



To: Members of the Performance
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 17 May 2013

Direct Dial: 01824 712554

e-mail: dcc_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **FRIDAY, 24 MAY 2013** in **CONFERENCE ROOM 1A, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

A briefing session will be held, immediately before the meeting, at **9.30am** for **all Committee Members** on the Council's Quarterly Performance Reports at which a representative from the Wales Audit Office will be present.

AGENDA

PART 1 - THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THIS PART OF THE MEETING

1 APOLOGIES

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

To appoint a Vice Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee for the ensuing year.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

4 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.

5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)

To receive the minutes of the last Performance Scrutiny Committee held on the 11th April, 2013 (copy enclosed).

PART 2 - CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It is recommended in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that exempt information (as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act) would be disclosed.

6 CEFNDY ENTERPRISES (Pages 11 - 68)

To consider a confidential report by the Head of Adult and Business Services (copy enclosed) in respect of Cefndy Enterprises.

10.10 – 10.45

PART I

7 ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT : DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (Pages 69 - 100)

To consider the Wales Audit Office's Annual Improvement Report on the Council (copy enclosed) and identify any required actions.

10.45 – 11.15

Comfort Break

8 YOUR VOICE COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 4 (Pages 101 - 108)

To consider a report by the Head of Customers and Education Support (copy enclosed) which presented an analysis of the customer feedback policy `Your Voice` for Quarter 4 of 2013/14

11.30 – 12.00

9 ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK (Pages 109 - 142)

To consider a report by the Corporate Director: Modernisation and Wellbeing (copy enclosed) which detailed the self-assessment of social care in Denbighshire and identified improvement priorities for 2013/14.

12.00 – 12.30

10 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 143 - 162)

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (copy enclosed) seeking a review of the committee's forward work programme and updating members on relevant issues.

12.30 – 12.50

11 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

To receive any updates from Committee representatives on various Council Boards and Groups

12.50 – 13.00

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Bill Cowie

Meirick Davies

Richard Davies

Colin Hughes

Geraint Lloyd-Williams

Peter Owen

Dewi Owens

Arwel Roberts

Gareth Sandilands

David Simmons

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information

Press and Libraries

Town and Community Councils

This page is intentionally left blank

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 11 April 2013 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Bill Cowie, Meirick Davies, Richard Davies, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Colin Hughes (Chair), Arwel Roberts (Vice-Chair) and Gareth Sandilands

Observers: Councillors Raymond Bartley, Jason McLellan and Huw Williams.

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Improvement Manager (TW), Audit Manager (BS), Head of Planning and Public Protection (GB), CCTV Supervisor (GS), Corporate Improvement Officer (NK), Democratic Services Manager (SP) and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Dewi Owens and the Corporate Director: Economic and Community Ambition, Rebecca Maxwell.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declaration of personal or prejudicial interest had been raised.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 21 February, 2013, were submitted.

Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies requested that actions be added to minutes where appropriate for ease of reference. It was suggested and agreed that a footnote be added where appropriate.

[SP to action]

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February, 2013 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 CORPORATE PLAN QPR: QUARTER 3 2012/13

[A pre-meeting training session had been held for Committee Members on the Corporate Plan Performance Measures, to aid with their scrutiny of this item]

The Corporate Improvement Manager (CIM) submitted a report (previously circulated) presenting the Corporate Plan Quarterly Report 2012-2017. The purpose of the report was for the council to understand the progress of its contribution to the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes. Regular reporting was an essential monitoring requirement of the Corporate Plan to ensure that the Council exercised its duty to improve.

The Chair confirmed a meeting had recently taken place between himself, the Vice-Chair and the CIM to peruse the report prior to the meeting.

Within the Plan, each indicator and performance measure had been given a coloured status which described the current position. Each outcome also had “improvement activities” which were projects and actions designed to contribute to the delivery of the outcome. These were monitored by providing a “delivery confidence”. The same four colours were used for the Delivery Confidence Status.

The report had highlighted areas of concern to the Committee as follows:

4.1.1 – the work to formalise plans for dropped kerbs had not progressed and had, therefore, been flagged as “red” (priority for improvement). It had been agreed at Council to action work to be carried out where dropped kerbs were needed and not to delay. The Head of Environmental Services would be requested to circulate a progress report to Committee members on the development of the dropped kerbs.

4.1.2 – the percentage of pupils leaving school without an approved qualification had been flagged as “red”. Continued efforts were required from the service to improve this to an “acceptable” status.

4.1.3 – fixed penalty notices for dog fouling had been flagged as “red”. The issue was raised that the fixed penalty notices were not being applied throughout the whole of the county. It was recommended fixed penalty notices should be applied throughout the county.

4.1.4 – also identified as a “red” was the percentage of initial core group meetings held within 10 days of the initial child protection conference. Performance had to improve by approximately 10% to ensure “acceptable” status. It was recommended the Head of Children’s Services be requested to circulate a progress report to members of the Performance and Partnerships Scrutiny Committees in respect of initial core group meetings being held within 10 days of the first child protection conference.

4.1.5 – The timely determination of householder planning applications had been identified as “red”. The Development Control Manager, Paul Mead, was currently assessing changes to the Planning Committee in a way which would improve the decisions.

Points 4.1.6 and 4.1.7 were noted.

Councillor Huw Hilditch Roberts stated that he could not endorse this report as he felt the process for collecting and evaluating information was not a true reflection of actual performance.

The CIM clarified that for the indicators and measures, the evaluations were robust. The issues raised by Councillor Hilditch Roberts included how activities were monitored and assessed and evaluations in the report might not indicate the project had been completed but was an assessment of whether activities were progressing on track or not. The progress of activities was evaluated by officer(s) responsible for the activity. It was recommended by the Committee that the process be reviewed in order to maximise the transparency, validity and evidence-base of the Quarterly Update Reports.

The Committee agreed that the lead contacts of the Committee should be using their role to question and challenge the services on any areas or issues where performance was a concern. The Chair agreed to assist when appropriate.

RESOLVED that :

- (i) The Committee request Cabinet and Corporate Improvement Officers to review the process for monitoring and assessing the status and progress of activities (which currently depend on the evaluation of the officer(s) responsible for the activities) and to consider the depth of information on the outcomes in order to maximise the transparency, validity and evidence-base of the quarterly update reports.*
- (ii) The Committee agrees that, as the Performance Scrutiny members had been nominated as lead contacts with individual services, the lead contacts should use this role to question and challenge those services on any areas or issues where performance was a concern. The chair of the Committee to assist when appropriate.*
- (iii) The Head of Environmental Services be requested to circulate a progress report to Committee members regarding the development of dropped kerbs.*
- (iv) The Head of Children's Services be requested to circulate a progress report to members of the Performance and Partnerships Scrutiny Committees in respect of initial core group meetings being held within 10 days of the first child protection conference.*

[RhE to pursue above]

6 REVIEW OF SERVICE CHALLENGE PROCESS

The Corporate Improvement Manager (CIM) submitted a report (previously circulated) presenting the Draft Proposal for Improving the Service Challenge Process.

The new Service Challenge processes had been discussed by CET (Corporate Executive Team) and SLT (Senior Leadership Team). A presentation had also been before Council Briefing.

The new proposal would be a more detailed annual process. It was proposed that the Chief Executive, all Corporate Directors, Lead Members and Scrutiny representative Members attend every Service Performance Challenge Assessment Panel. A representative of the Welsh Audit Office would also be involved. The new process would be based on self-evaluation. The Service Challenge would be supported by Members of the Corporate Improvement Team.

The discussion covered the following:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Documents to support the service self-assessment
- Process timeline and
- Meeting schedule.

RESOLVED that Members accepted and agreed the draft proposals for a new Service Challenge process, which would include:

- (i) A more detailed review with a renewed focus on self-evaluation*
- (ii) An annual rather than a bi-annual programme with increased flexible links with the business and budget planning process*
- (iii) The development of a new and separate process for agreeing efficiencies.*

[TW to note the above resolution]

At this juncture (11.20 a.m.) there was a 5 minute comfort break

The meeting re-convened at 11.25 a.m.

7 PROVISION OF CCTV IN DENBIGHSHIRE

The Head of Planning and Public Protection (H:P&PP) submitted a report (previously circulated) presenting information regarding the operation of the Council's CCTV function and its partnership working with other agencies, including North Wales Police.

The H:P&PP introduced Graham Smith, CCTV Supervisor (CCTV:S). The CCTV control room was based in Rhyl Police Station.

The Council used public space CCTV provision as part of Denbighshire's contribution to activities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The service provided by Denbighshire County Council was highly regarded by North Wales Police as providing an excellent and essential service.

Council Officers staff the CCTV control room, working shifts to provide 24 hour cover, 7 days a week, 365 days per year. The control room consists of 10 staff comprising of 1 full-time CCTV supervisor, 5 full-time and 4 part-time CCTV operators. 2 full-time operators left in 2012 and were not replaced due to the need to make significant savings in the region of £113,000 by 2014/15.

58 permanent cameras cover Rhyl, 18 cover Prestatyn and 4 cover Rhuddlan.

The control room also has remote access to CCTV at Lon Parcwr, Ruthin, Highways Depot, Kinmel Park Depot and the Marsh Road , Rhyl Recycling Centre as well as 4 external school cameras.

The CCTV control room can also remote connect to view the Town Council owned CCTV system in Llangollen. Denbigh Town Council also has a CCTV system.

There are 6 re-deployable cameras which can send limited quality pictures back to the control room via the airwaves. The 6 re-deployable CCTV cameras are due for renewal over the next 6 months. A management decision had been taken not to renew the cameras and to encourage Council departments and outside agencies to make their own arrangements for Re-deployable CCTV with the CCTV control room willing to accept and monitor the pictures for a modest charge.

There were a number of CCTV recorded offences during 2012. The H:P&PP agreed to email a breakdown of incidents to all members of the Committee for clarity.

The CCTV Department also provide secondary services for the Council by being the Emergency Out of Hours Customer Service Contact Centre. (ie:the Council's main point of contact after 6 p.m. weekends and public holidays).

The fact the unit employs only 10 members of staff led to problems during times of sickness absence and holidays. The implications were, cameras were not being monitored for several short temporary periods but were all left recording, and arrangements were put in place to allow out of hours phone calls during these periods to be seamlessly transferred to a pre-approved third party facility, in Conwy County Borough Council.

The H:P&PP referred to the project for developing a North Wales regional CCTV service which now appeared not to be viable. The Committee endorsed the retention of both CCTV provision and control centre in Denbighshire.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Committee supports the existing CCTV arrangements within the CCTV Team and recommends that consideration also be given to how other towns in Denbighshire could access CCTV services in the future.*
- (ii) The Head of Planning and Public Protection be requested to circulate a breakdown into areas of offences and incidents recorded by CCTV; and*
- (iii) A update report by the Head of Planning and Public Protection on the CCTV service be presented at the October 2013 meeting.*

[RhE to pursue the above]

8 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

A report by the Scrutiny Co-ordinator was submitted (previously circulated) seeking Members' review of the Committee's future work programme.

The Corporate Improvement Manager (CIM) informed the Committee an additional risk had been identified since the last review. The Corporate Improvement Officer (CIO) clarified that Denbighshire County Council were working with the Welsh Government regarding the modernising school plan. The risk would be if the funding was not aligned with the project plan. This was Phase 1

RESOLVED that the forward work programmes be accepted and noted.

9 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

None.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 p.m.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Report To: Performance Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 24 May 2013

Lead Member / Officer: Cllr Barbara Smith / Alan Smith

Report Author: Tony Ward

Title: Annual Improvement Report: Denbighshire County Council

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This paper presents the latest Annual Improvement Report for Denbighshire County Council, issued by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) in May 2013. The report is attached at Appendix I.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. This report provides information regarding the latest Annual Improvement Report for Denbighshire County Council. This is the key external regulatory report received by the council each year.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. It is recommended that Members consider the report and highlight any issues that require further clarification by the Wales Audit Office (who will be represented at the meeting), or that require further scrutiny by the Committee.

4. Report details.

- 4.1. Each year, the Auditor General must report on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. Drawing on the work of the relevant Welsh inspectorates, as well as work undertaken on his behalf by the Wales Audit Office, this report presents a picture of improvement over the last year. The report is in three main sections, which cover, for the most part, Denbighshire County Council's (the Council) delivery and evaluation of services in relation to 2011-12, and its planning of improvement for 2012-13.
- 4.2. Overall the Auditor General has concluded that: the Council is making good progress in delivering its improvement programme but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the performance measures and evidence the Council uses to judge its effectiveness.
- 4.3. The Auditor General has made no new recommendations this year. However, the report does set out the progress the Council is making to address the recommendations and proposals for improvement made in previous reports.

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

5.1. The report does not require a decision, although it does contain information regarding the council's ability to deliver its Corporate Priorities.

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

6.1. There is no cost implication associated with this report.

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.

7.1. There is no requirement for an equality impact assessment as this report will not result in a decision which will result in any change for staff or the community. It will therefore not have a disproportionate negative impact on people who share particular protected characteristics.

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

8.1. A draft of the Annual Improvement Report was presented to, and discussed with, the Chief Executive, and feedback was provided prior to the report being finalised. The Annual Improvement Report will be presented to the Corporate Governance Committee on 22 May 2013, and also to Council on 4 June 2013.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. Not required.

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

10.1. The Corporate Risk Register contains all the significant corporate risks which, if they were to occur, may impact on the ability of the council to delivery continuous improvement.

11. Power to make the Decision

11.1. The report does not require a decision.



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Annual Improvement Report

Denbighshire County Council

Issued: May 2013

Document reference: 258A2013

About the Auditor General for Wales

The Auditor General is independent of government and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. He leads the Wales Audit Office and is held accountable by the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly for the Wales Audit Office's work.

The Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Assembly Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales. He also appoints the external auditors of Welsh local government bodies, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. The Auditor General's appointed auditors are responsible for the annual audit of nearly £5.5 billion of funding that is passed by the Welsh Government to local government in the form of general and specific grants. Local government, in turn, raises a further £2.1 billion through council tax and business rates.

As well as carrying out financial audit, the Auditor General's role is to examine how public bodies manage and spend public money, including achieving value in the delivery of public services. The Wales Audit Office aims to make public money count, by promoting improvement, so that people in Wales benefit from accountable, well-managed public services that offer the best possible value for money. It is also committed to identifying and spreading good practice across the Welsh public sector.

This Annual Improvement Report has been prepared on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales by Huw Lloyd Jones and Gwilym Bury under the direction of Alan Morris.

Contents

Summary report and recommendations	4
Detailed report	
Introduction	6
The Council is making good progress in delivering its improvement programme but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the evidence the Council uses to judge its effectiveness	7
The Council is making good progress in delivering improvement in its priority areas	7
The Council's corporate performance management arrangements support reliable self-evaluation but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the evidence the Council uses to judge its effectiveness	16
The Council's arrangements to support improvement are good	19
Appendices	
Appendix 1 Status of this report	22
Appendix 2 Useful information about Denbighshire and Denbighshire County Council	23
Appendix 3 Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter	25
Appendix 4 Denbighshire County Council's improvement objectives and self-assessment	27
Appendix 5 Proposals for improvement 2012-13	28

Summary report

- 1 Each year, the Auditor General must report on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. Drawing on the work of the relevant Welsh inspectorates, as well as work undertaken on his behalf by the Wales Audit Office, this report presents a picture of improvement over the last year. The report is in three main sections, which cover, for the most part, Denbighshire County Council's (the Council) delivery and evaluation of services in relation to 2011-12, and its planning of improvement for 2012-13.
 - the Council's programme to improve roads is progressing but, following the 2012 floods, an independent investigation will determine whether actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in the future; and
 - the Council continues to make good progress with its planned actions to improve the way it works.
- 2 Overall the Auditor General has concluded that: the Council is making good progress in delivering its improvement programme but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the performance measures and evidence the Council uses to judge its effectiveness.
- 3 In the first part of our report, we conclude that the Council is making good progress in delivering improvement in its priority areas:
 - performance continues to improve in most aspects of the Council's work to adapt service delivery to address demographic change;
 - there has been progress in supporting regeneration projects in Rhyl but, in challenging economic times, progress has been slow in supporting economic growth across Denbighshire as a whole;
 - Estyn has judged that the Council provides good quality education services for children and young people and that prospects for further improvement are good;
- 4 The second part of the report finds that the Council's corporate performance management arrangements support reliable self-evaluation but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the evidence the Council uses to judge its effectiveness.
- 5 Finally, the third part of the report sets out our views on how well the Council is planning for, and making arrangements to support, improvement. We conclude that the Council's arrangements to support improvement are good. In particular:
 - the Council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure;
 - the Council has complied with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and its *Welsh Language Scheme*; and
 - the Council continues to make good progress in addressing the proposals for improvement identified in our previous assessments.

Recommendations

- 6 I make no new recommendations this year. This report sets out the progress the Council is making to address the recommendations and proposals for improvement made in my previous reports. Those proposals for improvement are set out in my improvement assessment letters issued to the Council during the course of the year. [Appendix 5](#) gives more detail. These letters are available on our website www.wao.gov.uk.

Detailed report

Introduction

- 7 Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure), the Auditor General must report each year on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. [Appendix 1](#) provides more information about the Auditor General's powers and duties under the Measure.
- 8 With help from Welsh inspectorates, Estyn (for education) and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (the CSSIW), we have brought together a picture of what the Council is trying to achieve and how it is going about it. This report also sets out the progress the Council has made since the Auditor General published his last annual improvement report, drawing on the Council's own self-assessment.
- 9 We do not undertake a comprehensive annual review of all Council arrangements or services. The conclusions in this report are based on our cumulative and shared knowledge and the findings of prioritised work undertaken this year.
- 10 Given the wide range of services provided and the challenges facing the Council, it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:
- recommend to Ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way;
 - conduct a special inspection and publish the report with detailed recommendations;
 - make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made the Council must respond to that recommendation publicly within 30 days; and
 - make proposals for improvement – if we make proposals to the Council, we would expect it to do something about them and we will follow up what happens.
- 11 We want to find out if this report gives you the information you need and whether it is easy to understand. You can let us know your views by e-mailing us at info@wao.gov.uk or writing to us at 24, Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF11 9LJ.

The Council is making good progress in delivering its improvement programme but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the evidence the Council uses to judge its effectiveness

The Council is making good progress in delivering improvement in its priority areas

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

12 The Council's *Corporate Plan 2009-2012* included the objective of 'adapting service delivery to address demographic changes'. It noted that the population of Denbighshire was growing by about 1,000 people each year and the population was ageing. It said there was a need to attract young people and encourage Denbighshire's young people to make a future in the county so that, over time, a more balanced population could be achieved. This would involve modernising education, having suitable housing available and using the *Local Development Plan* to outline the future infrastructure for residential, business and service areas in the county. The initial priorities, however, were to be directed towards:

- independence and choice for older people – older people are able to live independently for longer;
- independence and choice for people with learning disabilities; and
- community initiatives meet the needs of an increasing population of older and disabled people.

13 We found that the Council's performance continues to improve in most aspects of its work to adapt service delivery to address demographic change.

Arrangements to support independence for older people continue to improve

14 The Council has identified a range of actions to aid independent living that include:

- increasing support for those who have had falls, hospital treatment or other situations through reablement services;
- improving supported housing options through 'extra care housing';
- reducing the number of people needing support in care homes; and
- increased use of telecare.

In 2011-12, performance on all these actions improved from the previous year.

15 The CSSIW concluded in its Director's report¹ about 2011-12, published in October 2012, that there was positive change and improvement in adult services but the assessment of the needs of carers remained an area for improvement. The following is a summary extracted from the full report.

1 An annual review of a Council Social Services performance undertaken by the CSSIW which includes an assessment of a Council's self-evaluation of its performance (often called the 'Directors report'). The CSSIW provides an overall evaluation of performance and identifies areas of progress and areas for development.

- 16 The CSSIW found that the Council has made progress in developing a wide range of services and mainstream local community facilities to encourage independence. A reablement service has been successfully implemented. Two-thirds of people referred to it do not require a further service and the majority of people surveyed provide positive feedback of their experience. The Council is seeking ways to extend the reablement service model to people provided with services by the independent sector.
- 17 The CSSIW identified that the Council had succeeded in providing alternatives to residential care through an increased provision of extra care housing, and the further development of existing sheltered housing and community living schemes. Many services are provided in partnership with health, the independent or voluntary sector. Other positive developments include the extension of telecare to 450 additional people and delivering over 80 per cent of equipment that helps to maintain people's mobility and independence within five working days.
- 18 The CSSIW also identified that the Council had introduced specific measures to increase the involvement of users of social services in their planning and delivery. This was a central feature in the development of community living services, for example, and is also illustrated by the training of five older people under the Dignity in Care and Equalities (DICE) initiative. This helped to cascade the DICE message to older people, to staff employed by the Council and to the independent and voluntary sectors through training events. Another initiative is the inclusion of mental health service users as paid members of service planning boards.
- 19 A number of initiatives have been used to improve services to carers and the Council reports that all carers who are assessed are provided with a service. However, only approximately one third of carers were offered or provided with an assessment or review. A waiting list for assessments was developed in 2011-12 and increased funding has been made available to address increased demand. This is an area that the CSSIW identified as requiring improved performance.
- Progress is being made in supporting independence for people with learning disability**
- 20 The Council has increased both the number and rate of adults with learning disabilities who are supported in the community and reduced the number and rate of those supported in care homes. In addition, the project to provide new accommodation for people with learning disabilities was completed in July 2012.
- 21 A key measure to increase the numbers of people who exercise full choice and control of their personal support is through better promotion and improved take-up of direct payments. The CSSIW reported that the take-up of Direct Payments in Denbighshire is still low compared to some other councils. The Council took steps to try to improve take-up during 2011-12 but the effectiveness of the measures remains to be seen.

Some progress is being made with the plans to support community initiatives to meet the needs of older and disabled people

- 22 The Council uses a range of local indicators to judge success in encouraging and facilitating a healthy lifestyle and the well-being of older and disabled people. The performance measures the Council has chosen to reflect progress against this objective show a positive picture overall.
- 23 However, the number of people supported into education, training, or employment was below the Council's target and the number of people participating in disability sport sessions declined from 8,504 to 3,012 in 2011-12. The appointment of a Disability Sports Officer has coincided with some increase in sports participation during 2012.

There has been progress in supporting regeneration projects in Rhyl but, in challenging economic times, progress has been slow in supporting economic growth across Denbighshire as a whole

- 24 The Council's 2011-12 improvement objective for 'regenerating our communities' had three intended outcomes:
- reducing socio-economic deprivation in the northern coastal strip;
 - supporting sustainable economic growth; and
 - reducing the rate of decline in the rural economy.

Progress has been made in supporting key regeneration projects in Rhyl and the Council has begun to identify the resources necessary to achieve the ambitions it shares with partners for the town

- 25 The Council is seeking to reduce high deprivation in the northern coastal strip – particularly in parts of Rhyl. The Council and its partners did not achieve all the targets and planned actions for 2011-12 in relation to increasing satisfaction with the area as a place to live or reducing the numbers living in poverty. However, the Council and its partners were successful in reducing criminal damage, continuing to support a number of capital projects including the start of work on the new bridge and harbour improvements at Foryd Harbour. Key decisions were taken on the retention of the Sky Tower as an iconic building and the demolition of the Honey Club as part of the eyesore removal project.
- 26 The Council has made good progress in licensing 41 houses in multiple occupancy, achieved its target of licensing 30 houses per year for 2011-12 and increasing the percentage of year 11 pupils in Rhyl continuing in education.
- 27 The Council has again not met its aim of reducing the rate of Job Seekers Allowance claimants in Rhyl compared to elsewhere in Denbighshire. As in 2010-11, the level of claimants will have been affected by the general problems in the economy. As we stated in our last *Annual Improvement Report*, the size of the task of regeneration in Rhyl is daunting and the Council's influence is limited. Significant capital investment is required with major attractions

and sites in need of improvement and development. However, Welsh Government, Council and European Union capital funding for the Foryd Harbour development, including a new cycle and footbridge, demonstrates progress.

- 28 Management accountability for the regeneration objective was re-assigned during 2012 following senior management restructuring and the appointment of a new strategic director. We found that this change had led to increased impetus and focus for the work at Rhyl. Some of this impetus has focused on the *Rhyl Going Forward* delivery plan, which pulls together the various strands of existing work into a clearer and more focused framework. However, as we reported last year, the Council also recognises the need to clearly identify what support is required from all its services and its partners to contribute to the implementation of the strategy, especially to the regeneration of West Rhyl. We shall continue to monitor progress on this work during 2013-14.

The Council has delivered many actions to support the County's economy but its measures of success show limited progress in very challenging economic times

- 29 The Council set itself a range of actions to support economic development and has successfully carried out many of these but, in very challenging economic times, it is difficult to judge the impact of the Council's intervention.

- 30 The Council achieved its target for reducing the ratio of house prices to average earnings but this outcome may only reflect the economic problems leading to reduced housing prices.

- 31 The target to reduce the level of Job Seekers Allowance claimants compared to Wales was missed, but this indicator has fluctuated and may not be a reflection on the effectiveness of the Council's work to support economic growth. The reduction during 2011-12 in the percentage of economic inactivity in Denbighshire is positive and is greater than the average for Wales.

- 32 The Council's arrangements for administering housing benefit are supporting improvement; processes should ensure that timely payments are made to the right people and the service is generally effective and responsive. The average processing time for new housing benefit claims are the same as the Welsh average at 20 days, and have improved from the previous year. Average processing time for dealing with change of circumstance notifications is better than the Welsh average. A higher percentage of new claims were decided within 14 days than in the previous year. The level of activity in counter fraud has increased with a higher number of fraud referrals, investigations and successful sanctions than in the previous year. The total number of applications for reconsideration or revision, and the total number of appeals has reduced. The performance of a small number of indicators declined during 2011-12. Notably the percentage of

overpayments identified and recovered has fallen, and it is taking the service longer to deal with applications for reconsideration or revision, and appeals.

The Council's work to reduce the rate of decline of the rural economy shows progress in line with its targets

- 33 The Council achieved the targets it set itself to reduce the rate of decline in the rural economy, and exceeded targets to support micro rural enterprises and the number of jobs created in such businesses. Member Area Groups continue to tackle small-scale issues seen as affecting the local rural economy, such as the Neuadd Pwllglas refurbishment project in Ruthin.

Estyn has judged that the Council provides good quality education services for children and young people and that prospects for further improvement are good

- 34 Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) and the Wales Audit Office undertook an inspection of the Council's education services for children and young people. The report was published in February 2012. The following is an extract summary from the full report.
- 35 Estyn identified that, in Denbighshire, levels of free-school-meals and other deprivation measures had increased at a faster rate than across Wales in the three years preceding the inspection. Despite this, performance had also improved at a faster rate than across Wales in both key

stages 2 and 4 during this time. Key stage 3 performance had kept pace with that across Wales until 2010, although it improved more slowly in 2011. In 2011, the percentage of learners gaining the core subject indicator in key stages 2 and 4 were above the all-Wales average. This level of performance compared well with other authorities when contextual information is taken into account. However, in key stages 1 and 3 performance dropped below Welsh averages.

- 36 Estyn concluded that Denbighshire's performance against the Welsh Government's benchmarks for performance based on free-school-meal entitlement had improved over the last five years. Overall, progress between primary and secondary schools was good. In 2011, the gap in performance on the core subject indicator between boys and girls was less than the average for Wales at all key stages. Particular groups of learners, including vulnerable groups and those with additional learning needs, were generally attaining their expected levels. Learners were making good progress in gaining skills in first and second language Welsh, and generally achieving good standards in both subjects. The percentage of learners leaving primary school with functional literacy improved in 2011, and was better than the average across Wales. Learners who receive support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills made good progress and many maintained this improvement to end of the key stage. The percentage of Year 11 learners not in education, training or employment has decreased steadily in recent years and was better than the average for Wales.

- 37 Estyn found that support for school improvement had improved significantly since the previous inspection. The authority's school improvement and inclusion services had been restructured under one head of service. This restructuring had considerably strengthened joint working between officers within the authority, and was helping to improve the achievement of all learners.
- 38 The inspection found that the Council has very good arrangements to support and challenge schools, and knows its schools very well. Data is analysed thoroughly and used effectively to challenge progress and target interventions. Officers evaluate thoroughly the quality of leadership and management in schools and compare these with headteachers' own evaluations. As a result, the rigour and consistency of officers' and members' challenge to leadership and management in schools contribute well to improving standards. Challenge is a very strong feature of the authority's work. At the time of the authority's inspection the number of Denbighshire schools requiring follow-up after an inspection was among the lowest in Wales. The Council's Partnership Agreement with schools sets out clear criteria to define an appropriate level of support and intervention. Good procedures also exist to identify areas of specific risk and respond effectively to them. As a result, officers accurately identify schools needing additional support, leading to a steady improvement in standards. Systematic weakness in school leadership and management is addressed effectively to make sure that schools improve quickly enough.
- 39 Statutory processes in relation to pupils with additional learning needs are effective. Rigorous systems for moderating requests for additional support have resulted in a reduction in the number of statements of special educational needs issued. Good relationships and communication with parents and schools help keep the number of referrals to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales consistently low, with just one appeal conceded since 2009. The authority educates just over half of the learners with statements in mainstream schools, with most of these pupils attending mainstream classes with their peers. This means that most learners are educated near to their own home. Very few learners attend independent special schools, enabling the authority to spend nearly all the special needs budget on learners in its own schools.
- 40 Estyn concluded that overall value for money in education services was good. The budgets per pupil for both primary and secondary education were just below the Wales average, but attainment at most key stages was above average. The Council is developing its arrangements to assess the outcomes and value for money from services commissioned from external agencies, although these were not in place for all such services at the time of the inspection.
- 41 The Council is well placed to deliver its plans for 21st century schools, and has made good progress in delivering its Modernising Education programme. It has agreed an appropriate framework for school reorganisation and is delivering this framework through an effective process of area reviews. The Council has already made

good progress in addressing its identified priorities to increase Welsh medium provision and to reduce surplus capacity. Officers keep asset management surveys up-to-date and use these to prioritise maintenance.

The Council's programme to improve roads is progressing but following the 2012 floods an independent investigation is taking place to see if any improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in the future

42 In 2011-12, a Council improvement priority is 'securing a sustainable road network and flood defences'. The Council has reported that it did not meet all its targets for improving the condition of roads in 2011-12. Indicators for the condition of B and C roads improved but the trend of deterioration in the condition of A roads continued. Concern from the public about the condition of roads and awareness of the Council's performance contributed to the Council's decision to identify additional funding for roads maintenance in 2011-12. Part of the £1.5 million identified to invest in Council priorities has been used to pay for prudential borrowing of approximately £7 million for major highways works. New equipment has also been purchased. The Road Condition Index is a new indicator to provide more comprehensive information about the condition of the roads network in the county, and allows the Council more opportunity to target future investment in areas such as the Dee Valley, where roads appear to be in a very poor condition.

43 One of the reasons for keeping roads in good condition is to improve safety. Road safety is now being actively monitored by the Council through measures for skid resistance, accidents per kilometre, take-up of cycle and safety training, and insurance claims. In 2001-12 all these indicators met the Council's targets.

44 The Highways and Infrastructure service was, until October 2012, a jointly managed service with Conwy County Borough Council, with teams and elements of the service becoming increasingly integrated. In 2012, the two councils undertook a joint review of the effectiveness of these partnership arrangements. The review's resulting Business Plan showed that a fully integrated Highways service would not produce any significant savings or efficiencies. Following a senior management restructuring, the service is no longer jointly managed but the two Councils continue to look for further opportunities to rationalise management, reduce costs and improve services by strengthening those areas of sub-service that are already under single management and other opportunities where collaboration might bring benefits to residents.

45 The Council's objective is to reduce the number of properties at risk of flooding. A recent Environment Agency report² states that Denbighshire has approximately 3,000 properties at significant risk of flooding and about 14,000 further properties at moderate or low risk. The Council aimed to reduce the risk of flooding for 1,575 high-risk properties during 2009-2012, largely through the completion of flood defence schemes

² *Flooding in Wales: A national assessment of flood risk*, Environment Agency, September 2011

at Llangollen, Denbigh, Corwen and West Rhyl. The schemes were largely funded through government grants. These schemes have reduced the risk of flooding for 995 properties. Work has commenced on the West Rhyl coastal defence scheme, which should be completed in 2013-14. A new flood defence scheme for Corwen has now attracted Welsh Government funding and work is about to start.

- 46 In November 2012, there was serious flooding across North Wales and at 10 locations across Denbighshire, with considerable damage to property and the death of a vulnerable elderly resident. The Council set up a flood investigation working group, which has already produced some interim recommendations. The investigations are being carried out under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, working in partnership with Environment Agency Wales and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Authority. The purpose of the investigation is to clarify why the flooding happened, how likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again and whether any improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future. The final results of the investigation are due to be reported in the Summer of 2013.

The Council continues to make good progress with its planned actions to improve the way it works

- 47 In the *Corporate Plan 2009-2012*, the Council made a pledge to become a 'high performing Council, close to the community'. One of the Council's improvement objectives is to improve the way it works. We found that the Council continues to make good progress with the actions planned to address this objective.
- 48 The Council's target is to be in the top half of Welsh councils for performance in a basket of 19 indicators drawn from the National Strategic Indicators (NSIs), which all councils are required to measure. Whilst the indicators are not always good measures of outcomes for residents, they are drawn from across a range of services and do provide useful information on the delivery of services. They include indicators for: educational attainment for pupils aged 16; the timeliness of issuing of statements of special educational need; support for potentially homeless households; affordable housing units provided; changes of school for children in care; and levels of waste that are recycled.
- 49 In 2011-12, the Council achieved further progress with 15 of the 19 indicators in the top quartile for Wales. There are three indicators where recorded performance levels are in the bottom half of councils in Wales and the Council has addressed in its annual report what action it plans to improve performance.

- 50 The Council achieved a higher percentage of its outcome measure targets during 2011-12 (61 per cent) when compared to 2010-11 (55 per cent), although this is lower than the percentage achieved in 2009-10 (66 per cent).
- 51 We highlighted in last year's *Annual Improvement Report* the need for the Council more clearly to express the success criteria for achieving its ambition to be 'close to the community', and to clarify the accountability and monitoring for this aim. During the last year, the Council has identified two methods for measuring success in bringing the Council 'close to the community'. The first was by delivering the outcomes of its corporate priorities, which have been developed to address community needs. The second was by considering the results of the latest Residents' Survey.
- 52 The Residents' Survey, which was conducted for the first time in 2009 and then again in 2011, went out to a random selection of 6,000 households in Denbighshire. The Council survey suggested that more people in Denbighshire in 2011 felt the Council acted on their concerns and treated people fairly.
- 53 During 2011-12, the Council's Corporate Director for Learning and Communities has led on the development of a new programme of work to ensure that the Council continues to become 'closer to the community'. The Council has, for example, implemented a number of initiatives during 2011-12, including the town plans and member area groups (MAGs). The town plans aim to enable local communities to take a more active role in the planning of initiatives to revitalise their local areas. The member area groups aim to improve the process for consultation with local members on community issues.
- 54 As part of the Council's commitment to bring itself 'closer to the community' the Council reports progress in meeting specific improvements across the County's six community areas. The improvements set for each community area reflect the local priorities agreed during the consultation on the Corporate Plan. The analysis of progress on the community improvements is largely descriptive, such as the section on work in improving the Rhyl Harbour area, and it is not always clear how residents have directly benefited.

The Council's corporate performance management arrangements support reliable self-evaluation but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the evidence the Council uses to judge its effectiveness

- 55 Our last *Annual Improvement Report* (January 2012) concluded that the Council's performance management arrangements were soundly based and developing satisfactorily, with clear and effective leadership by senior officers and councillors. This continues to be the case. The performance scrutiny committee and the twice-yearly service challenges receive performance information of consistent quality and in an easily understood format. In addition to the service challenge, the Council's Cabinet reviews performance on a quarterly basis. There remains scope to improve the quality of questions asked by some committee members at service challenges to ensure a more consistent focus on the right issues.
- 56 We found that the Council has created a strong central policy team that oversees, co-ordinates, and actively manages performance. This has enabled the Council to implement a well-understood and consistent system for performance management. Staff within services acknowledge that they are responsible for their performance and understand how their work relates to delivering the Council's Improvement Objectives and corporate priorities.
- 57 In June 2012, we reported the results of our audit of the accuracy of a sample of the Council's performance indicators. Though our sample was smaller this year than in the past, the results were satisfactory and we qualified none of the Council's performance indicators.
- 58 There are examples of strong self-evaluation within individual services. The CSSIW has concluded that the Director's report³, demonstrated that clear leadership and performance management arrangements are in place and that the Director's report gives a comprehensive and detailed explanation of the past year, setting the local context with a clear account of the achievements and challenges Social Services has faced, and continues to face. It makes reference to the Council's achievements and future plans, and acknowledges areas where performance still needs to improve, or where service developments have not yet been achieved. The report also explains why changes that may not be immediately popular are being made, and provides an opportunity for readers of the report to provide feedback. The Council has provided the CSSIW with detailed position statements for adult and children's services, plus supporting evidence.
- 59 The Estyn inspection also found that the Council robustly reviews and challenges its education services for children and young people annually to secure improvement and value for money. The Council had strengthened its arrangements to support schools in financial difficulties and improved the effectiveness of monitoring and management of recovery plans. Good progress has been made in developing workforce planning arrangements in the authority and for schools.

3 An annual review of a Council Social Services performance undertaken by the CSSIW which includes an assessment of a Council's self-evaluation of its performance (often called the 'Directors report'). The CSSIW provides an overall evaluation of performance and identifies areas of progress and areas for development.

- 60 The Council's annual Performance Report (the Report) was published before the statutory deadline of 31 October 2012. The Report assesses the Council's performance in the preceding financial year (2011-12) and clearly sets out how the Council has sought to discharge its duties under the Measure.
- 61 The Report includes details of performance as measured by the national statutory performance indicators and provides a clear and well-structured focus on the Council's progress in the delivery of its Improvement Objectives. The Report is concise and well written and, for most of the Improvement Objectives set for 2011-12, reports clear, outcome-based performance. The narrative helpfully links the Improvement Objectives to the tables of statutory and key performance indicators. Where the output or outcome was not achieved, the Report includes a brief explanatory commentary.
- 62 We found that the Performance Report is clearly presented and easy to read and uses a consistent reporting structure to evaluate and report performance for each of the Improvement Objectives. Improvement Objectives are crosscutting and identify opportunities to promote integration across services and departments to deliver effectively the intended improvement. The Report includes some comments on areas where progress in delivering actions has been slow, or performance has fallen. For example, with regard to the indicator for the risk management of adult protection referrals, the Council notes that performance has declined, and outlines why this has happened.
- 63 As required, the Report includes an explanation of how its contents contribute to the Council's statutory duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement and account for it'.
- 64 The final section of the report summarises the Council's performance against its chosen 19 national indicators, and an outline of its performance management framework. The 19 national indicators are assessed by the Council to be the most suitable basket of indicators by which to judge if it is a 'high performing Council' but a summary which includes all of the 41 national indicators would give a clearer and more comprehensive assessment of progress.
- 65 Each Improvement Objective is supported by a series of activities and measures that are managed and delivered by the appropriate service area and monitored throughout the year as part of the Council's performance management framework. Importantly, the Council has introduced key internal processes within this system to both challenge and manage improvement.
- 66 We identified a number of aspects in which the Report does not adhere as well as it might to Welsh Government guidance. In particular:
- The Report does not provide a rounded summary of progress against aspects of some Improvement Objectives. For example, it is a key Welsh Government priority that all social housing should comply with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). The Council has reported WHQS performance through the various structures of its

performance management framework, but this information is not included in the Performance Report. The proportion of Council-managed social rented homes that met the WHQS has increased to 86 per cent in 2012, but nowhere does the Report note that the Welsh Government target is for all homes to meet the WHQS by March 2013. The latest estimate indicates that the Council will be only one of four councils to achieve the target by the end of 2013.

- In some of the Improvement Objectives, the Council acknowledges that focus of activity is very narrow and does not allow for a rounded assessment of progress. For instance, the regeneration Improvement Objective Outcome on sustainable economic growth is narrowly focused on three indicators, and a further three performance measures. No additional measures or actions have been included, for example, on either sustainability or quality of accommodation. These are equally as important as existing indicators on house prices, and the absence of this information presents only a partial picture of how well the Council is performing in this area.
- There is also only very limited reference in the Report to the status and outcomes of the Council's current regional and sub-regional collaborative projects. There is no reference in particular to recent performance difficulties with the Highways collaboration project with Conwy County Borough Council, aspects of which were the subject of a critical joint report by Conwy and Denbighshire's Internal Audit services.

67 On 28 September 2012, the auditor appointed by the Auditor General gave an unqualified opinion on the Council's 2011-12 accounts. The appointed auditor also issued his *Annual Audit Letter* before the end of November 2012 – [Appendix 3](#) gives more detail.

The Council's arrangements to support improvement are good

The Council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure

- 68 Following the local government elections in May 2012, the Council decided to develop a new Corporate Plan following a considerable amount of consultation and engagement with residents and its staff, including a residents' survey and workshops with young people.
- 69 The Council agreed and published its new *Corporate Plan 2012-17: An excellent council, close to the community* (the Plan) in October 2012. Our audit and assessment work found that the Plan meets the requirements of the Measure. The Council has set out a clear rationale for selecting the areas it is focusing on improving, based on its current performance, stakeholder and partner views and recent consultation activity with citizens. The Council has produced a Welsh language version of the Plan and provided summary versions on its website and in its newsletter, *County Voice*.
- 70 The Plan clearly sets out the Council's contribution to Denbighshire's Local Service Board community strategy, *The Big Plan for Denbighshire*. The Corporate Plan has seven Improvement Objectives relating to: education and school buildings; developing the local economy; improving roads; protecting vulnerable people; clean and tidy streets; access to good quality housing; and modernising the Council.
- 71 The Council has clearly stated what the Improvement Objectives aim to achieve and has included broad details, linked to its Medium Term Financial Plan, on the resources available, both revenue and capital, to support their delivery.
- 72 The clarity of the link between the Improvement Objectives and accompanying measures of success, baseline data and targets for improvement is not yet consistent across all seven Improvement Objectives. Some links are very clear and show the intended impact of improvement. The measures of success for the Improvement Objective to improve roads, for example, focus on an overall reduction in the percentage of roads being classed as being in poor condition, and improvement in residents' satisfaction with the quality of roads. It is therefore clear what the Council is seeking to improve.
- 73 In some other Improvement Objectives, the measures for assessing whether anyone is better off are not yet as detailed or effective. The Council reports that it intends to address this issue through publishing the technical guidance which will define indicators to measure success for all the Improvement Objectives and the 'excellence threshold' that the Council is aiming to achieve during the lifetime of the Corporate Plan.

The Council has complied with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and its *Welsh Language Scheme*

- 74 The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 (the Act) sets out specific requirements for local authorities in Wales. The Act required councils to develop and publish Equality Objectives and a Strategic Equality Plan by 2 April 2012. There is significant alignment between the requirement to produce Equality Objectives and the 'Fairness' element that authorities must consider in setting Improvement Objectives under the Measure. The Council's Corporate Plan includes an equality impact assessment, which includes some information on the Council's equality work, particularly in relation to research and reports on topics relating to protected groups and the Council's future plans for engagement with these groups. We believe the Council has met the requirements of the Act in setting its Improvement Objectives.
- 75 The role of the Welsh Language Commissioner was created by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Over time, new powers to impose standards on organisations will come into force through legislation. Until that time, the Commissioner will continue to review Welsh language schemes by virtue of powers inherited under the Welsh Language Act 1993. The Commissioner works with all local authorities in Wales to inspect and advise on the implementation of language schemes. It is the responsibility of local authorities to provide services to the public in Welsh in

accordance with the commitments in their language schemes. Every local authority is committed to providing an annual monitoring report to the Commissioner outlining its performance in implementing the language scheme. The Commissioner analyses every monitoring report; provides a formal response and collects further information as required.

- 76 The Commissioner judged that Denbighshire County Council has set in place a robust governance process, and the Bilingual Members Forum will consider the impact on the language when the Council discusses, confirms and implements its policies. The Council has also reviewed its Equality Relevance Assessment Form, which includes the Welsh language, to ensure that new policies or plans do not have a detrimental effect on the language. With more effective monitoring, the Council has ensured enhanced accountability and scrutiny regarding the language, but the process of monitoring contractors will need tightening in the year to come. The Council has committed to guarantee a Welsh language service in its main public contact centres, by ensuring contact details such as the bilingual helpline, e-mail addresses and the website are given appropriate publicity.

The Council continues to make good progress in addressing the proposals for improvement identified in our previous assessments

- 77 The Council complied with the requirement to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement during 2011-12 and has made good progress in most areas for improvement identified in previous audit letters and reports.
- 78 The Council undertook a corporate governance review as part of the process to update and agree its Annual Governance Statement. The review found that the Council had adequate arrangements in place for meeting the six principles in the framework but the review of the effectiveness of the arrangements identified significant governance risks relating to partnership and information. We have conducted further work at all councils in Wales on the production of the Annual Governance Statements and we shall produce a national report in due course.
- 79 Managerial responsibility within the Council for *Rhyl Going Forward* is still undergoing a period of transition as part of the reorganisation of duties amongst the Council's heads of service. At senior level, the newly appointed Corporate Director of Economic and Community Ambition has assumed responsibility for economic development. We shall provide a further assessment of progress with regard to the *Rhyl Going Forward* delivery plan later in the year.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Status of this report

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake an annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. This requirement covers local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

This report has been produced by the Wales Audit Office on behalf of the Auditor General to discharge his duties under section 24 of the Measure. The report also discharges his duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether, as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17, he believes that the authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

Improvement authorities are under a general duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions'. Improvement authorities are defined as local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

The annual improvement assessment is the main piece of work that enables the Auditor General to fulfil his duties. The improvement assessment is informed by a forward-looking assessment of an authority's likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. It also includes a retrospective assessment of whether an authority has achieved its planned improvements in order to inform a view as to the authority's track record of improvement. This report also summarises the Auditor General's conclusions on the authority's self-assessment of its performance.

The Auditor General may also in some circumstances carry out special inspections (under section 21), which will be reported to the relevant authorities and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22). This published *Annual Improvement Report* summarises audit and assessment reports including any special inspections (under section 24).

An important ancillary activity for the Wales Audit Office is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments.

Appendix 2

Useful information about Denbighshire and Denbighshire County Council

The Council

The Council spends approximately £234.8 million per year (2012-13 budget), including specific Welsh Government grants. This equates to about £2,500 per resident. In the same year, the Council also planned to spend £41.2 million on capital items.

The average band D council tax in 2011-12 was £1,024 per year. This increased by 2.8 per cent to £1,052 for 2012-13. Eighty-four per cent of Denbighshire's housing is in council tax bands A to D. The average band D council tax is the sixth highest in Wales although recent annual increases have been below average.

The Council is made up of 47 elected members who represent the community and make decisions about priorities and use of resources. The Leader is Councillor Hugh H Evans OBE. The political make-up of the Council is as follows:

- 8 Conservatives
- 13 Independent
- 8 Plaid Cymru
- 18 Labour

The Council's Chief Executive is Dr Mohammed Mehmet and his management team includes:

- Corporate Director: Modernisation and Wellbeing – Sally Ellis
- Corporate Director Economic and Community Ambition – Rebecca Maxwell
- Corporate Director: Learning and Communities – Hywyn Williams

Other information

The Assembly Members for Denbighshire are:

- Ann Jones, Vale of Clwyd, Labour Party
- Darren Millar, Clwyd West, Conservative Party
- Ken Skates, Clwyd South, Labour Party

Regional Assembly Members are:

- Llyr Huws Gruffydd, Plaid Cymru
- Mark Isherwood, Welsh Conservative Party
- Aled Roberts, Welsh Liberal Democrats
- Antoinette Sandbach, Welsh Conservative Party

The Members of Parliament for Denbighshire are:

- Chris Ruane, Vale of Clwyd, Labour
- David Jones, Clwyd West, Conservative
- Susan Elan Jones, Clwyd South, Labour

For more information see the Council's own website at www.Denbighshire.gov.uk or contact the Council at County Hall, Wynnstay Road, Ruthin, LL15 1YN. Telephone: 01824 706000.

Appendix 3

Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter

Dr. Mohammed Mehmet
Chief Executive
Denbighshire County Council
County Hall
Wynnstay Road
Ruthin
Denbighshire
LL15 1YN

Dear Mohammed

Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter

This letter summarises the key messages arising from my statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 as the Appointed Auditor and my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources

It is the Council's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the Statement of Accounts;
- review the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the Statement of Accounts.

Local authorities in Wales prepare their Statement of Accounts in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This Code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards. On 28 September 2012 I issued an unqualified audit opinion on the Statement of Accounts stating that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions. My report is contained within the Statement of Accounts. The key matters arising from the audit were reported to members of the Corporate Governance Committee in my Audit of Financial Statements report on the 26 September 2012.

My consideration of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the Statement of Accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed as part of the Improvement Assessment under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. Overall, I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place. The Auditor General may highlight areas where the effectiveness of these arrangements has yet to be demonstrated or where improvements could be made when he publishes his Annual Improvement Report.

The Council's Corporate Plan (2012 to 2017) sets out how much additional money they plan to invest over the next five years in order to achieve their ambitions. Whilst I believe the Council is well placed to address its financial challenges, the amount of additional investment (£134m) over and above resources already committed to its priority areas is significant. Managing this level of investment will require robust governance procedures and continued consultation and engagement. As a result, the Council are re-visiting their medium term financial strategy and ensuring arrangements are put in place to manage this level of spend on an on-going basis.

I issued a Certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts has been completed on 28 September 2012.

The financial audit fee for 2011-12 is currently expected to be in line with the agreed fee set out in the Annual Audit Outline.

Yours sincerely

Derwyn Owen
For and on behalf of the Appointed Auditor

29 November 2012

Local electors and others have a right to look at the Council's accounts. When the Council has finalised its accounts for the previous financial year, usually around July or August, it must advertise that they are available for people to look at. You can get copies of the accounts from the Council; you can also inspect all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them for 20 working days after they are made available. You can ask the auditor questions about the accounts for the year that they are auditing. For example, you can simply tell the auditor if you think that something is wrong with the accounts or about waste and inefficiency in the way the Council runs its services. For more information see the Wales Audit Office leaflet, *Council accounts: your rights*, on our website at www.wao.gov.uk or by writing to us at the address on the back of this report.

Appendix 4

Denbighshire County Council's improvement objectives and self-assessment

The Council's improvement objectives

The Council is required by the Welsh Government to make plans to improve its functions and the services it provides. Each year it must publish these plans along with specific 'improvement objectives' that set out the key things that the Council intends to do to improve. The Council must do this as soon as possible after 1 April each year.

The Council published its improvement objectives for 2012-13 in October 2012. The details are available on the Council's website at www.denbighshire.gov.uk. They are:

Key improvement objective priorities 2011-12	Key improvement objective priorities 2012-13
Adapting service delivery to address demographic changes.	Developing the local economy.
Reducing deprivation and growing Denbighshire's economy sustainably by strategically targeting resources.	Improving performance in education and the quality of school buildings.
Modernising the education service to achieve a high level of performance across the county.	Improving our roads.
Securing a sustainable road network and flood defences.	Vulnerable people are protected and able to live as independently as possible.
Improving the way the Council works.	Clean and tidy streets.
	Ensuring access to good quality housing.
	Modernising the council to deliver efficiencies and improve services for our customers.

The Council's self-assessment of performance

The Council's self-assessment of its performance during 2011-12 can be found on the Council's website at www.denbighshire.gov.uk.

Appendix 5

Proposals for improvement 2012-13

Over the course of our work in 2012-13 we have made some new proposals for improvement. These have previously been reported to the Council and are set out below for information. We will continue to monitor and report on the progress made by the Council in implementing the proposals under our future programme of work.

Proposals for improvement

P1 Provide a wider evidence base of information to enable the Council to assess whether it has met its Improvement Objectives.

P2 Include more information on the status and outcomes of the Council's collaborative projects.

Wales Audit Office
24 Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9LJ

Tel: 029 2032 0500

Fax: 029 2032 0600

Textphone: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: info@wao.gov.uk

Website: www.wao.gov.uk

Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru
24 Heol y Gadeirlan
Caerdydd CF11 9LJ

Ffôn: 029 2032 0500

Ffacs: 029 2032 0600

Ffôn Testun: 029 2032 0660

E-bost: info@wao.gov.uk

Gwefan: www.wao.gov.uk

Report to: Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 16 May 2013
Lead Member / Officer: Head of Customers and Education Support
Report Author: Corporate Complaints Officer
Title: Performance standards revealed through the Complaints process

1 What is the report about?

To present analysis of the feedback received via Denbighshire County Council's customer feedback policy 'Your Voice' for Quarter 4 of 2012/13.

2 What is the reason for making this report?

To provide information regarding any performance issues identified by 'Your Voice', and to make recommendations to address these accordingly.

3 What are the Recommendations?

3.1 That the Committee note and comment on the performance of services.

4 Report details

Highlights

The Council responded to **95%** (163 / 172) of recorded complaints in accordance with the 'Your Voice' timescales in Quarter 4. The corporate target is 95% and this is the first time it has been achieved. This is up from the previous quarter (91%).

660 complaints were recorded during 2012/13 – an increase of 12% on the previous year.

Of these 600 (91%) were responded to within the 'Your Voice' timescales. Although below the corporate target, it is a significant improvement on the performance for 2011/12 when 78% (460 / 587) of complaints were responded to within timescale.

The authority also received 192 compliments during quarter 4. Over the year, 820 compliments were recorded.

Complaint response times

The overall performance of the Council has improved in the last quarter.

No service areas were highlighted as RED in quarter 4.

Of the 9 service areas that received complaints in quarter 4, over half (5) responded to all of their complaints within the corporate target.

Environmental Services continue to perform well, having consistently achieved or exceeded the corporate target in each quarter of 2012/13. This is despite them receiving the highest volume of complaints.

Environmental Services are the only 'corporate' service to receive more compliments than complaints. They account for over a quarter of all compliments received by the Authority.

The performance for Highways improved to 85% of complaints responded to within timescale.

Stage 1 complaints is where the issue is in terms of failing to respond within 10 working days – with 94% responded to within timescale. This is an improvement on previous quarters (see table in B4).

Complaint handling

The number of stage 2 complaints reduced during this quarter. It is too early to say whether this reflects improved complaint investigation at stage 1 and will require monitoring over coming periods.

The number of complaints investigated at stage 3 has increased in each quarter; from just over 2% of complaints considered by the Authority in Q1 to 3.5% in Q4. These should be reviewed to determine whether there is a specific reason for this increase and whether any assistance can be offered to the services.

Analysis of feedback

Following the recommendation of the Committee at the meeting on 21 February 2013, a sample of feedback received during Q4 from Environmental Services and Highways was undertaken.

Environmental Services recorded 67 complaints - all at stage 1. 61 of these were categorised as being 'Service' related. Further:

- 20 complaints were about the 'Quality of service';
- 12 complaints concerned 'Non-delivery of service';
- 8 complaints related to 'Length of time for service'.

In summary:

- 24/67 complaints concerned missed collections; 18 were upheld, 4 upheld in part and 2 not upheld.
- 8/67 related to non-delivery of bins/bags; 5 were upheld and 3 upheld in part.

53 Compliments were also received, with:

- 10 for collections;
- 6 for replacement requests;
- 4 for the X2 scheme;
- 3 for the recycling centre (all relating to Rhyl);
- 2 for staff effort during the bad weather;
- 2 general service;
- 1 for staff for the Christmas collection.

Highways recorded 26 complaints. 'Service' accounted for 20 of these. Further:

- 9/26 were about lack of gritting/snow clearance;
- 4/26 concerned lack of response to their enquiry;
- other issues included: the price of parking; the action of a bailiff; the painting of double yellow lines at Loggerheads; and alleged damage following council works.

33 Compliments were also received, with:

- 5 for gritting/snow clearance;
- 4 for the prompt response to enquiries;
- 3 for pot hole repairs; and
- 3 for road cleaning

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

An excellent Council, close to its community.

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

None – existing role of Corporate Complaints Officer.

7 What consultations have been carried out?

Monthly reporting to Senior Executive Team.

8 Chief Finance Officer Statement

Not applicable.

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

By not dealing with complaints effectively, the reputation of the Council may suffer.

10 Power to make the Decision

Article 6.3.4(b) of the Council's Constitution sets out the Committee's powers with respect to scrutinising performance in general and the performance of certain service areas.

Contact Officer:

Corporate Complaints Officer

Tel: 01824 706197

Appendix A – ‘Your Voice’ information

A1 Your Voice’ reporting periods

A1.1 The following periods are used for reporting data in regards ‘Your Voice’:

- Quarter 1: 1-Apr to 30-Jun
- Quarter 2: 1-Jul to 30-Sep
- Quarter 3: 1-Oct to 31-Dec
- Quarter 4: 1-Jan to 31-Mar

A2 Complaint response timescales

A2.1 The ‘Your Voice’ feedback policy states that the following timescales should be adhered to when responding to complaints:

- Stage 1: **10** working days
- Stage 2: **25** working days
- Stage 3: **15** working days

A3 ‘Your Voice’ performance measures

A3.1 A traffic light system will be used to highlight performance in relation to response timescales to complaints. Performance is rated according to:

Red	Less than 80% of complaints responded to within timescale
Orange	when more than 80% but less than 90% of complaints responded to within timescale
Yellow	when more than 90% but less than 95% of complaints responded to within timescale
Green	more than 95% of complaints responded to within timescale

A3.2 To assist with identifying whether a service area’s performance has changed from the previous period(s), the following key has been developed:

Symbol	Indication
▲	Improvement in performance
▼	Decline in performance
◀	No change in performance
–	No data for period for comparison

Appendix B – ‘Your Voice’ Quarter 4 2012/13 data

B1 Overall complaint response times for the current year

Service Area	Quarter 1 (12/13)				Quarter 2 (12/13)				Quarter 3 (12/13)				Quarter 4 (12/13)			
	Recd	Within	%	Status	Recd	Within	%	Status	Recd	Within	%	Status	Recd	Within	%	Status
Social Services Adults	14	11	79%	▲ R	11	9	82%	▲ O	12	10	83%	▲ O	7	6	86%	▲ O
Social Services Children	16	15	94%	▲ Y	16	12	75%	▼ R	10	7	70%	▼ R	6	5	83%	▲ O
Business Planning and Performance	0	0	n/a	– –	0	0	n/a	– –	0	0	n/a	– –	0	0	n/a	– –
Legal and Democratic Services	1	1	100%	– –	1	1	100%	◀ G	1	1	100%	◀ G	0	0	n/a	– –
Customers and Education Support	4	4	100%	◀ G	2	1	50%	▼ R	10	10	100%	▲ G	9	9	100%	◀ G
Environment	26	25	96%	◀ G	44	42	95%	▼ G	64	64	100%	▲ G	67	67	100%	◀ G
Finance and Assets	7	5	71%	▼ R	8	6	75%	▲ R	4	3	75%	◀ R	5	5	100%	▲ G
Housing and Community Development	25	20	80%	▲ O	17	13	76%	▼ R	25	25	100%	▲ G	19	17	89%	▼ O
Regeneration	1	1	100%	◀ G	3	3	100%	◀ G								
Planning and Public Protection	16	16	100%	▲ G	11	10	91%	▼ Y	24	24	100%	▲ G	15	15	100%	◀ G
Highways and Infrastructure	22	21	95%	▲ G	34	32	94%	▼ Y	18	9	50%	▼ R	26	22	85%	▲ O
Communication, Marketing and Leisure	9	9	100%	▲ G	11	10	91%	▼ Y	10	10	100%	▲ G	15	15	100%	◀ G
School Improvement	1	1	100%	– –	0	0	0%	– –	0	0	0%	– –	0	0	n/a	– –
Other	1	1	100%	– –	4	1	0%	– –	0	0	0%	– –	0	0	n/a	– –
Total	143	130	91%	▲ Y	166	144	87%	▼ O	179	163	91%	▲ Y	172	163	95%	▲ G

B2 Corporate response times according to each complaint stage for the current year

Q1	Count	Within	%
Stage 1	131	119	91
Stage 2	8	7	88
Stage 3	3	3	100
PSOW*	1	1	100
	143	130	91

Q2	Count	Within	%
Stage 1	154	133	86
Stage 2	8	8	100
Stage 3	4	3	75
PSOW*	0	0	
	166	144	87

Q3	Count	Within	%
Stage 1	161	146	91
Stage 2	13	12	92
Stage 3	5	5	100
PSOW*	0	0	
	179	163	91

Q4	Count	Within	%
Stage 1	156	147	94
Stage 2	6	6	100
Stage 3	6	6	100
PSOW*	4	4	100
	172	163	95

*Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

B3 Compliments received during the current year

Service Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Social Services Adults	68	147	82	58	355
Social Services Children	10	8	13	18	49
Social Services Corporate	0	0	0	0	0
Business Planning and Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Legal and Democratic Services	1	1	0	0	2
Customers and Education Support	2	2	5	9	19
Environment	42	44	73	53	212
Finance and Assets	0	0	0	1	1
Housing and Community Development	24	4	15	13	56
Regeneration	1	1	0	0	2
Planning and Public Protection	7	4	8	6	25
Highways and Infrastructure	12	20	10	33	75
Communication, Marketing and Leisure	10	10	4	0	24
School Improvement	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
	177	241	210	192	820

B4 Summary of response times for 2012 / 13

Service Area	Full Year 2011-2012				Full Year 2012-2013			
	Recd	Within	%	Status	Recd	Within	%	Status
Social Services Adults	41	30	73%	– R	44	36	82%	▲ O
Social Services Children	39	23	59%	– R	48	39	81%	▲ O
Business Planning and Performance	1	1	100%	– G	0	0	n/a	– –
Legal and Democratic Services	6	3	50%	– R	3	3	100%	▲ G
Customers and Education Support	19	16	84%	– O	25	24	96%	▲ G
Environment	142	137	96%	– G	201	198	99%	▲ G
Finance and Assets	25	21	84%	– O	24	19	79%	▼ R
Housing and Community Development	79	33	42%	– R	86	75	87%	▲ O
Regeneration			0%	– –	4	4	100%	– –
Planning and Public Protection	97	85	88%	– O	66	65	98%	▲ G
Highways and Infrastructure	69	56	81%	– O	100	84	84%	▲ O
Communication, Marketing and Leisure	51	43	84%	– O	45	44	98%	▲ G
School Improvement	4	3	75%	– R	1	1	100%	▲ G
Other	1	0	0%	– –	5	2	40%	– –
	587	460	78%	– R	660	600	91%	▲ Y

B5 Summary of performance at each complaint stage for 2012 / 13

YTD	Count	Within	%
Stage 1	602	545	91
Stage 2	35	33	94
Stage 3	18	17	94
PSOW*	5	5	100
	660	600	91

*Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

This page is intentionally left blank

Report To: Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 16 May 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. The report is subject to further consultation and refinement and will need to be presented to Full Council by July 2013.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

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

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 Scrutiny are asked to consider and comment on:
 - 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

4. Report details.

- 4.1 The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) has four components:

① 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 the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (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.
- 4.6 The report will form an integral part of the 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

Key messages and priorities from the ACRF process

- 4.7 Our overall assessment is that Denbighshire Social Services succeeded in making real improvements in terms of both performance and quality over the past year. 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 24/7 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 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 A full EqIA will be done following a further period of consultation on the draft.

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.
- 8.2 We have 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.
- 8.3 The draft assessment will subject of consultation with Health, CSSIW and colleagues in Flintshire as part of a peer review process in which we will each undertake an analysis and review of each others self assessment.

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.
- 11.2 Article 6.3.4(b) sets out scrutiny's powers with respect to performance monitoring and policy objectives.

Contact Officer: Principal Manager (Business Support) Adult & Business Services
Tel: 01824 706641

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 was not delivered in 2012/13 was the development and delivery of an integrated disability service for children and young people and their families. However, 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.

Status: Draft for consultation
Date: 3 May 2013

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 is making us look more closely to home and to work much more 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 the 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 partners across the Council, the Environment Agency, and 3rd sector colleagues. 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 to find out what needs the individual might have and refer them to the appropriate team or relevant external agencies.

Often we 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 our First Contact Team are able to signpost a quarter of people who contact Social Services to community based services.

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.

Supporting Children and Families

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, children with disabilities 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 we received 7345 of these contacts. 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.

“The service provided felt ‘impartial’ which allowed me to be more open and honest. I did not get the impression that my family had been judged or pigeon holed prior to our first meeting, which made me feel positive about speaking to my Support Worker”

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, children with disabilities 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)

Status: Draft for consultation
Date: 3 May 2013

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.

During this year we have undertaken a detailed review of our intensive family support services 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 children with disabilities 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 of our children with disabilities 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 people with disabilities 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.

“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. 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. 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. In addition, we have invested resources into developing a new emergency foster care service.

“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

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. We now have an established and stable workforce that continues to gain in experience and as a result we have good staff retention rates with no agency staff.

“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”

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;

Looking forward—our top priorities for 2013-14

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 good services for children and families needing Social Services intervention.

The main focus of our energies for 2013/14 will be as follows:

1. Vulnerable families provide stability and safe care for children

To achieve this we will:

- implement a 24/7 Family Support Service;
- implement a new Foster Care Support Service;
- implement the North Wales pre-court protocol;
- 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 children with disabilities;
- review and restructure our Occupational Therapy service;
- undertake 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 and 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.

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
- advice about 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
- special equipment and home adaptations
- care and/or support in a person's home
- short breaks
- 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

Status: Draft for consultation
Date: 3 May 2013

- 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 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 prevented hospital admission
- 219 people to 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
56 people required the same level of support
5 people had an increased level of support

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

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

During the year the reablement team 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 hospital 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.

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 response centre when a person needs help or something has been detected such as gas or smoke.

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.

Equipment

We have a 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 develop a scheme to provide Direct Payments for equipment and minor adaptations. We anticipate that the scheme will 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

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
- ✓ 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

- ✓ 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
- ✓ 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

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)

Our aim is build on this work 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

Status: Draft for consultation
Date: 3 May 2013

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 judge, 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 3rd 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 3rd Sector to develop a North Wales Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2012/15 which was approved by Welsh

Status: Draft for consultation
Date: 3 May 2013

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. The main group of people we work with are people who have social care needs and 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 has engaged with 1619 participants as of March 2013 and 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 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 done	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 but 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 these services in the Corporate Plan and linked funds to the Plan. In addition, Welsh Government has protected social services in their budget, meaning this year we can re-invest efficiency money into pump-priming initiatives to grow 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
- 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 2013-14

Theme	Priority Actions
-------	------------------

<p>Safeguarding Making sure that vulnerable adults are protected from harm</p>	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 be robust safeguarding arrangements in place
<p>Personalisation: People having choice and control over their lives and being able to live as independently as possible</p>	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 a scheme 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
<p>Localisation People's individual needs being met within their local communities</p>	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
	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
	Develop plans for 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>	Implement new arrangements for accessing advice and information through a Single Point of Access
	We will continue to strengthen our working with Health by: a. clarifying and developing the role of health and social care support workers

	<p>b. developing guidance on social care and health responsibilities for delivering personal care</p>
	<p>We will improve partnership working with Children and Family Services to:</p> <p>a. develop a family focus in relevant service areas</p> <p>b. explore models for providing effective services for young people with disabilities who will need ongoing support from Adult Services</p>
	<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 • promoting the take up of telecare in local authority accommodation
<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 in</p> <p>Reduce sickness absence</p> <p>increase the % of staff who 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>

This page is intentionally left blank

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="185 236 981 268">Assuring the quality of the services we commission</p> <p data-bbox="185 309 1178 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="185 533 1178 1305" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="185 533 1178 676">✓ 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="185 718 1178 861">✓ 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="185 903 1178 1011">✓ 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="185 1053 1178 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="185 1235 1178 1305">✓ contributed to a review of how we can enhance quality monitoring across the North Wales region. 	<p data-bbox="1198 309 1975 379">Our aim is to further develop our approach to quality in 2013/14. We will:</p> <ul data-bbox="1198 421 2058 1394" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1198 421 2058 497">• strengthen and improve contract monitoring processes through regional work on quality monitoring <li data-bbox="1198 497 2058 606">• bringing together our reviewing and contracting staff to join up, and enhance our oversight, of the quality of care provision <li data-bbox="1198 606 2058 683">• explore the potential of carrying out spot checks for domiciliary care <li data-bbox="1198 683 2058 791">• 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="1198 791 2058 944">• 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="1198 944 2058 1053">• continue to embed Dignity in Care as an integral part of our training programme for the whole social care workforce <li data-bbox="1198 1053 2058 1283">• 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="1198 1283 2058 1394">• 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>

Report to: Performance Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 16 May 2013

Report Author: Scrutiny Coordinator

Title: Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

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

2. What is the reason for making this report?

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

3. What are the recommendations?

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

4. Report details.

4.1 Article 6 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, whilst the rules of procedure for scrutiny committees are laid out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.

4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.

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

- issues raised by members of the Committee
- matters referred to it by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

- relevance to the Committee's/Council's/community priorities
 - the Council's Corporate Plan and the Director of Social Services' Annual Report
 - meeting workload
 - timeliness
 - outcomes
 - key issues and information to be included in reports
 - officers and/or lead Cabinet members who should be invited (having regard to whether their attendance is necessary or would add value)
 - questions to be put to officers/lead Cabinet members
- 4.5 When considering future items for inclusion on the forward work programme members may also find it helpful to have regard to the following questions when determining a subject's suitability for inclusion on the work programme:
- what is the issue?
 - who are the stakeholders?
 - what is being looked at elsewhere
 - what does scrutiny need to know? and
 - who may be able to assist?
- 4.6 As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested subjects. No such proposal form has been received for consideration at the current meeting.
- Wales Audit Office (WAO) Annual Improvement Report
- 4.7 The annual report on the Council's performance was rescheduled from the Committee's last meeting to the current one. However, as the Council has only recently received the draft version of the Annual Report from the WAO, the final published version was not available in time for submission to the current meeting. Consequently, with the Chair's permission, the Report has been rescheduled into the Committee's work programme for its June meeting. As a result, the Committee will have five items plus the work programme report for consideration at its June meeting. A similar situation will arise in September. Members are therefore asked to consider whether they are happy to proceed with this number of agenda items for the June and September meetings or whether they wish to reschedule any of the reports to a future meeting, or receive any of them as information or consultation reports outside of the formal meeting.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this purpose a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 2.

Progress on Committee Resolutions

- 4.9 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 3 to this report.

5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The SCVCG met on 16 April and no items were referred to Performance Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

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

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

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

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

8. What consultations have been carried out?

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

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

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

10. Power to make the decision

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

Contact Officer:

Scrutiny Coordinator

Tel No: (01824) 712554

Email: dcc_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk

Note: Any items entered in italics have not been approved for inclusion at the meeting shown by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
20 June	1 Corporate Plan QPR: Q4 2012/13	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Tony Ward	July 2012
	2 Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register following the latest formal review by CET	Identification of effective measures to address the high level risks	Tony Ward	January 2013
	3 Estyn Action Plan [Education]	To monitor the progress achieved to date in implementing the actions to address the 2 recommendations in the 2012 Estyn Inspection of the Quality of Education Services	Better quality services and better outcomes for pupils through early identification of any slippages in progressing actions, or in implementing mitigating measures to address risks identified	Karen Evans/Diane Hesketh	June 2012
	4 Review of Council Publications	To consider the findings of the review	The formulation of recommendations with respect to future Council publications and the most appropriate and effective communication methods for engaging with residents	Jamie Groves/Gareth Watson	February 2013 (transferred from Communities Scrutiny March 2013)
19 September	1 Annual Performance Review Report 2012/13	To evaluate the performance of the council during 2012/13	Identification of trends or areas of poor performance leading to recommendations to address declining performance and realise the Council's ambition to	Tony Ward	July 2012

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			become an excellent authority		
	2 Licensing Matters	To consider the effectiveness of the new procedures for licensing following the implementation of the findings of the review of licensing matters conducted by the Internal Audit Department (with specific emphasis on taxi licensing and safeguarding responsibilities)	Monitoring of the new licensing policies and procedures to ensure that the processes are robust and effective in supporting the Council's compliance with all licensing and safeguarding legislation, and in mitigating risks to vulnerable groups who use services licensed by the Authority	Graham Boase/Nicky Jones	November 2012
	3 Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments [Education]	To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children	Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement	Julian Molloy	January 2013
	4 Corporate Plan QPR: Q1 2013/14	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Tony Ward	February 2013
	5 Your Voice' complaints performance (Q1)	To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints process	Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses.	Jackie Walley/Steven Goodrum	February 2013
24 October	1 Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register following the latest formal review by CET	Identification of effective measures to address the high level risks	Tony Ward	January 2013
	2 CCTV in Denbighshire	To consider progress on	The development of an efficient	Graham	April 2013

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			developing the Council's CCTV function in light of the Regional Collaboration project not being progressed. Consideration of reducing costs, increasing income and delivery of identified savings while progressing a more equitable distribution of CCTV throughout the County."	and effective Service that serves the Council and residents well and delivers safer communities	Boase/Emlyn Jones	
12 December	1.	Corporate Plan QPR: Q2 2013/14	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Tony Ward	February 2013
	2	'Your Voice' complaints performance (Q2)	To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints process	Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses.	Jackie Walley/Steven Goodrum	February 2013
16 January 2014	1	Verified External Examinations and Teacher Assessments [Education]	To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children	Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement	Julian Molloy	January 2013
	2	Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register following the latest formal review by CET	Identification of effective measures to address the high level risks	Tony Ward	January 2013
20 February	1	'Your Voice' complaints performance (Q3)	To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with	Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the	Jackie Walley/Steven	February 2013

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
		the Council's complaints process	development of recommendations to address weaknesses.	Goodrum	
20 March	1. Corporate Plan QPR: Q3 2013/14	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Tony Ward	February 2013
1 May					
June 2014	1 Your Voice' complaints performance (Q4)	To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints process	Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses.	Jackie Walley/Steven Goodrum	February 2013
	2 Corporate Plan QPR: Q4 2013/14	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Tony Ward	February 2013
	3 Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register following the latest formal review by CET	Identification of effective measures to address the high level risks	Tony Ward	January 2013

Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
----------------------------	-------------------	-------------------	--------	--------------

Information/Consultation Reports

Date	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered

Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
20 June	6 June	19 September	5 September	24 October	10 October

Performance Scrutiny Work Programme.doc

Updated 15/05/13 RhE

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Appendix 2

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
25 June	1	Outsourcing ICT Services to Schools	To give an overview of the tendering process, evaluation and scoring and request the final decision from Cabinet.	Yes	Cllr Eryl Williams / Jackie Walley / Stephanie O'Donnell
	2	Finance Update Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council		Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	3	Mental Health Partnership	to ask Cabinet to consider and agree to a new partnership between the Council and BCU to deliver Adult Mental Health services to the citizens of Denbighshire.		Phil Gilroy/Cllr Bobby Feeley
	4	Cefndy Healthcare: Future Direction & Impact of Potential loss of DWP funding	To consider options in light of risks from loss of DWP funding & need to maintain employment for vulnerable & disabled people		Cllr Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy / Deborah Holmes-Langstone
	5	Ruthin Area Primary Schools Review	To seek approval for starting a formal consultation period	Yes	Cllr Eryl Williams / Jackie Walley

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		with Ruthin Primary schools		
	6 Corporate Plan QPR: Quarter 4 2012/13	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012 -17	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Tony Ward
	7 Final Budget Position and Revenue Outturn 2012/13	To update Cabinet on the final Budget Position and Revenue Outturn 2012/13	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	8 Review of LDP Steering Group	To seek approval for the proposed revised membership and terms of reference for the LDP Steering Group	Yes	Cllr Eryl Williams / Angela Loftus
	9 Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
	10 Day Services	To update Cabinet on changes to day services provided for older people	Yes	Phil Gilroy/ Cllr Bobby Feeley
30 July	1 Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2 Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
	3 Local Housing Strategy	To consider a report by	Tbc	Cllr Hugh Irving / Sue

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		(Glyndwr University)	Glyndwr University		Lewis
	4	Local Housing Strategy	To consider the Local Housing Strategy	tbc	Cllr Hugh Irving / Sue Lewis
	5	North Wales Hospital – CPO			Graham Boase
	6	Adult Safeguarding	To consider future options for the arrangements for Adult Safeguarding	Yes	Cllr Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy
3 September	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Annual Performance Review 2012/13	To review the draft Annual Performance Review for 2012-13 and to recommend the report for adoption by full Council		Cllr Barbara Smith / Tony Ward
	3	Corporate Plan QPR: Quarter 1 2013/14	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012 -17	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Tony Ward
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
24 September	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			the Council		
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
29 October	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
	3	Supplementary Planning Guidance Masterplan for the North Wales Hospital			Graham Boase
26 November	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
17 December	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
	2	Corporate Plan QPR: Quarter 2 2013/14	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012 -17	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Tony Ward
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
14 January 2014	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
18 February	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
25 March	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Corporate Plan QPR: Quarter 3	To monitor the Council's	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith /

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		2013/14	progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012 -17		Tony Ward
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
29 April	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
27 May	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention.	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
June	1	Finance Report Update	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Corporate Plan QPR: Quarter 3 2013/14	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Tony Ward

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			Corporate Plan 2012 -17		
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>29 April</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>11 June</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>16 July</i>

Updated 30/4/2013 - KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

This page is intentionally left blank

Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
11 April 2013	5. Corporate Plan QPR: Quarter 3 2012/13	<p><i>That :</i></p> <p><i>(i) The Committee request Cabinet and Corporate Improvement Officers to review the process for monitoring and assessing the status and progress of activities (which currently depend on the evaluation of the officer(s) responsible for the activities) and to consider the depth of information on the outcomes in order to maximise the transparency, validity and evidence-base of the quarterly update reports.</i></p> <p><i>(ii) The Committee agrees that, as the Performance Scrutiny members had been nominated as lead contacts with individual services, the lead contacts should use this role to question and challenge those services on any areas or issues where performance was a concern. The chair of the Committee to assist when appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>(iii) The Head of Environmental Services be requested to circulate a progress report to Committee members regarding the development of dropped kerbs.</i></p> <p><i>(iv) The Head of Children's Services be requested to circulate a progress report to members of the Performance and Partnerships Scrutiny Committees in respect of initial core group meetings being held within 10 days of the first child protection conference.</i></p>	<p>A session will be held immediately prior to the Committee meeting itself, at which a representative of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) will be present, for the purpose of discussing the Council's performance management and monitoring arrangements.</p> <p>All Committee members to note their responsibilities with respect to their role as lead contacts for the various Services and to seek the Chair's support if required.</p>

	6. Review of Service Challenge Process	<p>RESOLVED that Members accepted and agreed the draft proposals for a new Service Challenge process, which would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A more detailed review with a renewed focus on self-evaluation (ii) An annual rather than a bi-annual programme with increased flexible links with the business and budget planning process (iii) The development of a new and separate process for agreeing efficiencies. 	<p>The Corporate Improvement Manager has been informed of the Committee's resolution.</p>
	7. Provision of CCTV in Denbighshire	<p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The Committee supports the existing CCTV arrangements within the CCTV Team and recommends that consideration also be given to how other towns in Denbighshire could access CCTV services in the future. (ii) The Head of Planning and Public Protection be requested to circulate a breakdown into areas of offences and incidents recorded by CCTV; and (iii) A update report by the Head of Planning and Public Protection on the CCTV service be presented at the October 2013 meeting. 	<p>The information will be circulated separately</p> <p>Update report scheduled into the Committee's work programme for 24 October 2013</p>