Total Funding	177,387	177,652	-265				-265
In-year Position	0	-2,858	-2,858	-1,069	-848	-290	-651

RESULTING POSITION AT 31/03/2013

	£'000
School Balances Brought Forward	1,801
In Year contribution	1,069
School Balances Carried Forward	2,870
Earmarked Balances	
Services	
Business Planning & Performance	60
Legal & Democratic Services	76
Finance & Assets	17
Highways & Environmental Services	278
Planning & Regulatory Services	7
Children & Family Services	149
Housing & Community Development	9
Communication, Marketing & Leisure	38
ICT/Business Transformation	109
Customers & Education Support	246
School Improvement & Inclusion	151
Total	1,139
Corporate Plan Reserve	
Balanace Brought Forward	1,300
In-year Budgeted Contribution	2,073
Reallocated Reserves	6,274
Year-end Contribution	651
Balance Carried Forward	10,298
General Balances	
Balanace Brought Forward	6,976
In-year contribution	300
Balance Carried Forward	7,276

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APPENDIX 2				
TRANSFERS TO/FROM EARMARKED RESERVES	Balance at 31st March 2012 £000	Transfers Out 2012/13 £000	Transfers In 2012/13 £000	Balance at 31st March 2013 £000
Council Fund:				
Schools				
School Balances	(1,801)	592	(1,661)	(2,870)
Early Retirement Fund - Schools	(716)	0	0	(716)
Schools Transitional Protection	0	22	(584)	(562)
Grant & Capital Related				
Capital Schemes	(1,256)	2,485	(1,525)	(296)
Capital Financing (VAT refund interest)	(860)	500	0	(360)
PFI Grant	(3,732)	0	(169)	(3,901)
Planning Delivery for Wales	(228)	24	0	(204)
Sustainable Waste Management	(3,449)	994	(850)	(3,305)
Revenue Grants Unapplied	(537)	491	(734)	(780)
Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme	(14)	0	(18)	(32)
Supporting People Reserve	(3,654)	1,040	(378)	(2,992)
External Funding Administration	(134)	175	(149)	(108)
Legal Obligations/Commitments				
Town & Country Planning Act (s.106) Requirements	(1,733)	442	(349)	(1,640)
Single Status	(4,725)	3,722	0	(1,003)
S.117 Mental Health Act	(52)	0	0	(52)
CESI Pooled Budget	(26)	9	0	(17)
Social Care				
Llys Marchan Reserve	(10)	10	0	0
Specialist PSS Placements	(890)	0	0	(890)
Care Home fees	(358)	0	0	(358)
Social Care Amenity fund	(23)	0	(2)	(25)
Service & Corporate				
Environmental Services	(129)	129	(108)	(108)
Modernising Education	(353)	415	(62)	0
Youth Service	(61)	0	0	(61)
Integrated Children's Centre	(83)	3	0	(80)
Leisure Strategy	(109)	0	0	(109)
Insurance Fund	(382)	355	(540)	(567)
Major Events Reserve	(188)	0	(21)	(209)
Elections	(80)	83	(25)	(22)
Risk Management Fund	(87)	0	(55)	(142)
IT Networks Development	(162)	0	0	(162)
IT Systems Development (EDRMS)	0	0	(40)	(40)
LABGI Reserve	(149)	149	0	0
Delivering Change	(2,563)	2,088	(200)	(675)
Regeneration Project (VAT refund)	(164)	122	(30)	(72)
Winter Maintenance	(402)	176	0	(226)
Major Highways Projects	(160)	81	0	(79)
Environment Reserves	(186)	45	(5)	(146)
LDP Future Costs	(263)	202	0	(61)
Design & Development	(120)	0	0	(120)
Area Member Reserve	(199)	152	0	(47)
Superannuation Recovery	(89)	0	(213)	(302)
N Wales Regional Transformation Fund	(63)	63	0	0
Training Collaboration	(47)	9	0	(38)
Finance & Legal Reserves	(92)	9	(40)	(123)
Yellow Bus Reserve	(101)	0	0	(101)
Signing Schemes	(75)	0	(21)	(96)
Corporate Plan	0	0	(10,298)	(10,298)
Resident Survey	0	0	(13)	(13)
Town Plans/Economic Development	0	0	(515)	(515)
Total	(30,505)	14,587	(18,605)	(34,523)

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Appendix 3 Review of Reserves

Reserve	Explanation	Movement £'000
Modernising Education	Set up to fund schools capital - Movement is simply 'tidying up'	-215
Capital Financing (VAT refund interest)	To offset increased borrowing costs - increase in costs did not occur, MTFP already assumes future budgetary increase	-500
Single Status	Offset initial costs of Single Status and contribute to 'incremental drift' - this is now nearly complete and final costs will be lower than original forecasts	-2,500
Delivering Change	Limited expenditure to date - services have tended to absorb costs as incurred, will 'top up' each year	-1,750
LABGI	Unused Economic Development Grant	-149
Supporting People Reserve	Was set up to guard against large drop in grant over short period. Now known that grant will reduce more gradually and over a longer period	-1,000
Llys Marchan Reserve	Dispute over costs, now settled	-10
LDP Future Costs	LDP underway, unlikely to spend all	-100
External Funding Administration	Previous years' underspends for the costs of administering EU grants. Team now at full strength	-50
Capital Plan Investment Reserve	Total reallocated from reserves above	6,274
	Net Movement	0

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Cost Centre	School	Balance as at 31.03.2012	Balance as at 31.03.2013	Movement in Year	Total Pupil Nos Sept 2012	Balance per Pupil	School Budget 2012/13	Balance as %age of Budget
114	YSGOL BETWS GWERFIL GOCH	12,587	20,180	7,593	31.00	651	198,780	10.15%
116	YSGOL Y FAENOL	32,145	23,402	(8,743)	126.00	186	429,680	5.45%
117	YSGOL BODFARI	16,977	24,092	7,115	36.00	669	193,490	12.45%
136	YSGOL CARROG	19,830	29,402	9,572	33.00	891	203,870	14.42%
140	YSGOL CEFN MEIRIADOG	34,920	46,664	11,743	64.50	723	270,260	17.27%
146	YSGOL CLOCAENOG	4,316	4,670	354	37.50	125	194,170	2.40%
162	YSGOL CAER DREWYN	36,796	53,145	16,349	74.00	718	384,790	13.81%
163	YSGOL CYFFYLLIOG	2,311	12,229	9,918	24.00	510	195,710	6.25%
165	YSGOL BRO DYFRDWY	60,206	66,796	6,589	96.50	692	511,040	13.07%
168	YSGOL Y PARC INFANTS	60,620	74,765	14,146	155.00	482	659,140	11.34%
169	YSGOL FRONGOCH JUNIORS	56,771	45,345	(11,426)	184.00	246	572,440	7.92%
172	YSGOL TWM O'R NANT	38,802	34,182	(4,621)	243.50	140	907,460	3.77%
173	YSGOL PENDREF	2,010	(40,294)	(42,304)	167.50	(241)	775,420	-5.20%
176	YSGOL HIRADDUG	35,629	60,521	24,893	211.00	287	750,250	8.07%
196	YSGOL GELLIFUR	8,405	3,561	(4,845)	92.50	38	322,850	1.10%
198	YSGOL GLYNDYFRDWY	26,907	0	(26,907)	0.00	0	86,530	0.00%
210	YSGOL BRO ELWERN	3,954	15,416	11,463	34.00	453	207,680	7.42%
219	YSGOL HENLLAN	31,312	22,794	(8,518)	60.00	380	313,360	7.27%
247	YSGOL BRO FAMAU	2,622	(10,714)	(13,335)	99.00	(108)	399,940	-2.68%
249	LLANBEDR CONTROLLED	(2,242)	43,450	45,691	23.00	1,889	277,820	15.64%
251	YSGOL DYFFRYN IAL	219	31,875	31,656	44.50	716	324,160	9.83%
255	YSGOL BRYN CLWYD	(1,634)	(1,545)	89	24.00	(64)	221,670	-0.70%
258	YSGOL LLANFAIR D.C.	46,250	47,792	1,542	98.00	488	410,520	11.64%
266	YSGOL BRYN COLLEN	(3,220)	(19,565)	(16,345)	135.00	(145)	622,420	-3.14%
268	YSGOL BRO CINMEIRCH	10,366	7,848	(2,519)	68.50	115	309,590	2.53%
284	YSGOL MELYD	33,134	62,924	29,791	146.50	430	713,650	8.82%
325	YSGOL PENTRECELYN	23,936	21,026	(2,910)	35.00	601	194,300	10.82%
332	YSGOL BODNANT COMMUNITY SCHOOL	46,538	59,389	12,851	462.50	128	1,622,750	3.66%
333	CLAWDD OFFA	(31,821)	45,437	77,258	233.50	195	784,720	5.79%
336	YSGOL PENMORFA	29,331	121,979	92,648	412.00	296	1,517,980	8.04%
337	YSGOL Y LLYS	75,917	41,616	(34,301)	273.50	152	1,015,440	4.10%
338	YSGOL PANTPASTYNOG	24,694	27,316	2,622	59.50	459	254,890	10.72%
351	YSGOL RHEWL	(327)	(607)	(281)	59.50	(10)	201,020	-0.30%
361	YSGOL Y CASTELL	(25,540)	24,301	49,842	194.00	125	706,570	3.44%
364	YSGOL BRYN HEDYDD	41,728	50,013	8,286	439.50	114	1,380,890	3.62%
365	CHRIST CHURCH C.P.	32,678	50,114	17,435	402.50	125	1,593,120	3.15%
366	YSGOL DEWI SANT	109,447	111,645	2,198	491.00	227	1,587,980	7.03%
367	YSGOL EMMANUEL	168,401	166,549	(1,853)	436.50	382	1,557,660	10.69%
368	YSGOL LLYWELYN	19,103	37,824	18,721	499.50	76	1,743,530	2.17%
369	YSGOL MAIR R.C.	(23,429)	(1,074)	22,355	276.00	(4)	996,940	-0.11%
373	YSGOL BORTHYN CONTROLLED	58,899	43,495	(15,403)	120.00	362	508,090	8.56%
374	RHOS ST. C.P.	127,055	110,490	(16,565)	172.00	642	688,180	16.06%
375	YSGOL PENBARRAS	37,892	74,201	36,309	234.50	316	849,950	8.73%
390	ST. ASAPH INFANTS V.P.	25,564	(7,588)	(33,152)	104.00	(73)	413,580	-1.83%
392	YSGOL ESGOB MORGAN	3,997	(5,061)	(9,058)	99.00	(51)	370,860	-1.36%
405	YSGOL TREFNANT CONTROLLED	61,029	35,564	(25,464)	66.00	539	298,150	11.93%
408	YSGOL TREMEIRCHION	9,426	(1,216)	(10,642)	52.50	(23)	249,210	-0.49%
467	YSGOL GYMRAEG Y GWERNANT	9,090	107	(8,983)	126.00	1	489,430	0.02%
490	ST BRIGID'S	15,002.30	(14,161)	(29,164)	140.00	(101)	432,480	-3.27%
TOTAL		1,408,602	1,650,291	241,689	7,697		29,914,409	5.52%

Average

214

Secondary School Balances As at 31.03.2013

Cost Centre	School	Balance as at 31.03.2012	Balance as at 31.03.2013	Movement In Year	Total Pupil Nos Sept 2012	Balance per Pupil	School Budget 2012/13	Balance as %age of Budget
513	DENBIGH HIGH SCHOOL	(32,478)	52,387	84,864	707	74	3,391,740	1.54%
527	YSGOL DINAS BRAN	127,370	106,242	(21,128)	973	109	4,727,550	2.25%
537	PRESTATYNN HIGH SCHOOL	258,251	416,518	158,266	1,780	237	7,172,020	5.81%
541	RHYL HIGH SCHOOL	(256,325)	(205,472)	49,853	778	(264)	3,865,910	-5.31%
543	BLESSED EDWARD JONES HIGH SCHOOL	(168,740)	(412,753)	(244,013)	483	(955)	2,243,770	-18.40%
549	YSGOL BRYNNHFRYD	79,653	87,849	8,196	1,189	74	5,520,800	1.59%
553	YSGOL GLAN CLWYD	154,624	225,133	70,509	971	232	4,191,890	5.37%
590	ST BRIGID'S	(15,002)	121,461	136,463	364	334	1,654,800	7.34%
TOTAL		148,354	391,365	243,011	7,225	54	32,768,480	1.19%

Average 54

Special School Balances As at 31.03.2013

Cost Centre	School	Balance as at 31.03.2012	Balance as at 31.03.2013	Movement In Year	Total Pupil Nos Sept 2012	Balance per Pupil	School Budget 2012/13	Balance as %age of Budget
619	YSGOL PLAS BRONDYFFRYN	55,126	482,300	427,174	86,00	5,608	2,694,269	17.90%
655	YSGOL TIR MORFA	188,980	345,818	156,838	77,00	4,491	2,096,912	16.49%
TOTAL		244,106	828,118	584,012	163	5,080	4,791,181	17.28%

Average 5,080

TOTAL ALL SCHOOLS

1,801,062 2,869,774 1,068,712 15,085

67,474,070 4.25%

Average balance per pupil - all schools

190

Report To: County Council

Date of Meeting: 9 July 2013

Lead Officer: Corporate Director: Modernisation and Wellbeing

Report Author: Early Intervention, Strategy and Support Service Manager

Title: Annual Council Report: Social Services 2012/2013

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 Every Director of Social Services in Wales is required to produce an annual report which summarises their view of the effectiveness of the authority's social care services and priorities for improvement.
- 1.2 A draft annual report for 2012/2013 is attached as Appendix 1. The report is intended to provide the public with an honest picture of services in Denbighshire and to demonstrate a clear understanding of the strengths and challenges faced.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 To provide Council with our self assessment of social care in Denbighshire and the identified improvement priorities for 2013/2014.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 Full Council are asked to consider:
 - the Director's self assessment of social care in Denbighshire
 - improvement priorities for 2013/2014
 - whether the draft report provides a clear account of performance
- 3.2 The report will form an integral part of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) performance evaluation of Denbighshire Social Services. The evaluation also informs the Wales Audit Offices assessment of Denbighshire County Council as part of the annual improvement report.

4. Report details.

- 4.1 The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) has four components:
 - ❶ **A detailed self assessment and analysis of effectiveness**
- 4.2 Performance has been assessed against a set of outcome statements developed by the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA). The outcome

statements focus on service users and carers, as well as 'organisational capacity' including Corporate, Political and Leadership support.

② Evidence trail

- 4.3 A significant volume of evidence has been collected to demonstrate the self analysis and associated judgements. This information will be submitted to CSSIW.

③ Integration with business planning

- 4.4 The improvement priorities we have identified through our self assessment have been integrated into our Service Business Plans and therefore mainstreamed into the authority's performance management framework.

④ Publication of an annual report

- 4.5 In line with the guidance that governs the ACRF process the annual report has been written for the public. We are required to publish the annual report by 31 July 2013.

Key messages and priorities from the ACRF process

- 4.6 Our overall assessment is that Denbighshire Social Services succeeded in making real improvements in terms of both performance and quality over the past year.

- 4.7 We can show that we have:

- supported families successfully at an early stage to help prevent problems escalating
- provided early support and helped people to regain their confidence and ability to care for themselves e.g. after a fall.
- supported people to live independently in the community and reduced the number of people admitted into Care Homes
- provided looked after children with stable and caring homes
- safeguarded children and vulnerable adults effectively
- worked in partnership with other authorities and agencies
- a stable workforce who are supported with their professional development
- strong leadership driving forward the agenda
- improved quality assurance processes
- robust financial management which has delivered services within budget

- 4.8 However, there have been some real challenges for both Adult and Business and Children's Services. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the challenges and how we are responding.

- 4.9 The improvement priorities contained within the annual report recognise the need to continue to adapt and modernise our services in order to respond to

the expectations and requirements of the Welsh Government's Social Services and Wellbeing Bill.

4.10 Key features of our approach to proactively remodel, and develop new service patterns to improve local services will include:

- the development of enhanced family support services with a 7 day per week waking hour family support service;
- strengthened transition support to young people with disabilities who are moving from children services to adults services;
- implementation of the IFSS (Integrated Family Support Service) model;
- the development of additional Extra Care;
- developing a three-year plan to develop services to support carers;
- additional investment in reablement and approaches to support people to live independently without the need for ongoing social care;
- reduced sickness absence, a higher percentage of performance appraisals completed and improved response times for complaints.

4.11 The future of our services has to look different and so our commitment to modernisation will involve an increased investment in preventative and early intervention services to enable citizens to be independent, resilient and able. This approach will need to be underpinned by a range of services, activities and support networks that people can access in their own community. The delivery of this agenda will require cross-council/service and cross-sector solutions including community led initiatives.

4.12 We recognise that as we remodel and develop new services and approaches this will bring change and, inevitably, some change will not be popular. However, the financial climate means that tough decisions cannot be avoided. Our focus will be on making changes that deliver cost effective, sustainable services that ensure vulnerable people are protected and that people receive high quality services that provide dignity in care and good outcomes.

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

5.1 The priorities detailed within the ACRF directly contribute to priority 4: vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible. Examples include:

- working with the Communication, Marketing and Leisure Service to support vulnerable people to live independently through joint initiatives;
- working with Housing, Internal Audit and Environmental Services to streamline processes for Disabled Facility Grants;
- ensuring families that are facing challenges or have complex needs will receive targeted support, with the aim of keeping families together;
- working with partner agencies to ensure vulnerable children and families are identified and supported at an early stage to prevent problems arising and escalating.

5.2 Activity identified within the annual report is/ and will continue to directly contribute to, and benefit from, the delivery of both the Economic and Community Ambition and Modernising the Council programmes.

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

6.1 The actions identified within the report are aimed at delivering service improvements, improving outcomes and meeting local needs better within the context of achieving challenging financial efficiencies.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?

7.1 Increased investment and focus on preventative and early intervention services is intended to help people and families to become more independent and resilient. Work through our modernising social services programme will need to ensure that the potential for people becoming socially isolated/lonely following short term intervention is minimised

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1 We have drawn on feedback from service users and carers about our services as part of our existing quality assurance system. We have also drawn on findings of the positive CSSIW inspections in 2012/2013 along with good practice research that has been commissioned by the Welsh Government such as the National Review of Outcomes for Children and Young People.

8.2 The draft assessment was considered by Performance Scrutiny on the 16 May 2013 and we have worked with Flintshire peer review each our respective self assessment reports.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 Additional funding has been identified to support the delivery of priorities in the Corporate Plan, including one year Welsh Government budget protection for social services. This allocation will fund the associated priorities in the ACRF. It is crucial that costs to implement additional ACRF actions are delivered within the resources identified and that planned efficiencies are achieved.

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

10.1 Detailed risk registers have been developed for the Adult and Business Service and for the Children and Family Service. As the ACRF has been mainstreamed into the work of the Services the associated risks and actions to mitigate and manage them are captured in the risk register.

11. Power to make the Decision

11.1 Statutory Guidance on the Role and Accountabilities of the Director of Social Services issued under Section 7 of Local Authority Social Services Act 1970.

Annual Report 2012-13

Who we are
What we do
The difference we make



Denbighshire County Council
Social Services

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If you would like to find out more about our services and how to access them, contact the First Contact Team. You can write or call in to see them at:

64 Brighton Road
Rhyl
LL18 3HN

County Hall
Wynnstay Road
Ruthin
LL15 1YN

Phone 01824 712900
Fax 01824 712888
Text 07917 597993
Email firstcontactteam@denbighshire.gov.uk
Website www.denbighshire.gov.uk

This document provides a summary of our annual self-assessment.

For a version of this leaflet in Braille or another language or format, call free on 0800 243 980.

Introduction

This is my annual report about Social Services in Denbighshire. The report looks at performance in 2012/13 and sets out our priorities for 2013/14. The report provides a detailed assessment of how effective services are for adults and children and families.

How effective are our services?

My overall assessment is that Denbighshire Social Services has succeeded in making real improvements in terms of both performance and quality over the past year.

The commitment and hard work of our workforce is exceptional and as a result we have been able to deliver positive outcomes for people. We can show that we have:

- supported families successfully at an early stage to help prevent problems escalating
- provided early support and helped people to regain their confidence and ability to care for themselves e.g. after a fall.
- supported people to live independently in the community and reduced the number of people admitted into care homes
- provided looked after children with stable and caring homes
- safeguarded children and vulnerable adults effectively
- worked in partnership with other authorities and agencies a stable workforce who are supported with their professional development
- strong leadership driving forward the agenda
- improved quality assurance processes
- robust financial management which has delivered services within budget

We set some ambitious challenges last year and I am pleased that we were able to take these forward. Specific achievements include successfully re-investing resources into family support and opening an Intensive Supported Independent Living Scheme (ISIL). The ISIL provides accommodation and intensive support for people with learning disabilities and people with physical disabilities.

The ISIL consists of 3 bungalows with up to 4 tenants in each bungalow and provides an effective approach to supporting people to live more independently in the community. The scheme has enabled 3 young adults to move from residential settings into their own home.

A key action that we hoped to deliver in 2012/13 was the development and delivery of an integrated disability service for children and young people and their families. Unfortunately there have been some delays in securing and developing the new location for the Child Development Centre. We will see this new service in place in 2013/14.

Staff sickness levels also remained higher than we would want to see.

During 2013/14 we will be launching an ambitious programme to modernise social care in Denbighshire. This will involve new, and remodelled, approaches to social care that are cost effective and sustainable within the context of a challenging financial environment and demographic pressures.

In line with the Welsh Government's Social Services and Enhancing Wellbeing Bill our commitment is to develop services that give citizens real control and a stronger voice over the way they are supported. This will include a clear focus on supporting people to maintain their independence through targeted preventative and early intervention services which provide recovery, restoration and can demonstrate a reduction in the need for ongoing care. Providing high quality services that protect and support vulnerable people and children will remain a core feature.



Sally Ellis

**Corporate Director Modernisation and Wellbeing
(Statutory Director of Social Services)**

The Changing Face of Social Services

To be able to respond to the changing and increasing demands being placed on Social Services there is a need think about the social care agenda more broadly.

Social Services increasingly face serious challenges that include financial constraints, increased demand and shifting public expectations. This is at a time when the demography of our society is changing with:

- an ageing society with many more people in middle years with significant disabilities;
- an increasing number of children with significant disabilities who rightly have high expectations of services;
- changing family and community structures with continuing high rates of family breakdown.

Like many authorities we are seeing increases in the number of:

- looked after children and those on the child protection register
- people with a learning disability;
- older people with complex care needs and whose support needs are extensive;
- carers who need support to help them continue to support vulnerable people.

It is clear that responding to the demands with traditional models of social care is not an appropriate or sustainable response to meeting the needs and expectations of vulnerable people. The need for change has been identified within Denbighshire County Council's Corporate priorities.

Delivering the council's priorities

Denbighshire's Council's priorities for 2012/17 include a commitment to:

- ensuring vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible; and
- modernising the council to deliver efficiencies and improve services for our customers.

In 2013/14 our focus will be on a specific set of projects to modernise our services. We have established a 5 year programme to modernise social services including some new, some tested, and some radical ways of working. The changes will redefine the responsibility of individuals, families and communities for maintaining their own health and wellbeing and require a change in culture that provides a greater focus on promoting resilience, independence, self care and community support.

Changing the way we work, even when this is for positive reasons, can be challenging. We recognise that the level of change required will involve difficult decisions about the way some services are delivered and that these will not always be popular. We will have to pay attention to managing this change effectively and ensure that we are effective in listening and involving staff, elected members and communities in the modernising programme.

Working with others

We take great pride in our positive track record for delivering improvement and for our commitment to partnership working based upon respect for others.

The modernising Social Services programme and commitment within the Council priorities to support vulnerable people means the time is right to maximise the benefits of working in partnership with our own Council services such as housing, leisure and community services, education and countryside services.

In 2012/13 we have established the North Wales Commissioning Hub that is starting to see some real improvements in the commissioning of services for people with complex needs (adults and children). Building on the North Wales Adoption Service we have established a joint adoption panel with Conwy Social Services.

As the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCU) has continued to embed there have been times when the pace of partnership working and service development has not been as quick as we would have liked. This continues to be challenging for all but what does remain is a commitment from all parties to work in collaboration to achieve positive outcomes for our citizens. The recent commitment to develop a Single Point of Access across health and social care, and the fact that BCU are partners in the Regional Commissioning Hub provide good evidence for this.

In November 2012, parts of St Asaph, Ruthin, Rhuddlan and a number of other communities, were devastated by floods. Both during the emergency response, and in the ongoing recovery process, Social Services staff worked in excellent partnership with colleagues partners across the Council, the Environment Agency, and third sector organisations. Much has been learnt about the processes for safeguarding vulnerable residents and maintaining independence during events like this.

The progress in detail

The following sections provide a more detailed analysis of:

- how people can access support;
- our performance for services to adults and services to children and families;
- the difference we are making, and
- our top priority areas for service development and improvement in 2013/14.

Providing an effective and timely first response

Our First Contact Team provides a single point of access to our services. They carry out initial screening conversations to find out what needs an individual might have.

Often they are able to signpost people to information/advice and everyday support in their own communities. Accessing community support is an integral part of leading an independent and fulfilling life. Based on sample data we know First Contact Team are able to signpost a quarter of people who contact Social Services to community based services.

A single point of access

Last year we were selected as a pilot to develop a single point of access to social and health care services. This service will provide a single number that the public can use to make contact and get support from a range of agencies when in need of help.

With funding from the Social Services Improvement Agency we have worked with Health and third sector colleagues to develop the model for our Single Point of Access which will go live this Autumn. Developing this service has taken longer than we initially anticipated but we are now in the final stages leading up to the implementation. Excitingly, the work will also now be used to inform the development of a Single Point of Access across North Wales.

Children & Family Services

What we are about

We aim to ensure vulnerable children:

- are safeguarded;
- live with secure, stable loving families;
- have opportunities for success, and
- are enabled to grow and develop into healthy, well rounded adults.

The Services we provide

We recognise the importance of providing the right support to children and families at the right time. This involves working closely with other agencies to combine our effort so that we:

- help prevent problems arising;
- respond early before problems escalate, and
- provide effective support when intensive help is needed from statutory services.

The services we provide include:

- information, advice and signposting people to help and support;
- supporting families to care for their children safely and to reduce the risk of family breakdown;
- helping children in need, disabled children and young carers;
- supporting looked after children and care leavers;
- providing stable, secure placements through fostering and adoption, and
- child protection to ensure vulnerable children are safe.

Supporting Families in a timely and effective way

Every year families, professionals and the general public contact us with concerns about children and young people and in 2012/2013 the service received 7345 contacts with 799 of these proceeding to referral. The needs of these children and young people will be very different with some needing low level short term support and others needing to come into the care of the local authority.

We have worked hard to develop our early intervention services so that we are able to support families who need help but do not require social services input. Through the Team Around the Family and Families First services we can respond to family's needs as early as possible and help to stop problems and issues growing. The Team Around the Family works closely with families to identify what issues they want to address, to build on strengths that exist in the family and to put in place support that helps the family to manage their own situation going forward. In addition to the Team Around the Family we have a meeting every two weeks with the agencies delivering early intervention services that helps us to make sure we respond to families at the right time and with the right services. In 2012/13 Team Around the Family worked with 89 families which included 191 children/ young people.

“Would just like to thank a member of the Team Around the Family for helping me get some order in my family. Just to be a happy unit is amazing and fantastic.”

For some of the families who come to our attention whose needs are more serious we work closely with teachers, health visitors, and the police to share information and concerns about children and families. Through our meetings with them we agree what action is needed to support the family and who will take the lead. This approach helps to ensure that families who need help get early support from the most appropriate agency and that we (social services) are able to target who we work with.

We have worked hard this year to build a strong relationship between the Team Around the Family and early intervention services and the statutory Children and Family Services to make sure that for those families whose needs can fluctuate their experience through the different services is smooth.

These ways of working are helping us to ensure that we target the right services to families. One of the measures we use to help build a picture of how well services are targeted is to look at our re-referral rates. All authorities have children and families re-referred for help. However, in 2010/11 our re-referral rate of 29% was much higher than other authorities in Wales. We are pleased that the measures we have taken to support families early on have helped to reduce our re-referral rate to just over 19%. This performance compares well to other authorities in Wales.

Helping children in need, disabled children and young carers

"Thank you so much Sue for sharing our journey, for all your time, care & support. You have made a huge difference to our lives - to me, to us as a family... You became part of our lives 11 1/2 years ago... We met when our world had been up ended then blown apart, over the years you have helped me gather some of the pieces up, held them for me, helped me slowly put them back together - they don't fit exactly back but with your help we've managed to piece together some semblance of recognisable normality..." (Parent of Clic Sargent Service User)

In 2011/12 we undertook a big piece of work to identify those vulnerable families whose needs are most likely to escalate. Through this activity we identified the needs and common themes in the lives of 723 families. In 2012/13 we have used the information from this study to develop our early intervention services for children and their families.

The restructure of the whole service has concentrated on the quality of our practice and services we provide and we are very pleased with how well the new structure has been established and we are now really starting to see the improvements in the ways in which we work with children and the outcomes we are able to achieve for them. A national review of Outcomes for Children in Need and Children Looked After 2012 highlighted a number of strengths in Denbighshire including good communication and working relationships, improved staff morale, a focus on achieving change and working in partnership with families. As part of the review one service user explained: 'Social services had "stopped making me do things, now doing things with me" social workers "set goals I can achieve".'

During this year we have undertaken a detailed review of our intensive family support services (which include Supporting People Family Support Service; Therapeutic and Preventative Service, and Parenting provision) to see how well they respond to the needs of our families, both in terms of the availability of the services as the families need them and also the issues the services address. Following on from this review we have been able to reconfigure our services so that in 2013/14 we are able to extend our family support service to be a seven day a week provision, develop a new support foster care service that will help us to support families in crisis with a view to enabling children to remain with their families.

Services for disabled children focus on maximising their development and wellbeing and supporting them to live within their community. In 2012/13 we worked with our colleagues in education to identify and understand in more detail the needs of 365 disabled children and their families. A number of aspects in the lives and experiences of the children and families were explored and the results will be used to shape a range of much improved and informed 'whole family' services from 2013/14 onwards. For example we will be looking at how we promote and enable the independence of young with disabled people through increased and improved access to social, leisure and youth opportunities.

As reported in our report in 2011/12 we had intended to set up a regional North Wales Young Carer service ready for 2013/14. Agreement has now been reached by 3 of the 6 local authorities in North Wales to set up a joint service from 2014 onwards. In the meantime we have been working very closely with colleagues in education to ensure we have a more joined up approach to how we identify and respond to the needs of young carers and this work will continue in 2013/14.

Looked after children and care leavers

Looked after children are children and young people who are in the care of the local authority because of a care order made by the court or by agreement with their parent(s). Often these children are referred to as being 'in care'.

Overall we have seen a slight reduction in the number of looked after children with 158 looked after children on the 31st March 2013 compared to 162 on the 31st March 2012. However, this figure does not reflect that we have had a significant number of children entering the care system, and a significant number of children leaving care during the year.

Last year 79 children became looked after compared to 50 children in 2011/12. For each child coming into care there are a range of activities that we must undertake which include allocating each child a social worker, developing a care plan, ensuring they have an appropriate placement and that they are visited and reviewed in timely manner in order to ensure that they are happy, safe and their needs are being met.

“Like I was put in care when I was 11 and I felt like no-one wanted me, but coming into a nice home makes it easier. Giving a child/young person opportunities they may never had. The security of knowing there will always be food, clothes and a bed and most importantly always love”.

The headline figure of our looked after population remaining stable also masks the volume of work we have undertaken to ensure that looked after children are able to leave care with appropriate arrangements in place.

The Council acts as a 'corporate parent' for looked after children to make sure their education, health and well-being is promoted, that they take full advantage of opportunities and reach their full potential. This commitment continues with these children as they develop into young adults and prepare for their move to independence and out of the care of the local authority and in 2012/13 we supported 77 care leavers. During this year we have also carried out a detailed piece of work with our care leavers and the workers who directly support them to review how well the services we provide to care leavers.

On the whole care leavers reported that they feel the service responds to their needs as they change but did highlight that there is a need for more/better support at an earlier age in relation to:

- being prepared for independence (e.g. basic skills, managing money, cooking) with much earlier planning and preparation before they reach 16;
- accessing their budgets in a timely way;
- Social worker contact and support when they need them.

Some of the care leavers wanted continued support from their social worker whilst others in the group were happy with less contact and being supported by their personal advisor.

The results of this work helped to shape the design of the new 3 year care leavers personal advisor service that will commence in 2013/14 and is being taken forward in new developments in the way the leaving care service is delivered. Some of the changes we will make will include more focussed support on the development of independence skills with more targeted work with foster carers and a review of the processes by which we make payments to care leavers.

Fostering and adoption

In order to ensure we are able to provide permanent, stable, secure and loving families for our looked after children/ young people we work hard to make sure we have well trained, well supported and committed foster carers who are able to meet the range of needs of our looked after children. In 2012/13, and continuing into 2013/14, we have invested heavily in the training and development of our foster carers, particularly our longstanding foster carers and kinship carers (carers who are relatives of the young people they look after), to make sure they have the skills and experiences required to provide caring and stable homes for our children and young people. Training covers areas such as Helping to Protect Children & Young People Safer Caring; Promoting Equality; Promoting Educational Opportunities & Leaving Care; Promoting Health & Social Wellbeing; Attachment; and Managing Behaviour.

Experienced Foster Carers have also undertaken two training programmes jointly with our social work staff. The first was a 2 day programme and the second was an intensive 6 day training programme. Future training will also focus on addressing Health issues for looked after children and the Effects of Substance Misuse on Children.

“We have very much enjoyed fostering and feel we have grown in confidence and experience. We now feel more able to accommodate more challenging placements and are always eager to learn new skills and take on board any evidence and comments regarding our development as carers.” (Foster Carer)

It is important that we continue to recruit foster carers in order to provide a range of placements to meet the differing needs of our looked after children. We have therefore worked closely with our corporate communications and marketing service to develop a new brand and marketing strategy for foster care recruitment that will be launched in Spring 2013/14.

The North Wales Adoption Service has continued to embed however the national shortage of prospective adopters continues to be an issue affecting the region and as such has restricted progress in recruiting a sufficient range of adopters that can be matched with our children who are suitable for adoption. Adding to this pressure has been the implementation of new legislation that requires care proceedings to be completed within 26 weeks.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

One of Social Services' key responsibilities is to protect children from harm and take action to protect any child who is found to have suffered abuse, or whose welfare is likely to suffer without further intervention or services. We try to do this in partnership with families, and where appropriate, keep children in their own homes.

In our assessment last year we cited our confidence in having efficient and well developed systems in place to keep vulnerable children and young people safe. In 2012/13 we have maintained our robust processes for dealing with child protection with 99% of initial child protection conferences held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion and 99% of child protection reviews carried out within timescales.

We have focussed our efforts on improving our engagement and consultation with children who have been subject to the child protection process in order to better understand the impact (positive/negative) it has had on their safety.

In 2012/13 we undertook a comprehensive consultation activity with this group of children and as a result of the findings we will be taking forward a number of activities that will include exploring options as to how we can increase the participation of children in child protection conferences.

In November 2012, further allegations of historical child abuse led to the establishment in North Wales of Operation Pallial and the Macur review. We have satisfied ourselves that we do comply with the recommendations of previous inquiries and, with other North Wales authorities, are ensuring appropriate support and counselling services are available for victims coming forward as a result of the recent investigations.

How does our performance compare?

Based on national performance indicators our assessment of performance is summarised as:

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ making a decision on referrals within one working day ➤ the percentage of referrals which are repeat referrals ➤ ensuring that the child is seen as part of the initial assessment ➤ undertaking initial child protection conferences within 15 working days of the strategy discussion ➤ open cases are allocated to qualified social workers ➤ completing core assessments within 35 working days ➤ placing looked after children in appropriate placements so that they do not experience unnecessary placement moves ➤ supporting children and young people to ensure attendance in school whilst being looked after ➤ maintaining contact with young people aged 19 who were in care on their 16th birthday ➤ child in need reviews are carried out within the statutory timescales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ completing looked after reviews within statutory timescales ➤ undertaking initial core group meetings being held within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference ➤ undertaking statutory visits to looked after children in accordance with regulations ➤ ensuring plans for permanence for looked after children are in place at the point of their second review ➤ managing the demand for practical advice and support for disabled children and their families from occupational therapy within existing resources

Delivering an efficient, high quality and well managed service

We have invested heavily in the development of the children's services workforce over the past year with a clear focus on providing our staff with a range of skills and improving quality. For example we have trained staff in: Sexual Abuse Risk Assessment for Child Protection and the Family Courts; Social Work Child Protection Investigation Training; Caring for Children & Young People with Inappropriate or Harmful Sexual Behaviour (done jointly with Foster Carers); and an intensive 6 day training programme, looking at issues such as Advanced Attachment & Trauma, Communication and Assessment of Children (done jointly with Foster Carers). Future training will focus on Working with Difficult, Dangerous & Evasive Families; Advanced Skills and Tools for Communicating with Children; and Outcome Focussed Practice with Children, Young People and their Families.

“The Support Worker was professional and approachable... listened and did not dismiss my comments. The whole process felt positive – I got the impression that no matter what the outcome of the assessment something could be done to help us.”

We worked with Adult Services to start to address the issues relating to occupational therapy waiting lists.

Sickness continues to be a serious issue for us and despite our efforts and commitments we have not succeeded in reducing the high absence rates. The average sickness rate in 2012/13 was 14.27 days per employee compared to a target of 8.61 days per employee. This is an area that will require even more focussed efforts in 2013/14 including the introduction of a fortnightly absence review meeting.

Throughout the past year we have improved our quality assurance and performance management processes with a more robust focus on practice and quality. In particular we have:

- developed and improved our case file auditing to be more outcome focussed i.e. to see whether our interventions made a child's life better
- improved processes for consultation and engagement with service users;
- integrated performance and quality data together to provide a better picture of how well we are doing.

The changing face of Social Services for the future requires us to think differently about how we deliver services. There is a need to modernise our services to enable us to find the long term efficiency savings needed whilst continuing to provide better services for children and families needing Social Services intervention.

To achieve this we will focus of our energies for 2013/14 to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Vulnerable families provide stability and safe care for children

To achieve this we will:

- implement a 7-day-week Family Support Service;
- implement a new Foster Care Support Service;
- implement the North Wales pre-court protocol which aims to support the completion of care proceedings within twenty six weeks and improve the quality of social work assessments and plans submitted to court;
- strengthen our working with Housing Services to develop accommodation for vulnerable families;
- work with Adult and Business Support Services to develop a family focus in key areas – as opposed to services focussing on ‘children’ or ‘adults’.

2. Looked after children are provided with permanent, stable, secure and loving families and become independent adults

To achieve this we will:

- develop a detailed profile of our fostering service to include demand, areas of need, service delivery and gaps in services;
- develop our services and support to children placed with parents;
- commission a new regional advocacy service;
- strengthen our working relationship with Housing Services to develop accommodation for care leavers.

3. Vulnerable children are protected

To achieve this we will:

- implement the IFSS (Integrated Family Support Service) model;
- explore new models for child protection conferences;
- implement a 'lessons learnt' process so that we can reflect and learn from practice to help improve our systems and quality of work

4. Children with complex additional needs are enabled to live stable, secure and inclusive family lives

To achieve this we will:

- work in partnership with other agencies to develop services for disabled children;
- review and restructure our Occupational Therapy service;
- participate in a review of the Disability Facilities Grant process;
- introduce a person centred approach to our work.

5. The Children and Family Service is efficient, of high quality and well managed

To achieve this we will:

- reduce the service sickness absence levels;
- increase the percentage of staff who have an annual performance appraisal;
- enhance our use of information and intelligence to shape our services;
- agree with our partner agencies how we fund and deliver complex packages of care;
- deliver our customer service standards;
- develop mobile and flexible working within the service;
- improve our ability to deliver services through the medium of Welsh;
- improve our effectiveness in dealing with complaints.

Adult & Business Services

What we are about

We want to ensure that vulnerable people are protected and able to live as independently as possible. For most people this means working with them so that they can continue to live in their own home and participate in their local community to the extent they wish.

The services we provide

The type of service we offer depends on a person's needs. Depending on their situation we could offer someone:

- information and advice e.g. about community services; benefits and how to claim them;
- signposting to services available in their community;
- support that helps people to regain or develop their skills and confidence to take care of themselves safely;
- equipment and home adaptations to assist people with daily living activities;
- care and/or support in a person's home;
- respite/support for carers such as advice on healthy living or arranging for some short term care to enable carers to have a break from caring responsibilities;
- day services;
- care in a residential or nursing home for people with specific high level care needs.

Prevention and early intervention

Research shows that having positive connections with other people is an important part of people's wellbeing. We have a range of services that have been developed to build networks and support to help people live in their community without reliance on statutory social care services. In 2012/13 we have extended the range of community initiatives that support this agenda, to include:

- memory cafes for people with dementia;
- open forums where older people can listen and be involved in meetings hosted by different speakers covering a wide range of topics;
- a series of seminars for older people focussing on values, peace, positivity, compassion, cooperation, self care, resilience and hope.

We continue to work closely with Library and Leisure Services who provide a range of services that help support vulnerable people through:

- activities for older people such as chair based exercises;
- arts based provision for vulnerable people e.g. 'lost in arts' for people with dementia and their carers and 'hidden talents' music classes for people with learning disabilities;
- library services e.g. reading groups to meet and share experiences and a mobile library service that provide books, advice and support to 226 people who are housebound.

Promoting independence

We have developed our services to provide a strong focus on supporting people to maintain or regain their independence.

We have an effective Intake Service which aims to respond promptly when people seek help. The service has a clear focus on how we can support people to regain and maintain their independence. Last year our Intake and Reablement Service assisted 1786 people to retain their independence by delivering advice and short term intensive support. Positively 72% of people no longer needed a formal package of care after short term support.

Examples of how the service supported people to lead an independent life include:

Reablement

Reablement is short-term support which is designed to develop people's confidence to manage as many tasks as possible on their own rather than having other people do things for them.

In 2012/13 our reablement team provided a support programme to 337 people.

This included supporting:

- 49 people in ways that contributed to the prevention of hospital admission
- 219 people to help them return to their own home from hospital
- 5 people in ways that prevented a residential placement
- 8 people to return to their own home from residential care

The outcomes for people receiving this service were very positive. On completing their reablement support programme:

- 216 people required no further services
- 119 people transferred to our long term locality teams as they needed ongoing domiciliary care – of which:
 - 58 people required a decrease level of support than was originally thought to be needed;
 - 56 people required the same level of support as they were previously having even if for a short time they needed extra;
 - 5 people had an increased level of support to ensure their safety or provide the help needed.

Surveys completed by people who have received reablement showed that at the end of the reablement service:

- 93% who responded were treated with dignity and respect;
- 94% who responded felt more able to remain living independently in own home.

During the year the reablement service provided a quick response when support was needed, but there were times when it proved a real challenge to respond to the level of demand. There are significant pressures on the availability of hospitals beds across Wales. Locally there is particular pressure to ensure that social care arrangements are in place to enable people to be discharged from hospital into the community. This means working swiftly and in partnership with Health to assess people and to put in place care arrangements that have a focus on helping people to regain their independence. Within this context the pressures on reablement are likely to remain or grow.

In addition there have been a small number of cases where the independent sector have not been available to provide domiciliary care when the reablement support was due to finish. This meant the reablement team had to hold the cases longer than they needed to. Given the pressures on reablement a further £100k investment for developing reablement has been prioritised for 2013/14.

Telecare

Telecare is a range of equipment that uses sensors and an alarm system which is plugged into the telephone socket. This alerts a carer or a monitoring centre when a person needs help or something has been detected such as gas or smoke and an appropriate response can be instigated.

In 2012/13 we provided an additional 486 people with Telecare. There are now over 1300 with Telecare in Denbighshire.

In 2012 we asked everyone who has Telecare what they thought about their service. We had 530 responses which showed:

- 97% of people said Telecare helped them to remain independent;
- 98% of people said that they feel safer and more secure at home with Telecare.

People told us:

“It has saved my life.”

“A wonderful service, always there when needed.”

“I believe everyone should have Telecare, it has certainly given me peace of mind.”

“Very good advice available, improves my confidence to cope.”

243 carers and family members responded to our Telecare survey and:

- 99% said Telecare equipment has been useful.
- 98% felt that the Telecare service has helped the person they care for live independently at home.

Carers and family told us:

“It puts my mind at rest knowing that there is help there if needed, especially if I am not there.”

“When I leave I know that if anything went wrong she has back up.”

In October 2012 the Telecare Team won an Excellence Denbighshire Award in recognition of the service they provide. This award reflects the hard work of staff and focus on providing an excellent customer focused service.

We now need to ensure people embrace new technology in innovative ways to meet more complex needs.

Equipment

We have an Integrated Community Equipment Service (CESI), which is a formal partnership with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCU). The service provides and manages a wide range of equipment to help people live safely at home. In 2012/13 we provided 1,756 people with of equipment.

The service user “has asked that I contact you to thank you again for the brilliant work you did with her when installing and showing her how to use the electric bath seat. She said this has been life changing for her.”

In 2013/14 we will pilot a scheme to provide Direct Payments for equipment and minor adaptations. We anticipate that the scheme will provide people with the choice to purchase their own make or model whilst still meeting their assessed need and reduce the waiting times for people who require small items of equipment and minor adaptations to their homes.

Supporting People with complex and/or long term care needs

Whilst our emphasis is on prevention and early intervention, we recognise that an ageing population has complex, long term care needs that require responsive support tailored to individual needs. Where specialist/long term services are needed we are committed to ensuring that we provide high quality, responsive services, that focus on meeting people's needs in their own community wherever possible. At all stages our aim is to ensure that people are able to have a strong voice and control over their support arrangements. Progress in these areas can be summarised as follows:

Providing high quality services—progress made in 2012/13

- We have improved the timeliness of reviews so that we meet service users to discuss and review their needs, the services they receive and the quality of their support. We reviewed 1610 cases last year and 94% of these were within timescales.
- We developed standards to ensure that people are involved in their assessment, arrangements for their care and in reviewing services. We will be rolling these standards out and monitoring how well we meet them in 2013/14.
- We have started to develop information for the public about the quality of our services. We recognise that we need to refine and develop this approach further.
- We also developed a questionnaire to establish service user and carer views and experience on the quality of services. We used small focus groups to consult with service users and the general public on the questionnaire at the end of 2012/13 and will be rolling it out in 2013.

Our aim is to further develop our approach to quality in 2013/14. We will strengthen and improve contract monitoring processes through regional work on quality monitoring; by bringing together our reviewing and contracting staff to join up and enhance our oversight of the quality of care provision; we will also explore the potential of carrying out spot checks for domiciliary care. In addition we will be implementing rota visits which provide Elected Members an opportunity to visit our in-house provider services and speak to service users and staff about the quality of services.

Ensuring people have a strong voice and control

In our learning disability service we have developed and embedded a 'person centred' approach to our work. This approach means we listen and work with the person, their family and friends, to find out what is important to them and how we can best support them to improve the quality of their lives and reach their full potential.

People who were involved in a person centred review told us:

"I really felt I was being listened to." (Service user)

"Thank you for such a productive and enjoyable review at our home. We both felt that it was your approach and personality that produced such positive results, so thank you very much." (Parents)

"I thought a lot came out of the review and there was no doubt it showed us what was really important to him." (Independent Advocate)
"I am grateful for the prompt service received and the kind and caring attitude of the staff as I find it difficult to be in the company of strangers."

Our aim is to build on this work across Adult Services and develop an approach known as 'citizen directed support'. This approach is about people having choice and control over the support they need to live their life as independently as possible. The approach challenges the national focus on care management which can be bureaucratic with lots of forms to fill in and standardised ways of meeting people's needs.

Developing citizen directed support will require significant change for social services staff, providers and service users and families – but the change is worth making. We recognise that it may take a number of years to fully embed this approach. We will start the process in 2013/14 by completing a citizen directed support self assessment which has been developed by the Social Services Improvement Agency. The self assessment will help inform our plan to implement and manage this change over the coming years.

Dignity in care

We continue to champion dignity in care which is an integral part of ensuring high quality service provision. In October 2012 we held a Celebrating Age Festival. The festival involved speed dating for older people and a court trial with society in the dock to answer charges of ageism. The trial involved a real judge and barristers and a jury and challenged ageism and negative stereotypes of ageing. We were pleased that three of our Dignity in Care volunteers were shortlisted for the WRVS Diamond Champion Award for their role in shaping and delivering Denbighshire's dignity in care training programme and other voluntary work they undertake. Our work on championing dignity for older people has also been shortlisted for a Social Care Accolade.

Protecting vulnerable adults

We have effective systems in place to make sure that vulnerable people are safeguarded. We work well with other agencies and last year 271 people from across the social care workforce attended POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) training. We have posters that explain the types of abuse a vulnerable person may suffer and who can be contacted by anyone who has concerns.

In 2012/13 there were 97 vulnerable people referred to us where we undertook an investigation into their circumstances. We effectively worked with these people and agencies to ensure that the risk was fully managed. In all the risk was managed for 97% of referrals investigated. Where the risk wasn't managed plans and measures were put in place.

Carers

We value the role that carers have and appreciate this can be a challenging and demanding role. We aim to improve the quality of life of carers and support them to achieve their potential so that they and the people they care for, can live fulfilled lives.

Over recent years there have been significant improvements in the range of support available to carers. We now commission carer support services with six local third sector organisations including a Carers Needs Assessment Service run by NEWCIS.

Over the last 12 months we have played an active role in the North Wales Carers Strategic Group which has led the strategic approach to implementing the new Carers Measure (Wales) across North Wales. This has involved close work with BCU and the third Sector to develop a North Wales Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2012/15 which was approved by Welsh Government in January 2013. We will continue to work closely with BCU to implement the strategy action plan.

We remain committed to improving and developing support and services for carers and we will be investing additional resources for carer services over the next 3 years. In 2013/14 we will develop a three-year plan setting out how we will develop carer support, including availability of suitable respite care.

New Work Connections

The New Work Connections (NWC) project supports people over the age of 16 who, through a range of disadvantages, are economically inactive or unemployed. We believe that help with pursuing training and/or employment can often help to transform people's lives and reduce dependency on health and social care services. The project is led by Denbighshire and covers the four local authority areas of Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire and Gwynedd. This is a major collaboration project funded with an European grant and match funding from local authorities.

The Denbighshire project helped 567 people during 2012/13. We are aiming to help more people in 2013/14.

How does our performance compare?

In terms of our business performance, we continue to demonstrate that we are delivering a good service in areas that matter to people receiving services:

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Delayed transfers of care from hospital for social care reasons remain very low.✓ The numbers of people provided with reablement and not requiring an ongoing service continues to rise.✓ The numbers of new admissions to care homes continues to fall.✓ The number of reviews completed on time is the best it has ever been.✓ The number of people with CDS/ Direct Payments continues to rise – but we recognise that more needs to be done.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">! Continuing to support discharge in a timely and appropriate way when there is significant pressures within the Health Service.! We need to continue to invest in services to support carers and ensure that they receive a timely service.! We need to look at how we can manage increasing demand for Occupational Therapy assessment.! We are providing a responsive reablement service but this is becoming more challenging as we aim to support more people and people with complex needs.

The ability to manage within the resources available to us is very important and we delivered a balanced budget this year, having delivered efficiencies of some £875k. This has only been possible through working together as a service and it stands us in good stead for some of the financial challenges facing us in the next few years.

The challenges (and opportunities) ahead

Unfortunately, there continue to be challenges facing the Council as a whole, and Adult Social Care in particular. There are clear pressures arising from an ageing society and the increases in demands for services that that brings. This is at the same time that resources available to Local Government are reducing. While a Comprehensive Spending Review from Westminster is not due until the end of this calendar year, it would not be unrealistic to assume that the funds available to the Council could be reduced by some £10m over the 3 years to 2017.

This will mean that some hard choices will have to be made and will mean that Adult Social Care has to embrace the philosophy embedded in *Sustainable Social Services* and the *Social Services & Wellbeing Bill* of reducing the reliance of people on ongoing care and support. We are fortunate this coming year in that, while we do need to find £475k efficiencies, the Council has prioritised services that protect vulnerable people and promote their independence in the Corporate Plan. Additional funding has been linked to the delivery of the Corporate Plan. In addition, the Welsh Government has protected social services in their budget, meaning this year we can re-invest efficiency money into initiatives which will provide alternatives to long-term support. Initiatives that will be funded through Corporate Plan allocation and Welsh Government protection include:

- additional Extra Care Housing to further reduce reliance on more expensive residential care;
- improvements at Cysgod y Gaer to reduce energy costs;
- development of alternative models of support for adults with learning ; disabilities to offset the changes and a reduction in Supporting People funds
- direct payments for equipment and minor adaptations;
- mobile working solutions to enable a reduction in expensive office space;
- working with leisure services to develop services that promote the wellbeing of vulnerable people living in communities;
- additional support for carers;
- additional reablement capacity, and
- investment in equipment at Cenfdy Healthcare.

Delivering an efficient, high quality and well managed service

There are other challenges that we will be facing in ensuring that we can demonstrate that the Service that is efficient and effective. For example, our sickness absence rates continue to be a concern and there will be a greater emphasis on managing and supporting staff who are absent through sickness in this coming year.

Looking forward—our top priorities for 2013-2014

Theme	Priority Actions
Safeguarding Making sure that vulnerable adults are protected from harm	Introduce new arrangements for protecting vulnerable people, including consideration of regional/sub-regional Safeguarding Boards.
	Work with Health to ensure that where we have joint responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable people in hospital, there will robust safeguarding arrangements in place.
Personalisation People having choice and control over their lives and being able to live as independently as possible	Implement ways of working that enable people to be as independent as possible while maintaining choice and control over their social care needs.
	Improve contract monitoring processes e.g. exploring spot checks for domiciliary care.
	Develop a workforce that can deliver the requirements of a modern social care service.
	Embed Dignity in Care as a fundamental part of the way we work.
	Deliver our customer service standards and develop our services in response to feedback from people who use services.
	Develop and implement a pilot to provide Direct Payments for equipment and minor adaptations.
	Apply the lessons learnt from New Work Connections to shape future day services for working age adults.
Localisation People's individual needs being met within their local communities	We will work with Leisure Services to develop a strategy for independent living which will set out in detail how we will support people to live active and independent lives.
	We will create additional capacity within the 3 rd sector and other DCC Services to support the well-being agenda.
	Further develop reablement and create additional reablement capacity across Denbighshire to reduce dependency on on-going social care services.
	Develop a three-year plan to support the development of services that support carers.
	Plan 3 additional Extra Care facilities in Denbighshire.
	Implement Denbighshire's volunteer scheme to provide opportunities for residents to become active members of their community.

<p>Integration Making sure that services work together to meet the needs of individuals using flexible resources to reduce dependence</p>	<p>Implement new arrangements for accessing advice and information through a Single Point of Access and develop the care coordination processes necessary to support seamless delivery of community health and social care services.</p>
	<p>We will continue to strengthen our working with Health by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarifying and developing the role of health and social care support workers • developing guidance on social care and health responsibilities for delivering personal care
	<p>We will improve partnership working with Children and Family Services to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a family focus in relevant service areas • explore models for providing effective services for young people with disabilities who will need ongoing support from Adult Services
	<p>We will continue to strengthen our working with Housing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a shared strategic approach to meeting the accommodation needs of vulnerable groups • clarifying and developing the role of wardens in supporting people to live independently
<p>Efficiency and Effectiveness Making sure that adults have co-ordinated health and social care support to meet their needs</p>	<p>Review and re-engineer 3 key processes to ensure they deliver efficiencies as well as improve outcomes for individuals.</p>
	<p>Develop mobile and flexible working within the service and reduce the office space we need.</p>
	<p>We will streamline our financial processes to deliver efficiencies.</p>
	<p>Reduce sickness absence.</p>
	<p>Ensure that all of staff have an annual performance appraisal.</p>
	<p>We will design an annual whole sector training plan that is based on identified training needs and priorities.</p>
	<p>Improve our ability to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.</p>
	<p>Improve our effectiveness in dealing with complaints.</p>

Feedback can be provided to:

ACRF Feedback
Ty Nant
Prestatyn
LL19 9LG.

You can also call 01824 712900 or email:
customer.connections@denbighshire.gov.uk to leave feedback.



Ceri's Family concept and images: © Denbighshire County Council

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Challenges and Responses

Challenge	How we are responding
<p>Increasing numbers of Looked After Children</p> <p>Overall we have seen a slight reduction in the number of looked after children with 158 looked after children on the 31st March 2013 compared to 162 on the 31st March 2012. However, this figure does not reflect the true volume of activity and work associated with changes to the group of looked after children.</p> <p>Last year 79 children became looked after compared to 50 children in 2011/12. For each child coming into care there are a range of activities that we are required to undertake including allocating each child a social worker, developing a care plan, ensuring they have an appropriate placement, that they are visited regularly and there is a regular review of their case. Adding to this pressure has been the implementation of new legislation that requires care proceedings to be completed within 26 weeks.</p> <p>The headline figure of our looked after population remaining stable therefore masks the volume of work we have undertaken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we have invested in, and developed, our early intervention services (Team Around the Family and Families First services) so that we are able to support families as early as possible and help to stop problems and issues growing • we have reviewed our intensive family support service and will extend our family support service to be a seven day a week provision • we will develop a new support foster care service that will help us to support families in crisis with a view to enabling children to remain with their families.
<p>Responding to pressures on Health</p> <p>There are significant pressures on the availability of hospitals beds across Wales. Locally there is particular pressure to ensure that social care arrangements are in place to enable people to be discharged from hospital into the community. This means working swiftly and in partnership with Health to assess people and to put in place care arrangements that have a focus on helping people to regain their independence.</p>	<p>We have excellent PI performance for ensuring that care is in place so that people are not delayed when they are ready to be discharged from hospital. During the year the reablement team provided a quick response when support was needed. In all the team supported 219 people being discharged from hospital and prevented 49 hospital admissions. However, there were times when it proved a real challenge to respond to the level of demand. We have developed a discharge policy with Health and will continue to work closely with them to manage this pressure.</p>

Challenge	How we are responding
<p data-bbox="188 237 976 269">Assuring the quality of the services we commission</p> <p data-bbox="188 309 1173 491">We purchase a significant volume of services for vulnerable adults. We have well established approaches to monitoring the quality of care but recognise that more could be done particularly to ensure that positive outcomes are being delivered and that service users have a strong voice and control over their care. In 2012/13 we have:</p> <ul data-bbox="188 531 1173 1305" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="188 531 1173 675">✓ improved the timeliness of reviews so that we meet service users to discuss and review their needs, the services they receive and the quality of their support. We reviewed 1610 cases last year and 94% of these were within timescales <li data-bbox="188 715 1173 858">✓ developed standards to ensure that people are involved in their assessment, arrangements for their care and in reviewing services. We will be rolling these standards out and monitoring how well we meet them in 2013/14 <li data-bbox="188 898 1173 1010">✓ started to develop information for the public about the quality of our services - we recognise that we need to refine and develop this approach further <li data-bbox="188 1050 1173 1193">✓ developed a questionnaire to establish service user and carer views and experience on the quality of services. We consulted with on the questionnaire at the end of 2012/13 and will be rolling it out in 2013 <li data-bbox="188 1233 1173 1305">✓ contributed to a review of how we can enhance quality monitoring across the North Wales region. 	<p data-bbox="1202 309 1973 379">Our aim is to further develop our approach to quality in 2013/14. We will:</p> <ul data-bbox="1202 419 2049 1390" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1202 419 2049 499">• strengthen and improve contract monitoring processes through regional work on quality monitoring <li data-bbox="1202 499 2049 611">• bringing together our reviewing and contracting staff to join up, and enhance our oversight, of the quality of care provision <li data-bbox="1202 611 2049 691">• explore the potential of carrying out spot checks for domiciliary care <li data-bbox="1202 691 2049 802">• develop a 3 year plan for developing support for carers which could include a role in checking the quality of the service provided to the person they care for <li data-bbox="1202 802 2049 946">• implement rota visits which provide Elected members an opportunity to visit our In House provider services and speak to service users and staff about the quality of services <li data-bbox="1202 946 2049 1058">• continue to embed Dignity in Care as an integral part of our training programme for the whole social care workforce <li data-bbox="1202 1058 2049 1281">• complete a citizen directed support self assessment which has been developed by the Social Services Improvement Agency. The self assessment will help inform a plan to move to a model of citizen directed support that provides service users greater voice and control over their care <li data-bbox="1202 1281 2049 1390">• roll out a service user and care questionnaire and analyse and act on what people are saying about the quality of their care

Challenge	How we are responding
<p>Remodelling services</p> <p>Social Services increasingly face serious challenges that include financial constraints, increased demand and shifting public expectations. This is at a time when the demography of our society is changing with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ an ageing society with many more people in middle years with significant disabilities who are able to live fulfilled lives. ➤ an increasing number of children with significant disabilities who rightly have high expectations of services ➤ families and communities becoming more fragmented <p>Like many authorities we are seeing increases in the number of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ looked after children (see points above) ➤ children on the child protection register (registrations peaked at 95 in the year ending at 87 children at year end) ➤ people with a learning disability (numbers grew from 250 to 273 last year) ➤ older people with complex care needs and whose support needs are extensive ➤ carers who need support to help them continue to support vulnerable people <p>It is clear that responding to the demands with traditional models of social care is not an appropriate or sustainable response to meeting the needs and expectations of vulnerable people. The need for change has been identified within Denbighshire County Council's Corporate priorities. However, delivering change, particularly for people already receiving services can be challenging – for individuals, families, staff, elected members and communities – but if we don't make changes then social care will be unsustainable.</p>	<p>We have made good progress in developing more targeted preventative and early intervention services which provide recovery, restoration and can demonstrate a reduction in the need for ongoing care examples include work with Leisure Services to provide activities for older people, reablement, Telecare, Extra Care and early intervention services through TAF and Families First. However, we will need to pick up the pace as we move forward with our programme to modernise social care.</p> <p>Changing the way we work, even when this is for positive reasons, can be challenging. We recognise that the level of change required will involve difficult decisions about the way some services are delivered and that these will not always be popular. We will have to pay attention to managing this change effectively and ensure that we are effective in listening and involving staff, elected members and communities in the modernising programme. As part of our planned approach we will be visiting MAG's to discuss the challenges and plans with local members. Securing their buy in will be key critical if we are to make effective change that will enable us to respond to pressures and meet efficiency savings.</p> <p>Providing high quality services that protect and support vulnerable people and children will remain a core feature</p>

Annual Council Report – Social Services
2012/2013
17 June 2013

Equality Impact Assessment

Annual Council Report – Social Services 2012/2013

Contact: Craig MacLeod

Updated: 17.06.13

1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A strategic or service plan

Statutory role and accountabilities of the Director of Social Services issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970.

2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

Director of Social Services requirement to produce an annual report which summarises the effectiveness of the authority's social care services and priorities for improvement. Commitment to modernisation / Delivery of agenda = Changes that deliver cost effective, sustainable services that ensure vulnerable people are protected and that people receive high quality services that provide dignity in care and good outcomes.

3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

Yes

<If no, briefly summarise the reasons for this decision here, and skip ahead to the declaration at the end>

4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)

Feedback from service users and carers through existing quality assurance systems.

Self-assessment engagement - both Adults and Children's Services

Findings from CSSIW inspections 2012/2013.

Evidence to demonstrate self-assessment and associated judgements -

information submitted to the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). Consultation on & response on proposed Social Services and Wellbeing Bill. Report to Scrutiny 16.05.13 - provided Scrutiny with our self-assessment of social care in Denbighshire and identified improvement priorities 2013/2014 & clear account of performance.

Assessed against set of outcome statements developed by Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA).

Investment in preventative and early intervention services.

Identified cross Council/service and cross-sector solutions including community led initiatives - engagement with other departments, for example Marketing & Leisure Services, Housing, Internal Audit, Environmental Services.

Intranet statistical data provided by the Corporate Improvement Team.

Risk mitigation : Risk Registers mainstream ACRF work.

Additional funding identified to support the delivery of priorities in the Corporate Plan including 1 year Welsh Government budget protection for social services – fund the associated priorities in ACRF (Chief Finance Officer statement).

Draft assessment shared with CSSIW.

Peer review process with Flintshire CC – analysis and review.

Good practice research commissioned by the Welsh Government – eg. National Review of Outcomes for Children & Young People

Full Council – July 2013.

- 5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?**
(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)

Increase in investment in preventative and early intervention services will have a positive impact on citizens to be independent, resilient and able (Scrutiny Report 16.05.13). Potentially all protected characteristics could be affected but for certain we know that age and disability are/will be.

- 6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?**

Identified that some change will be unpopular, however, none are envisaged to have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics. Through our modernising social services work we will reduce any potential for people feeling socially isolated/lonely following short term intervention. Actions includes:

- effective signposting to community support and networks through our SPA (Single Point of Access) and as part of our assessment processes

- input into the development of the Big Plan Part 2 through work on community cohesion and responding to the needs of people living in rural communities

This will enable the services to put in place effective measures to eradicate any differential or negative impact to any of the equality target groups/protected characteristics.

7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.

<Please Select>	All due process has been carried out to ensure all 'reasonable' efforts have been carried out to mitigate any impact. Directly contributes to Corporate Priority 4: Vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible (eliminate or reduce any potential negative impact).
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8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?

Yes	See below challenges and improvement priorities which relate to all citizens + EqIA review
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Action(s)	Owner	By when?
Appendix 2 provides an overview of the challenges for both Adult & Business and Children's Services (Scrutiny Report 16.05.13)	Craig MacLeod & Vicky Allen	2013/2014
Improvement priorities contained in the 2013/2014 Annual Report respond to the requirements and expectations of the Welsh Government's Social Services and Wellbeing Bill	Craig MacLeod & Vicky Allen	2013/2014
All new service developments to deliver the priorities identified in the annual report will be subject to the EQIA process	Gwynfor Griffiths & Vicky Allen	Quarterly

9. Declaration

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date:	17.06.2014
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Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
Craig MacLeod	17.06.2013

Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.

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Report To: Council

Date of Meeting: 9 July 2013

Lead Officer: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Report Author: Democratic Services Manager

Title: Appointment to the North Wales Police and Crime Panel

1. What is the report about?

To appoint one member to the North Wales Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) for a minimum of one municipal year.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Panel membership includes elected members drawn from the six North Wales local authorities based on a politically balanced calculation and changes to regional political balance necessitates a new appointment by Denbighshire County Council.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That:

- (i) the Council appoints one member of the Labour Group to the Police and Crime Panel;
- (ii) the appointment period extends until any subsequent decision by Council is taken to appoint to the Panel

4. Report details.

- 4.1 In line with the terms of reference for the North Wales Police and Crime Panel, each of the six local authorities in north Wales is able to nominate a member or members to sit on the Panel. This would normally be undertaken at the Annual Meeting of Council where possible.
- 4.2 The Panel consists of 10 elected members and 2 independent co-opted members. Conwy County Borough Council is the host authority for the Panel and provides its support services. The allocation of seats to each authority is based on the political balance and population distributions across North Wales as a whole. The *d'hondt* methodology is used to identify the number of seats each local authority is allocated and to which political group(s) they apply.
- 4.3 Based on population, Conwy, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham appoint 2 members each whilst Denbighshire and Anglesey appoint 1 member each. The size of the main political groupings across the councils in North Wales determines how many seats each group or grouping is entitled to take. Labour

and Independent have 3 seats each, Plaid Cymru has 2 seats, and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats 1 seat each. To determine which authority appoints individual seats the Panel looks at how many seats a political party or grouping has in all the authorities combined and then sees which council or councils has the best claim to take the available seats. For example, Plaid Cymru has 69 seats across North Wales with 37 (53.62%) of them in Gwynedd. The Panel therefore allocated the 2 Plaid Cymru places to Gwynedd Council. Similarly, Conwy has the largest number (40%) of the Conservative councillors in North Wales and therefore takes the 1 Conservative seat on the Panel.

- 4.4 Last year the Council was asked to appoint an Independent Group member and Councillor Cowie has been Denbighshire's representative on the Panel since that time. The results from the May 2013 elections in Anglesey have been considered and resulted in Denbighshire now being allocated 1 labour member seat.
- 4.5 The Council can determine the period of time that the appointment is made, although this should not be less than 1 municipal year.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The Council has community safety responsibilities which are linked to the aims and activities of the North Wales Police and Crime Panel.

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

The appointment of a new councillor to the Panel is not expected to impact on services or create additional costs.

7 What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

An equality impact assessment is not required for this decision.

8 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

As the proposed appointment is a ring-fenced position Denbighshire's Labour Group have been made aware of the issues raised.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

There should be no additional costs to the council as a result of the appointment.

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

Failure to appoint a member would mean that Denbighshire's interests might not be adequately represented at the Panel.

11 Power to make the Decision

The terms of reference of the North Wales Police and Crime Panel in accordance with the *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011*

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Report to: County Council

Date of meeting: 9th July 2013

Lead Member / Officer: Councillor Barbara Smith / Gary Williams

Report Author: Gary Williams, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Title: Webcasting

1 What is the report about?

1.1 This report is about the potential for webcasting meetings of the Council.

2 What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 The report seeks to inform Members about the webcasting of council meetings and seeks their approval in principle to the introduction of webcasting.

3 What are the recommendations?

3.1 That the Council agrees in principle to the webcasting of Council meetings.

4 Report details

4.1 The former Minister for Communications and Local Government wrote to all authorities earlier this year indicating that the Welsh Government was making £1.2 million available by way of grant to local authorities in order to assist them in, amongst other things, implementing the webcasting of council meetings.

4.2 Each local authority was able to accept a grant of £20k towards the cost of introducing webcasting.

4.3 The webcasting of meetings involves the live streaming of sound and images of council meetings. The webcast can also be made available on the Council's website as archived material. This means that members of the public who are not able to attend meetings may either view them live online or at a later time or date via the online archive. Viewers using the archived content have the advantage of being able to use timeline links allowing them to view content by item or speaker.

4.4 The Welsh Government and WLGA have facilitated meetings with Democratic Services Officers to discuss the issue of webcasting at which a demonstration of one of the systems that are available has been delivered. In addition a demonstration was held for members on 15th May in the Council Chamber.

- 4.5 There is the facility on some systems to enable members of the public who are viewing a meeting that is being webcast to get involved in discussion forums via social media tools such as twitter and facebook and give their views on issues that are being discussed.
- 4.6 It is possible to webcast in such a way that the viewer is able to access the translation service. If a viewer wishes to access the simultaneous translation service, they would view the meeting via the English language version of the website. Whenever the person speaking at the meeting is speaking in Welsh, the viewer will hear the voice of the translator in English. If a viewer wishes to access the Welsh language content then they would view the meeting through the Welsh language version of the website which would stream the content of the meeting without the translator.
- 4.7 There is no statutory obligation on the Council to webcast meetings. This is however becoming a more common practice among local authorities in the United Kingdom. In Wales, Cardiff Council has been webcasting Council meetings for some time. Carmarthenshire County Council has recently begun webcasting meetings and does so in Welsh and English as described above. It is understood that all of the remaining authorities in Wales are actively considering the introduction of webcasting.
- 4.8 The Council is already obliged by law to hold meetings in public, subject to the exclusion of the public for certain confidential matters. Members of the public are entitled to attend meetings of the Council, Cabinet and other Committees.
- 4.9 There is not generally a large attendance by the public at meetings and the facilities available to accommodate large numbers of people are limited. Members of the public may be interested in hearing the debates of Councillors but are unable to attend due to work or other commitments or difficulties with transport.
- 4.10 The webcasting of meetings would make meetings of the Council more accessible to members of the public.
- 4.11 There will be a cost to the provision of webcasting and the Welsh Government grant is only available for one year with no guarantee of future funding. In addition to software licensing fees there may be additional costs associated with the integration of the system with existing cameras and microphones.
- 4.12 It is suggested that the use of webcasting be limited in the first instance to a duration which can be paid for from the grant monies available. The continued use of webcasting should be reviewed thereafter.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 The potential for improved access for the public to view Council meetings and engage with the Council via social media contributes to the priority of Modernising the Council to deliver efficiencies and improve services to our customers.

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

- 6.1 It is anticipated that a dual language webcasting solution would cost in the region of £20k per annum.

7 What consultations have been carried out?

- 7.1 CET have been consulted and are of the view that the question of webcasting be put before members at Council in order that they can decide whether or not they wish to have meetings webcast. The Corporate Governance Committee received a report in respect of webcasting and agreed that a report be put to the wider membership for their consideration. A demonstration has been held for Members.

8 Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 8.1 The cost of implementing the proposals should be considered in relation to the funding available. Costs should be contained within the funding available. Any ongoing costs beyond the term of the grant would be a cost pressure for the Council.

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

- 9.1 The risks associated with webcasting are that if it is implemented and the system does not work consistently then the Council's reputation may suffer.
- 9.2 There is a risk that there will be no additional funding from Welsh Government for this system from 2014/15 onwards.
- 9.3 The risk associated with not implementing a webcasting solution is that the Council will be seen to be left behind if other authorities in Wales proceed.

10 Power to make the decision

- 10.1 S111 Local Government Act 1972.

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County Council Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Council Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
Council Briefing – Budget 15 July		Reserved for an all-Council budget workshop			Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
10 September	1	Investigators' Report on the Floods at Glasdir, Ruthin	To consider findings of the report into flooding at Glasdir, Ruthin	Tbc	Cllr David Smith / Rebecca Maxwell
	2	Rhyl/Prestatyn Coastal Facilities Development: Business Case	To consider the business case for the development of the coastal facilities.	Yes	Jamie Groves / Alastair McNab / Tom Booty
	3	Local Housing Strategy	To agree the Local Housing Strategy	Yes	Cllr Hugh Irving / Peter McHugh / Sue Lewis
Council Briefing 16 September	1	Regeneration Strategy		N/A	Rebecca Maxwell
	2	Alliance Leisure (No more items to be added to this session)	To explain in detail the framework arrangements between Alliance Leisure and the Council	N/A	Jamie Groves / Alastair McNab
8 October	1	Annual Performance Review	To review the final draft of		Cllr Barbara Smith /

County Council Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Council Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		2012-13	the Council's Annual Performance Review 2012-13 and approve the document for publication before the statutory deadline of 31 October 2013		Tony Ward
	2	Draft Economic & Community Ambition Strategy	To consider approval of the Strategy following the public consultation	Yes	Cllr Hugh Evans / Rebecca Maxwell
Council Briefing – Budget 21 October	Reserved for an all-Council budget workshop				Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
5 November					
Council Briefing – 18 November	1	Natural Resources Wales	To consider issues relating to the new body & the management of natural resources	N/A	Rebecca Maxwell
	2	Biodiversity Issues	To consider biodiversity legislative requirements and DCC implementation	N/A	Cllr Huw Jones / Elizabeth Webster / Huw Rees
	3	Older People's Commissioner	To brief Members on the	N/A	Cllr Bobby Feeley /

County Council Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Council Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		for Wales	work of the Commissioner		Sally Ellis
3 December	1	Update on the draft budget for 2014 / 15	To consider an update on the developing budget	No	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
Council Briefing – Budget 9 December		Reserved for an all-Council budget workshop			Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
Council Briefing 27 January					
4 February					
25 February	1	Supplementary Planning Guidance Masterplan for the North Wales Hospital	To seek approval to adopt the SPG	Yes	Graham Boase
8 April					
Council Briefing 28 April					

County Council Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Council Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
13 May ANNUAL MEETING				

Note for officers – Full Council Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
<i>July</i>	25 June	<i>September</i>	27 August	<i>October</i>	24 September