

To: Members of the Cabinet

Date: 18 March 2015

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **CABINET** to be held at **10.00 am** on **TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2015** in **CONFERENCE ROOM 1A, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN.**

Yours sincerely

G Williams
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

AGENDA

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

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Pages 5 - 6)

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

3 URGENT MATTERS

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 MINUTES (Pages 7 - 14)

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17 February 2015 (copy enclosed).

5 APPROVAL OF FINAL BUSINESS CASE FOR YSGOL GLAN CLWYD REDEVELOPMENT (Pages 15 - 48)

To consider a report by Councillor Eryl Williams, Lead Member for Education (copy enclosed) recommending approval of the Final Business Case for Ysgol Glan Clwyd to Council.

6 GWE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS (Pages 49 - 60)

To consider a report by Councillor Eryl Williams, Lead Member for Education (copy enclosed) seeking approval of the amended governance arrangements for GwE (Regional School Improvement Service).

7 COUNCIL TAX AND NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES MOVES, DISCOUNTS, EXEMPTIONS AND RELIEFS TELEPHONE CALL RECORDING POLICY (Pages 61 - 74)

To consider a report by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance and Assets (copy enclosed) seeking approval of a new policy dealing with Revenues Services changes in address, changes in circumstances and claims for discounts and reliefs.

8 HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME TELEPHONE RECORDING POLICY (Pages 75 - 88)

To consider a report by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance and Assets (copy enclosed) seeking approval of a new policy dealing with Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction new claims and changes in circumstances.

9 DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP) POLICY (Pages 89 - 104)

To consider a report by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance and Assets (copy enclosed) seeking approval of a revised policy framework dealing with Discretionary Housing Payments.

10 LONG TERM STRATEGY FOR THE AGRICULTURAL ESTATE (Pages 105 - 120)

To consider a report by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance and Assets (copy enclosed) seeking approval of the future strategy for the Agricultural Estate.

11 DISPOSAL OF LAND AND BUILDINGS AT NANT HALL ROAD, PRESTATYN (Pages 121 - 130)

To consider a report by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance and Assets (copy enclosed) recommending disposal of council land and buildings at Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn.

12 FINANCE REPORT (Pages 131 - 148)

To consider a report by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance and Assets (copy enclosed) detailing the latest financial position and progress against the agreed budget strategy.

13 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 149 - 152)

To receive the enclosed Cabinet Forward Work Programme and note the contents.

PART 2 - CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

No Items.

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Hugh Evans
Julian Thompson-Hill
Eryl Williams
Bobby Feeley

Hugh Irving
Huw Jones
Barbara Smith
David Smith

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a *member/co-opted member of
*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Denbighshire County Council

CONFIRM that I have declared a ***personal / personal and prejudicial** interest not previously declared in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the following:-
*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)**

Signed

Date

*Note: Please provide sufficient detail e.g. 'I am the owner of land adjacent to the application for planning permission made by Mr Jones', or 'My husband / wife is an employee of the company which has made an application for financial assistance'.

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CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Tuesday, 17 February 2015 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Hugh Evans, Leader and Lead Member for Economic Development; Hugh Irving, Lead Member for Customers and Communities; Huw Jones, Lead Member for Leisure, Youth, Tourism and Rural Development; Barbara Smith, Lead Member for Modernising and Performance; Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance and Assets and Eryl Williams, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Education

Observers: Councillors Bill Cowie, Meirick Davies, Martyn Holland, Gwyneth Kensler, Dewi Owens, Merfyn Parry, Joe Welch and Huw Williams

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (MM); Corporate Director Economic and Community Ambition (RM); Director of Social Services (NS); Heads of Service: Legal, HR and Democratic Services (GW), Customers and Education Support (JW), Adult and Business Services (PG); Chief Accountant (RW); Housing Care and Support Manager (JS); Service Charge Officer (DO); Programme Manager Modernising Education (JC), and Committee Administrator (KEJ)

1 APOLOGIES

Councillors Bobby Feeley (Lead Member for Social Care, Adult & Children's Services) and David Smith (Lead Member for Public Realm)

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Meirick Davies – Personal – Agenda Item 7 – rents council garage
Councillor Martyn Holland – Personal – Agenda Item 5 – governor Bro Famau
Councillor Huw Williams – Personal – Agenda Item 5 – child in Pen Barras

3 URGENT MATTERS

No urgent matters had been raised.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 January 2015 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

5 MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME - RUTHIN PRIMARY AREA - YSGOL LLANBEDR

Councillor Eryl Williams presented the report briefing Cabinet on the recent decision of the Minister for Education and Skills regarding the future of Ysgol Llanbedr and seeking approval to commence consultation with the Church in Wales on the proposal to close Ysgol Llanbedr and report back to members thereon.

The Minister had rejected the proposal to close the school because he concluded that whilst there were sound educational arguments in favour of the proposal the consultation had been flawed. Following a review of the decision letter officers had recommended formal consultation with the Diocese on the school's future. Officers advised that the Diocese had alternative options for the school and further information would be sought during the consultation process to ascertain whether any alternative proposal addressed all the issues identified. Cabinet discussed the way forward in light of the information presented and it was confirmed that the purpose of today's report was not to debate school closure but to seek approval to commence consultation with the Church in Wales. The outcome of those discussions would be presented to Cabinet in April/May. It was also clarified that the outcome would not impact on the rest of the Ruthin area review proposals.

Councillor Huw Williams opposed the school's closure and was disappointed the matter had been brought before Cabinet so soon after the Minister had rejected the proposal. He highlighted that consultation flaws had been identified despite previous assurances in that regard from officers and following call in by Communities Scrutiny Committee. Reference was also made to the stress caused to school staff, parents and pupils as a result. In considering the next steps Councillor Williams advised that pupil numbers were increasing and asked that the school be granted a period of stability in which to flourish – he urged Cabinet not to instigate formal consultation on the school's closure but that the matter be adjourned pending informal discussion with the Diocese in the first instance. Councillor Joe Welch also spoke in support of the school, highlighting that funding to progress the Ruthin area review proposals was in place and not reliant on the school's closure. He was unhappy that officers were minded to re-commence consultation on school closure and raised questions regarding the cost of the consultation process. Councillor Dewi Owens also urged Cabinet to take time to reflect, particularly in light of pupil projections, and advocated wider consultation.

The following responses were provided to the issues raised –

- the Minister had been satisfied that the Council had a coherent educational case for the closure of Ysgol Llanbedr and transfer of pupils to Ysgol Borthyn
- critically the Minister was satisfied that the proposal would ensure a fairer and more equitable distribution of funding between mainstream schools in the county
- Denbighshire had been the first local authority to work to the new School Organisation Code and the consultation flaws identified by the Minister had not been raised previously at any other forum
- officers and members did not necessarily agree with the Minister's findings and although judicial review had been considered, it did not constitute best use of time and resources and the option to re-commence consultation had been recommended instead – the costs of consultation had been met within service budget

- informal discussions would take place with the Diocese in addition to the formal 28 day consultation period. Consideration would be given to alternative proposals which addressed the key issues and the Diocese would be invited to present those proposals to members
- the Council was required to tackle surplus places across the whole of Denbighshire and report back thereon to Welsh Government on an annual basis
- assurances were provided that support to the school would not be diminished in the interim period, regardless of the outcome.

Having considered the Minister's letter and issues raised during debate Cabinet was keen to address the school's future as soon as possible and end the period of instability. Cabinet agreed there was a need for formal consultation with the Church in Wales in the first instance and that the outcome of those discussions be reported back to Cabinet for consideration.

RESOLVED that Cabinet –

- (a) *notes the contents of the Ministerial letter attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and*
- (b) *agrees for officers to commence consultation with the Church in Wales on the proposal to close Ysgol Llanbedr and report back to members.*

6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HOUSING ACT WALES 2014

Councillor Hugh Irving presented the report detailing the requirement for Welsh local authorities to determine which groups of homeless persons it would apply the “intentionally homeless” test to following implementation of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 in April 2015.

The definition of intentionally homelessness under the new Act was provided together with details of those groups to which the test could be applied. Whilst Welsh Government's future intention was to remove the intentionality test for all families from around April 2019 officers considered that, for practical reasons, it would not be timely or appropriate to remove it from any individual grouping at this point. Consequently it was recommended that the Council did not exclude any of those eligible groups but continued to apply the test to all of them.

Officers clarified that approval of the recommendation would result in no change to the Council's current policy but would maintain the existing position until Welsh Government removed the test. The test would remain as a support to people rather than a punitive measure. Cabinet discussed with officers the reasons for not removing the intentionality test at this time and officers provided examples of the types of homeless households presented to the authority, application of the intentionality test in practice, and how positive engagement could benefit both individuals and families and provide sustainable tenancies helping mitigate the business risk to landlords. It was noted that intentionality decisions were rare and represented approximately 5% of all decisions taken in 2014. Cabinet recognised the benefits of taking an interim position until the future removal of the test whereby the test was used in a positive way to encourage cooperation and engagement with

households to address underpinning issues and needs, and develop closer working with partner agencies in order to deliver a joined up multi-agency framework for homeless households with unmet support needs. It was also recognised that this approach would likely relieve pressures on other Council services, in particular Adult and Children's Services. The need to take time to establish an appropriate framework for when the test was removed was also highlighted and assurances were provided that a consistent approach was being taken by neighbouring authorities who did not support removal of the test at this time.

The Leader queried the financial implications arising from the recommendations and officers reported that new responsibilities monies was being provided by Welsh Government as part of the wider additional activities bestowed on local authorities arising from the implementation of the Housing Act. It was confirmed that future reports to Cabinet would contain information on the wider financial context.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree that Denbighshire County Council does not exclude any of the groups named under section 2 of the report, but rather continues to apply the "intentionality test" to all of them and publishes its intent to do so in accordance with Welsh Government direction as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

7 HOUSING RENT SETTING & HOUSING REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2015/16

Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill presented the report seeking approval of the proposed rent increase and introduction of service charges, and approval of the Housing Revenue Account Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2015/16. The report also included reference to the Council's exit from the HRAS system in April 2015 and Councillor Hugh Irving was pleased to report on the positive engagement of the four tenant representatives on the HRAS Working Group and their valuable contribution to that process.

Councillor Thompson-Hill guided members through the budget figures which had been calculated taking into account the new rent policy, de-pooling of service charges, mechanism for uplifting rents and the introduction of a fixed service charge where applicable. The Service Charge Officer reported that a variable service charge had been initially recommended but because 90% of tenants were on fixed term annual contracts it had been more appropriate to introduce a fixed term service charge and pass the subsequent savings onto the tenants.

During consideration of the report the following issues were raised –

- Councillor Huw Jones was keen to ensure that the planned review of council garages was undertaken – it was agreed to include the review in the resolution
- it was highlighted that some council garages were not being used appropriately and officers provided assurances that action would be taken against those using council garages against terms of tenancy
- an explanation was provided regarding the application of the criteria for target rents with steps being taken to gradually increase rents in order to meet Welsh Government target rent figures for each separate property by 2015/16

- there was some dissatisfaction about the Welsh Government's calculation of average rents which did not take into account prosperity within different areas but it was accepted that this element was outside of the Council's control
- members were pleased to note that an element of new build had been factored into the Housing Stock Business Plan which would provide good quality accommodation for Denbighshire residents – the need to publicise this issue as a good news story was reiterated
- officers confirmed there was no reliance on Right to Buy sales as a funding source for the Housing Stock Business Plan with this element having significantly reduced over the years to just one sale forecast per annum.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2015/16 (Appendix 1 to the report) and the Housing Stock Business Plan (Appendix 2 to the report) be adopted;*
- (b) *rents for Council dwellings be increased in accordance with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to an average weekly rent of £74.93 with effect from Monday 6 April 2015;*
- (c) *rents for Council garages be increased in line with the increase in rents for Council dwellings;*
- (d) *that fixed average service charges of £1.99 per week are introduced where applicable in line with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, and*
- (e) *a review of garage sites be undertaken in 2015/16 as part of the Asset Management Strategy, the outcomes of the review to be reported back to Cabinet when it is completed and by no later than 31 December 2015 in any event.*

At this juncture (11.40 a.m.) the meeting adjourned for a refreshment break.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STRATEGIC INVESTMENT GROUP

Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill presented the report seeking Cabinet's support of projects identified for inclusion in the 2015/16 Capital Plan as recommended by the Strategic Investment Group (SIG) and detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor Thompson-Hill guided members through the report and elaborated upon funding available for capital investment to one-off projects and block allocations for on-going programmes of work. Reference was made to the work of the SIG in reviewing bids for allocations together with issues that arose during that process and a summary of the recommendations. Due to insufficient capital funding being available to cover all projects a number of pre-allocations from future capital receipts had been recommended.

Questions were raised regarding the £2m street lighting replacement programme and it was explained that in order to meet the requirement to submit applications for Government Salix funding on an annual basis it was proposed that an annual loan

of approximately £335k be taken out each year over six years on a rolling basis repayable out of the savings made from the previous year. The programme involved replacing existing lanterns with new LEA lanterns which should provide significant savings on energy and maintenance costs. Councillor Bill Cowie reported upon the poor lighting at the Pelican Crossing in St. Asaph (A525) since LEA street lighting had been installed and asked that the matter be investigated before consideration of the proposal at full Council. Councillor Thompson-Hill agreed to liaise with Councillor David Smith, Lead Member for Public Realm directly in that regard. He also responded to further questions regarding carbon emissions confirming that monitoring of the council's buildings was undertaken in that regard and energy efficient schemes had been introduced in some areas.

The Leader felt that the process of reviewing bids and allocating capital was robust but asked that consideration be given how to measure value for money and impact of capital investment in future years. Councillor Thompson-Hill agreed with that suggestion – he also agreed to provide further details regarding membership of the SIG in future reports and confirmed that meetings were generally well attended.

RESOLVED that the projects detailed in Appendix 1 to the report for inclusion in the 2015/16 Capital Plan be supported and recommended to full Council.

9 FINANCE REPORT

Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill presented the report detailing the latest financial position and progress against the agreed budget strategy. He provided a summary of the Council's financial position as follows –

- a net under spend on the revenue budget of £639k was forecast for service and corporate budgets
- savings of £7.1m were agreed as part of the budget and at this stage 90% had been achieved with 10% in progress
- highlighted other key variances from budgets or savings targets relating to individual service areas, and
- a general update on the Housing Revenue Account, Housing Capital Plan and the Capital Plan (including the Corporate Plan element).

Cabinet was also asked to approve the transfer of £100k funding to a reserve to fund school broadband enhancements in 2015/16.

Discussion focused on the following –

- the Corporate Director Economic and Community Ambition responded to questions regarding Rhyl Harbour Development confirming it had a good uptake during its first year – a more detailed review would be undertaken following its first full year of operation
- concerns were raised regarding Welsh Government's budgetary decisions whereby various grants were being awarded (and in one case removed) at such a late stage in the financial year that it caused difficulties for Councils planning their financial strategies and funding plans – particular reference was made to Welsh Government's late decision to award Councils £1.5m to spend on play

equipment by the end of March 2015 whilst simultaneously imposing significant budget cuts – it was considered that if funding was available it should be allocated beforehand to help shield Councils against the worse cuts

- concerns were also raised regarding the future of TAITH as much of the responsibility of that regional board had been disbanded by the Welsh Government – whilst plans could be made on a regional basis, local authorities would need to bid for funding individually and not on a coherent basis. Councillor Eryl Williams stated that the regional model had worked effectively and discontinuing that work was a retrograde step and out of line with the Welsh Government's vision for regional collaboration – he asked that the matter be raised directly with the Welsh Government
- members also reiterated previous concerns raised over the loss of income from the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency and impact on the revenue budget
- it was noted that changes approved in respect of the School Transport Service would not impact immediately but would be largely resolved long term
- updates on the major capital projects were provided and responses given to questions raised on individual projects. Councillor Eryl Williams felt there would be merit in providing pictures of the major projects at full Council.

RESOLVED that Cabinet –

- (a) notes the budgets set for 2014/15 and progress against the agreed budget strategy;
- (b) approves the transfer of £100k funding to a reserve to fund school broadband enhancements in 2015/16, and
- (c) a letter be sent to the Welsh Government regarding the Cabinet's concerns in respect of the Minister's proposals in relation to TAITH.

10 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Hugh Evans presented the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for consideration. Members noted that a report on the Long Term Strategy for the Agricultural Estate would be added to the work programme for March.

RESOLVED that Cabinet's Forward Work Programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.45 p.m.

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Report To:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	24th March 2015
Lead Member / Officer:	Councillor Eryl Williams, Lead Member for Education
Report Author:	Head of Customers and Education Support
Title:	Approval of Final Business Case for Ysgol Glan Clwyd Redevelopment

1. What is the report about?

The report seeks to inform the Cabinet of the current position with regard to the Council's submission of the Final Business Case for Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St Asaph to the Welsh Government.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Welsh Government has previously approved the Strategic Outline Case (May 2013) and Outline Business Case (October 2013) for this project. Approval is now required for the Final Business Case to be considered for approval by Welsh Government.

3. What are the Recommendations?

To recommend to Council approval of the Final Business Case for Ysgol Glan Clwyd.

4. Report details.

- 4.1 The Council's Corporate Plan details the Council's ambition to deliver significant investment in the Council's School Building's portfolio between 2012-17. A significant element of this work will be the delivery of the Band A projects for the 21st Century Schools Programme.

21st Century Schools Programme

The Welsh Government provided approval in principal for £36.7m as their 50% contribution towards the 21st Century Schools Programme which includes 5 projects in December 2011. Subsequent to this the Welsh Government have worked with all local authorities to ascertain how the overall £1.2 billion investment across Wales can be allocated into deliverable workstreams for individual local authorities.

All projects within the 21st Century Schools Programme (21st CSP) will be required to follow the guidance for Business Case approvals as defined in the

HM Treasury Model. For projects below £5m a Business Justification Case will require approval whilst for projects above £5m approval of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC), Outline Business Case (OBC) and Full Business Case (FBC) will be required.

- 4.2 The Ysgol Glan Clwyd project will provide an extended and refurbished school building to meet the growing demand for Welsh Medium Education in the north of the County.

Cabinet gave approval in July 2013 for approximately £1.0m to fund Phases 1 & 2 (Concept and Detailed Design) works which would enable the project to be progressed to a stage where approval could be sought for the full business case and contractors proposals received.

In August 2014 Willmott Dixon were appointed as the lead contractor following a mini competition amongst the six contractors appointed to the relevant value band for the North Wales Construction Framework. They have been engaged to produce the design stages of the school with appropriate break clauses prior to the construction stage.

The Stage C Design Report was submitted by Willmott Dixon to Denbighshire in late January 2015 and is a key milestone document which summarises the feasibility undertaken over past 4 months.

The key objectives are:

- Give a comprehensive overview of the feasibility undertaken;
- Demonstrate technical proficiency appropriate to the design of the building and site;
- Present costing information which demonstrates that the school can be delivered to an agreed budget;
- Demonstrate an achievable master programme for the project which reflects possible outcomes of the planning process;
- Highlight any risks which remain with the project and show these can be mitigated and managed through the next stages of the project;
- Present a level of information on the feasibility to receive successful Denbighshire / Welsh Government funding approval and to enable the authority to move forward to the detailed stages of the project.

- 4.3 The overall cost for the project within the Stage C report was £14,175,521. This was higher than the previously estimated sum of £13,900,000 for the Willmott Dixon element of the project. An element of this is as a consequence of additional surveys required and a decision to retain the existing science block at the school, which was proposed for demolition, for an additional educational purpose. In approving the Stage C report, Denbighshire has expressed clearly its view that the costs will be reduced by approximately £80,000 prior to approval of the next stage of the project. The overall cost for the project remains at £15,900,000 which includes Denbighshire costs (client and design fees) and Client contingency sums.

- 4.4 The Final Business Case as attached is to seek approximately 47% funding from the Welsh Government to fund the project. This will mean that a sum of £8,410,060 will be required to be provided by Denbighshire. This balance between WG and DCC funding will enable the funding for the 4 Community School projects within 21st Century Schools (Rhyl New School, Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy and Bodnant Community School, together with Ysgol Glan Clwyd) to be equal at 50/50. This sum is covered within the overall Corporate Plan and Capital Plan as part of the overall 21st Century Schools Programme funding.
- 4.5 The Final Business Case will be submitted to Welsh Government by mid-March 2015 on the proviso that formal approval from Cabinet and Council will be sought on 24th March and 14th April 2015, prior to final determination by the Welsh Government Capital Panel on the 28th April 2015. It is expected a final decision would be made by the Minister for Education in May 2015.
- 4.6 The following draft timescales are anticipated for progression of the project:-

Milestone activity	Date
Submit Business Case to WG	Mar 2015
Assessment of Business Case by WG	Apr 2015
Completion of Phase 2 – Detailed Design	July 2015
Contract Award	Oct 2015
Phase 3 – Construction	Nov 2015 – Aug 2017
Final Handover	Aug 2017

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

The development of the 21st Century Schools Programme and the wider Modernising Education Programme will be a factor in ensuring that the Council meets its aspiration to improve performance in education and the quality of our school buildings as documented within the Council's 2012 – 2017 Corporate Plan. The Programme will also assist the Priority of Developing the Local Economy via the investment of capital expenditure towards improving the quality of school buildings.

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

The costs arising from the Ysgol Glan Clwyd project will be approximately £15.9m. The approval of the Final Business Case will enable a contract to be agreed with the Welsh Government to enable the authority to secure approximately 47% of the match funding of the target cost. The final decision to engage Willmott Dixon for the construction stage will be made by Cabinet.

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.

The equality impact assessment is of the view that the proposal will have a positive impact of children and young people who share protected characteristics. The impact will be monitored during the lifetime of the project. One of the key benefits of the project will be to resolve significant issues currently on site with numerous levels changes that render large areas of the current buildings inaccessible.

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

There has been extensive consultation with the school community at Ysgol Glan Clwyd in the development of the project to date. This has included a number of neighbourhood consultation meetings to discuss the emerging designs for the new school buildings. There has also been engagement with the Elwy Member Area Group and St Asaph City Council on the progression of the project.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

This is a key strategic project both in 21st Century Schools and the Council's corporate plan. The council has already committed around £1.0m to the initial works which have led to this proposal. There is sufficient capital funding available to deliver the project at the projected cost.

This is the second largest capital project ever undertaken by the Council and as such carries financial risk. Good project management is therefore key to this and the project must be carefully monitored.

At each stage the Council must be convinced that each project represents value for money and that the programme overall is affordable and deliverable. At this stage in the programme it is deliverable and affordable.

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

Should the project fail to receive approval there is a risk that the work undertaken to date will not be progressed any further. The approval of the Strategic Outline Case for this project in May 2013 and Outline Business Case in October 2013 could be seen to lessen the risk of the project failing to receive final approval from the Welsh Government. To mitigate this there has been regular discussions with the Welsh Government on the progression of the Ysgol Glan Clwyd project.

The overall project is being managed by an experienced Project Manager with clear arrangements for the management of risk during the project.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 2 Local Government Act 2000 / Section 111 Local Government Act 1972

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(500 words maximum)

This Full Business Case (FBC) presents a proposal to extend, remodel and refurbish the County's existing Welsh medium secondary school, Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St Asaph to create a school with a capacity of 1250 via delivery of the identified 'preferred option'.

The school as of March 2014 had 968 pupils and is close to its current capacity of 1,000 pupils. The Council in partnership with the Welsh Government has increased the capacity in the Welsh Medium Primary schools which serve Ysgol Glan Clwyd. Current pupil forecasts suggest that the pupil numbers at the school will increase to 1,140 by March 2020. Without this project the Council will be unable to meet the growing demand for Welsh Medium education in the secondary sector.

This will address the following:

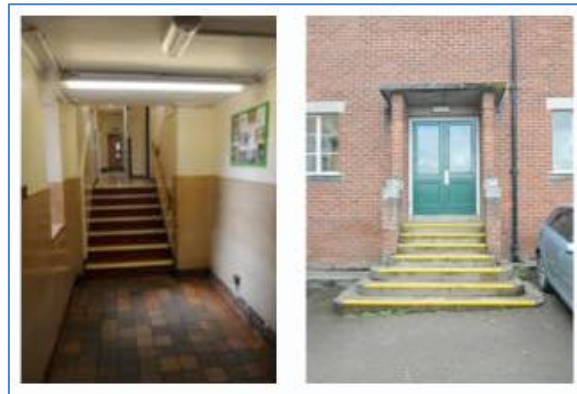
- Contribution to raising educational attainment;
- Improving condition – *raise retained School buildings to Condition Category B and any new build to Condition Category A plus elimination of maintenance backlog;*
- Improving suitability – *appropriateness of accommodation to enable delivery of 21st Century accommodation for forecast numbers of pupils on roll up to 1250 places;*
- Better matching of demand for and supply of pupil places – *provision of 1250 places to meet forecast increase in Welsh Medium demand in region, removal of all temporary accommodation;*
- Support delivery of other services – *improve facilities and access to leisure offer and wider community;*
- Quality of Design – *provide an aspirational environment suitable and flexible for delivery of 21st Century education.*

The 'preferred' option, following a re-assessment of the short list is a variation on the Option 3 presented at OBC stage. This new Option 3 still being a refurbishment, partial replacement & extension but focused on a slightly larger

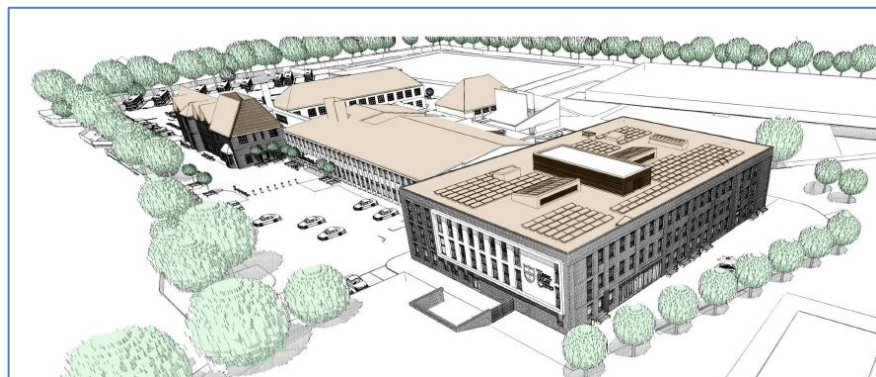
proportion of demolition and greater new build to the southern part of the school site.

The total cost of this preferred option is £15.9 million and this investment is being sought to deliver the 'preferred' option over the period 2014-2018.

Current School:



Proposed Design:



STRATEGIC CASE

(1000 Words Maximum)

The overall Strategic Case as described in detail within the Outline Business Case (OBC) remains valid.

To reconfirm in line with the detail in the OBC, satisfying the potential scope for this investment will deliver the following high-level programme wide strategic benefits:

1. **Investment Objective 1:** Learning environments for children and young people aged from 3 to 19 that will enable successful implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes;
2. **Investment Objective 2:** Greater economy through better use of resources to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the education estate and public provision;
3. **Investment Objective 3:** A sustainable education system with all schools meeting a 21st Century Schools Standard, and reducing recurrent costs and carbon footprint.

Guided by these overarching strategic objectives, a number of benefits criteria have been developed for the project against which to assess the options developed to address the business need. Based on an appraisal of the options available against these criteria, a 'preferred' option is proposed that will best contribute to delivering against these criteria, with the appraisal also including a value for money assessment to moderate the appraisal from an affordability perspective plus and initial assessment of risk attached to each option.

In summary the benefits criteria areas include:

- Raising attainment
- Support service delivery
- Building condition
- Suitability
- Matching demand / supply of places
- Design

The criteria have been used to identify specific measurable benefits against which the preferred solution can be assessed.

Business strategies

The Council has a 5 year Corporate Plan, approved by elected members in October 2012, which identifies 7 priority areas for Council activity and action and contextualises national and regional policy developments for Denbighshire.

Specifically within this plan there is a priority work stream for:-

- Improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings

This priority includes the following intended outcomes:-

- We will invest significantly to improve school buildings and facilities and provide improved learning environments for pupils
- We will continue to review school provision across the county to ensure that we provide the right number of school places, of the right type, in the right location. Specifically we aim to deliver:
 - A brand new high school for Rhyl
 - Extension and remodelling of Ysgol Glan Clwyd
 - Bodnant Community School extension as a single site school
 - A new area school in Cynwyd
 - A new faith-based school in the north of the county

The Corporate Plan states that the programme will be funded through the use of reserves, balances and by selling assets with the rest being generated through prudential borrowing. Further detail is contained within the Financial Case of this FBC. The affordability of this plan has been reconfirmed by Councillors recently as part of the overall budget setting process and Council on the 3rd February 2015 confirmed its commitment "that the delivery of the Corporate Plan takes priority in future budget setting rounds."

Other organisational strategies

These corporate priorities are further supported by service delivery plans and the establishment of a number of Corporate Programmes. These include:

- Economic Ambition
- Modernisation

which are supplemented by:

- Modernising Education (Inc. 21st Century Schools Programme)

Of particular relevance to this proposed project is the 21st Century Schools Programme. The Council believes that the Programme, through effectively addressing issues around surplus and deficit places, will lead to the reduction in the number of schools maintained whilst focusing resources on remaining schools to provide an estate that is modern, efficient and effective for delivery of a modern curriculum. In addition, delivery of projects within the 21st Century Schools Programme will also contribute to the development of the Economic Ambition programme via the investment in the economy and the development of appropriate community benefits.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

The Council recognises the importance of bilingualism in 21st Century Wales and has adopted a long term aspiration that all children and young people in the County will leave full-time education being competent and confident in using both Welsh and English languages. The Council recognises that this is a long term aspirational aim that will not be achieved for a number of years.

Since the submission of the Council's Outline Business Case the investment projects as part of the Tranche 3 21st Century Schools transitional funding at two of the main Primary feeder schools to Ysgol Glan Clwyd have been completed. This has allowed the increased demand in Welsh Medium education in the primary sector to be met and this now needs to be reflected in the Secondary Sector.

The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which covers the period 2014 – 17 reaffirms the Council's commitment to increasing the number of pupils

receiving their education through the medium of Welsh. In particular it includes actions to “increase the percentage of learners aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh” to which this project will assist those pupils who currently receive Welsh medium primary education and will continue to do so in the secondary sector.

ECONOMIC CASE

(500 Words Maximum)

The critical success factors, as identified and detailed in the OBC remain valid.

The short list of options as detailed in the OBC are summarised below:

Option Reference	Summary Description	Option Type
1	Do minimum – increase space provision via modular units	Comparator
2	Refurbishment, partial replacement & extension of Ysgol Glan Clwyd – Courtyard	Preferred
3	Refurbishment, partial replacement & extension of Ysgol Glan Clwyd – Rear block	Less Ambitious
4	New build Ysgol Glan Clwyd	More Ambitious

Following appointment of a contractor in August 2014 based on an Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) as described in the Commercial Case of this FBC, key stakeholders were re-engaged and an exercise undertaken to challenge the assessment of the short listed options originally developed as part of the initial feasibility work in 2010 and detailed in the OBC.

This re-assessment was undertaken to challenge the assumptions made when developing the original OBC short list; these assumptions and areas of challenge included:

- Practicality
- Buildability
- Value for money – in light of new construction approaches
- Latest construction market – costs
- Costs of options – figures used for OBC were based on Cost Plans originally developed in 2010 (albeit they included price uplift forecast)
- Areas of inefficiency in original short listed options

The proposed preferred solution was reviewed and it was considered that this project was unaffordable within the initial allocation for the project without compromising many of the elements which would deliver key benefits for the project.

This re-assessment exercise led to the development of an alternative approach to the original Option 3 as presented in the OBC. This approach has allowed for a revised approach to be taken to the delivery of the project which ensures that the key benefits can be delivered within the existing funding envelope for the project.

This new Option 3 still being a refurbishment, partial replacement & extension but focused on a slightly larger proportion of demolition and greater new build to the southern part of the school site – 47% new build against 40% new build with the OBC preferred option.

A workshop was held at the school on October 08th 2014 with key stakeholders to re-appraise the original OBC short list and the new Option 3 against the critical success factors.

Option 3, the new preferred option, delivers better value for money based on the revised options appraisal. It also offers potential for a reduced overall delivery timescale of approximately 6-8 weeks on the construction phase and a reduction in the number of those construction phases required compared to the original OBC preferred option. The initial plan included works being undertaken across 5 phases, the revised plan should be completed in 2 distinct phases. Overall this revised approach will reduce the level of disruption to an operational school and subsequently reduce the potential negative impact on learning.

Given the introduction of this new Option 3, now the 'preferred' option, the Economic Appraisals detailed in the OBC were revisited and updated to reflect the re-assessment exercise findings. This exercise confirmed that the new Option 3 was indeed the 'preferred' option when appraisal included other issues on cost, NPC, benefit, cost per benefit point and risk.

The short list of options as finalised, including identification of the FBC preferred option, are summarised below:

Option Reference	Summary Description	Option Type
1	Do minimum – increase space provision via modular units	Comparator
2	Refurbishment, partial replacement & extension of Ysgol Glan Clwyd – Courtyard	Preferred at OBC
3	Refurbishment, partial replacement & extension of Ysgol Glan Clwyd – Southern block	Preferred at FBC
4	New build Ysgol Glan Clwyd	More Ambitious

COMMERCIAL CASE

(1500 Words Maximum)

Method of procurement

Procurement for the project was via the North Wales Schools and Public Buildings Contractor Framework (NWSBPCF). This Framework was officially launched in April 2014 and sets out clear call off procedures via mini-tender exercises for Authorities to follow in procuring teams for specific projects. The Framework was developed and set up following an OJEU compliant procurement exercise that included PQQ and ITT stages to procure a limited number of main contractors to a set number of Lots under the Framework.

Given the anticipated project construction value of £13.9M, the project falls within Lot 2 of the Framework for projects valued between £7.5M and £15M.

Under the guidelines set out within the Framework for call off via mini-tender exercises for individual projects a number of procurement approaches are possible ranging from Early Contractor Involvement (ECI), through degrees of Design & Build to Full Design or Novation.

An appraisal of these options was undertaken based on an assessment of a number of priorities that included: complexity, quality, risk, management and price certainty. These priorities were discussed at a workshop held with key stakeholders, including the school in July 2013. The conclusion reached given the specific nature, scale and ambition for the project was to adopt an ECI approach with a Target Cost. A report was presented to the Modernising Education Board in October 2013 recommending an ECI approach for this project; this recommendation was adopted.

Based on the decision to proceed on an ECI / Target Cost approach, a mini-tender was prepared, using the guidelines set out in the Framework and issued on May 30th 2014 to all 6 contractors in Lot 2 of the Framework. This mini-tender was structured based on a 70% Quality / 30% Price ratio. Within this ratio a number of Quality Questions were posed and a Cost question in reference to a defined Scope of Services. Individual Quality Questions were also weighted based on their relative importance. In addition, an explicit and clear Evaluation

Criteria document was issued to the Contractors on Lot 2 to accompany the mini-tender to ensure the evaluation process was clear and transparent.

The mini-tender submissions, returned on July 25th 2014, were scored by an evaluation panel according to the guidance in the Evaluation Criteria issued. In addition, all bidders were invited to interview to present their written responses and answer any questions or clarifications that arose out of their written responses.

The project, as expressed within the mini-tender has been structured in phases; Phase 1 – Feasibility, Phase 2 – Detailed Design & Target Cost preparation and Phase 3 – Construction. The forms of contract proposed for the project are from the NEC 3 suite of contracts. An NEC 3 Professional Services Contract (PSC) is being used for Phases 1 & 2 and an NEC 3 Option C proposed for Stage 3. A break point option is retained at the end of Stage 2 – Detailed Design & Target Cost Preparation before contractual commitment to proceed to Stage 3 – Construction. It is also worth noting that there is still an option, before the end of Stage 2, in discussion with the appointed contractor, to switch NEC 3 options from C to another NEC 3 option for Stage 3 if this is deemed of mutual benefit based on the balance or risks remaining at that stage.

The above mini-tender process and evaluation exercise was facilitated via the Proactis portal and guided by the County's Procurement Service.

As a result of the evaluation of the written tender responses with moderation at interview, a successful contractor, in this case Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd. was notified of their success via formal correspondence on August 27th 2014.

Required services

The required products and services in relation to the preferred way forward were defined briefly as follows:

- Appointment of a lead contractor (& design team) with:
 - A successful recent track record of designing and constructing innovative secondary schools
 - Experience of using 'partnering-ethos' arrangements

- Ability to provide and lead a team of appropriate technical specialists (Education consultants, ICT and Energy specialists, et al.)
- Understanding of the emerging education and economic trends in Wales and locally in Denbighshire
- A sound reputation for maximising use of local suppliers within the construction supply chain
- A history of delivering significant community benefits through their construction ventures
- Technical ability to lead a complex design and build project to replace the existing school buildings including design, construction, demolition and reinstatement/re-landscaping works

In addition to the above, a specific Scope of Services was included in the draft contract documents that were issued with the mini-tender specifying the services required for Phases 1 & 2 of the project.

Negotiated deal and contractual arrangements

As set out in the section above, the project will use the NEC suite of contracts. To undertake Phase 1 & 2 of the project an NEC Professional Services Contract is being let. At the end of Phase 2, subject to final approval of the Full Business Case, the intention will be to let an NEC Option C Engineering and Construction Contract for delivery of Phase 3 – Construction however as noted above there remains the option, via agreement with the Contractor, to switch to another NEC Option e.g. Option A.

The final decision to enter into a formal contract for Phase 3 is scheduled to be taken by Denbighshire's Cabinet in September 2015 in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. The decision will be made following an assessment of the submitted works information by the Contractor.

Financial implications of deal

Under the proposed contractual arrangements and procurement approach the Contractor has been engaged based on a Target Cost. The main contractor will be responsible for undertaking both the design and construction work on the

project, for a negotiated target cost. The target cost is developed in conjunction with the clients cost advisors using an open book and transparent approach. The target cost should represent the actual cost of the construction work to the main contractor which will include the associated add-ons for overheads, profit etc.

There is also a pain / gain incentive proposed within the Phase 3 contract arrangements. At present within the draft Phase 3 contract there is an incentive based on the following share range:

- Less than 100% (under Target Cost) - Contractor share 50% / Client share 50%
- 100% (on Target Cost) – Contractor share 0% / Client share 0%
- Greater than 100% - (over Target Cost) - Contractor share 100% / Client share 0%

Risk transfer arrangements

The general principle is that risks should be passed to 'the party best able to manage them', subject to value for money. The general approach will be guided by these main principles:

- a 'pain/gain' model to offset risk to the Council
- development of target cost for the project; firming of prices
- an insight into their experience and perceptions of 'partnering'

The final allocation of risk within the project is being determined as part of the negotiation with the successful contractor as the project is developing. This involves discussions via dedicated Risk Workshops between Denbighshire and Willmott Dixon whereby project risks are allocated to the party best able to manage them and allocation of risk sums to deal with any residual risks remaining. Initial Risk Workshops have been undertaken in the lead up to Stage C of the design process. As the project continues to develop, risks will be under constant review with the ownership, likelihood, impact and potential cost associated reviewed; it is anticipated that the level of risk will reduce as the design process progresses.

Community Benefits

As part of the mini-competition exercise the commitment of the Contractor to Community Benefits was rigorously examined. In particular the Contractors were required to outline how they would maximise potential community benefits as part of this project. The Contractors proposals included targeting spending of £7million within a 30 mile radius of the school and a project target of 1,052 weeks of activities as opposed to the minimum requirement via the framework of 1,014 weeks of activities.

The progression of these community benefits will be measured during the project in accordance with the toolkit and reported on annually to the Welsh Government. In addition, as the design phase of the project develops Denbighshire County Council will enter into discussions on the principle of adopting a Project Bank Account approach with a view to assisting and supporting the supply chain where possible.

FINANCIAL CASE

(1000 Words Maximum)

Funding Sources

In July 2013, a report was submitted to Denbighshire's Cabinet recommending approval of £1.0M from the county's own resources to demonstrate the commitment to taking the project forward through detailed design. This recommendation was approved at Cabinet with the £1.0M being included in the Corporate Plan matrix. This has enabled Phases 1 and 2 to progress in parallel with the Welsh Government Business Case process so as to inform the business case development in a timely manner and place the project in a good position to proceed without delay within the County's overall 21st Century Schools Band A Programme given formal approval from Welsh Government.

The payment stream for the capital to fund the preferred option (Option 3) will see 47.1% of the funding coming from the WG, the remaining 52.9% coming from DCC. This will enable a balance to be made across the 21st Century Schools Programme for approved projects to date at 50/50. Any revenue implications will be dealt with once the new project is in place via the standard school budget formula setting process.

Summary spend profile and funding sources:

	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	TOTALS
Total	£5,000	£246,447	£3,595,469	£9,407,184	£2,404,917	£240,983	£15,900,000
WG			£2,521,998	£4,195,377	£531,582	£240,983	£7,489,940
DCC	£5,000	£246,447	£1,073,471	£5,211,807	£1,873,335		£8,410,060

NOTE: the above is based on the current best understanding of the preconstruction and construction programme at Stage C in the design process and may be reviewed as the design process moves forward.

The capital cost of the project is £15,900,000 over the expected lifetime of the project. A submission to access 47.1% of the project value is being made to WG with the remaining funding coming as contribution from Denbighshire. This approach was outlined in the SOP and has been agreed at Council.

The detail on the proposed method of delivery for the contribution from Denbighshire was included within the latest Capital Plan that formed part of the latest Corporate Plan that was agreed at Council on 03th February 2015. The funding provided by the authority will be found from reserves, balances and by selling assets with the rest being generated through prudential borrowing.

This Full Business Case was presented to Denbighshire's Strategic Investment Group on the 17th February 2015. The Group reviewed the business case, financial affordability and to ensure it aligned with the approved Council Capital Plan. The Group recommended its approval to the Council's Cabinet and Council. Both Cabinet and Council are scheduled to consider and approve the Business Case in March / April 2015 prior to final determination of this Business Case by the Welsh Government in April 2015.

Preferred Option Costs

The detailed costs associated with the construction element of the preferred option have been developed as part of progressing Phase 1 – Outline Design of the project, equivalent to the RIBA Stage C Report for the project.

The proposed capital expenditure will increase the overall value of the Council's asset estate by replacing aged buildings with new structures. Consequently, the balance sheet will show an increase in total asset value.

MANAGEMENT CASE

(1000 Words Maximum)

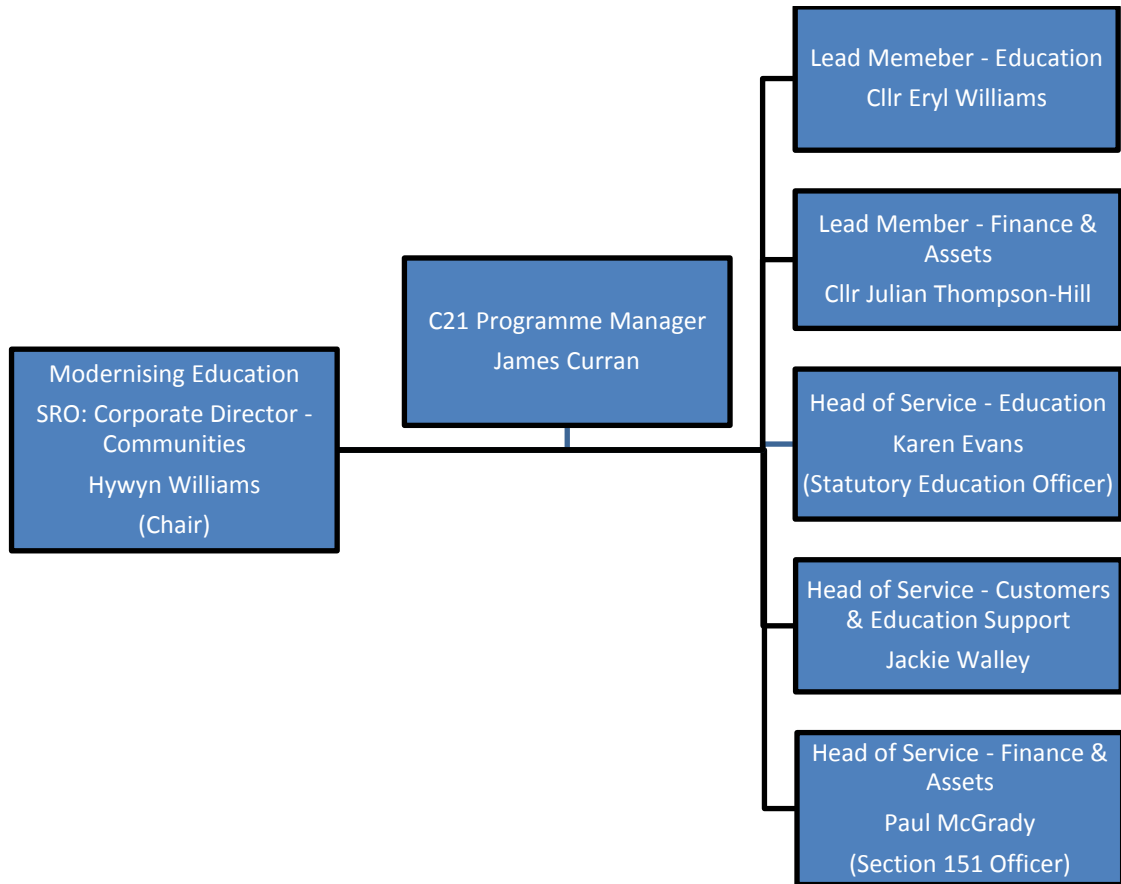
Programme Management

The scheme is an integral part of the Denbighshire's 21st Century Schools Programme which comprises a portfolio of projects through which Denbighshire will deliver the necessary change to ensure that the strategic aims of the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme are fully met. Denbighshire's Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) was agreed by the Welsh Government (WG) in December 2011.

The Project Management arrangements sit within the context of Corporate Programme Management. DCC's Programme Management strategy ensures that all project development and delivery is undertaken in concert with the Council's strategic vision and politically supported aspirations and priorities. The key principles of DCC's approach to Programme Management include:

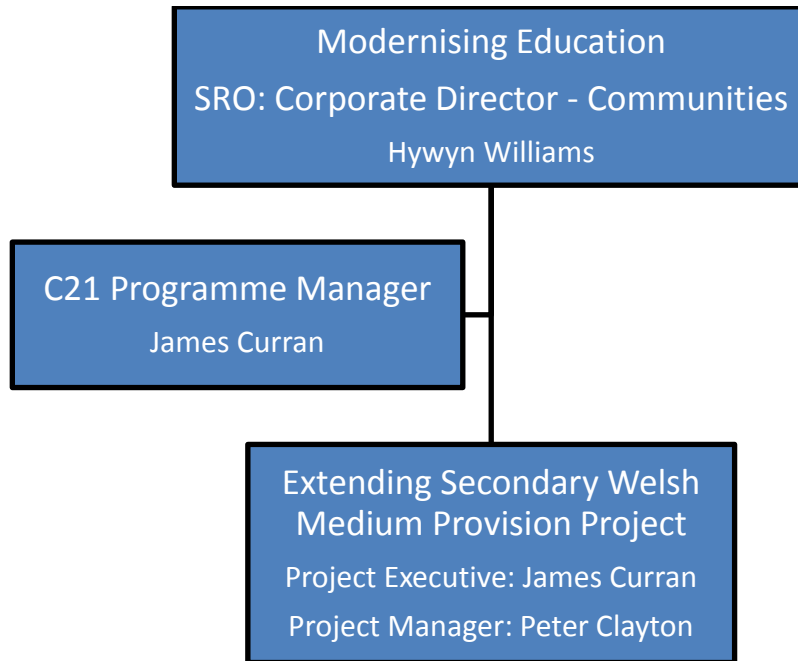
- Programme ownership at Corporate Executive level by a nominated Senior Responsible Owner
- A Programme Board with clearly defined Terms of Reference defining its:
 - Purpose
 - Scope
 - Remit
 - Membership
 - Tenure
- Programme Board membership comprising relevant Cabinet Members, Executive Officers and Service Heads
- A clear focus at strategic, corporate level on (and ultimate responsibility for) the realisation of identified Programme Outcomes and the Council's visions and priorities

The Councils' Modernising Education strategy is governed via the Modernising Education Programme Board. This Board has responsibility to oversee the 21st Century Schools Programme and the key projects therein. The Programme reporting responsibilities at Modernising Education Board level are shown below:



Modernising Education Programme Board

The operational link between Programmes and Projects is made by Executive Officers / Heads of Service / Programme Manager from the Programme Board being nominated Project Sponsors. The actual operational (Service) Programme reporting responsibilities for projects and strand activity are:



Programme – Project Link

Project Management

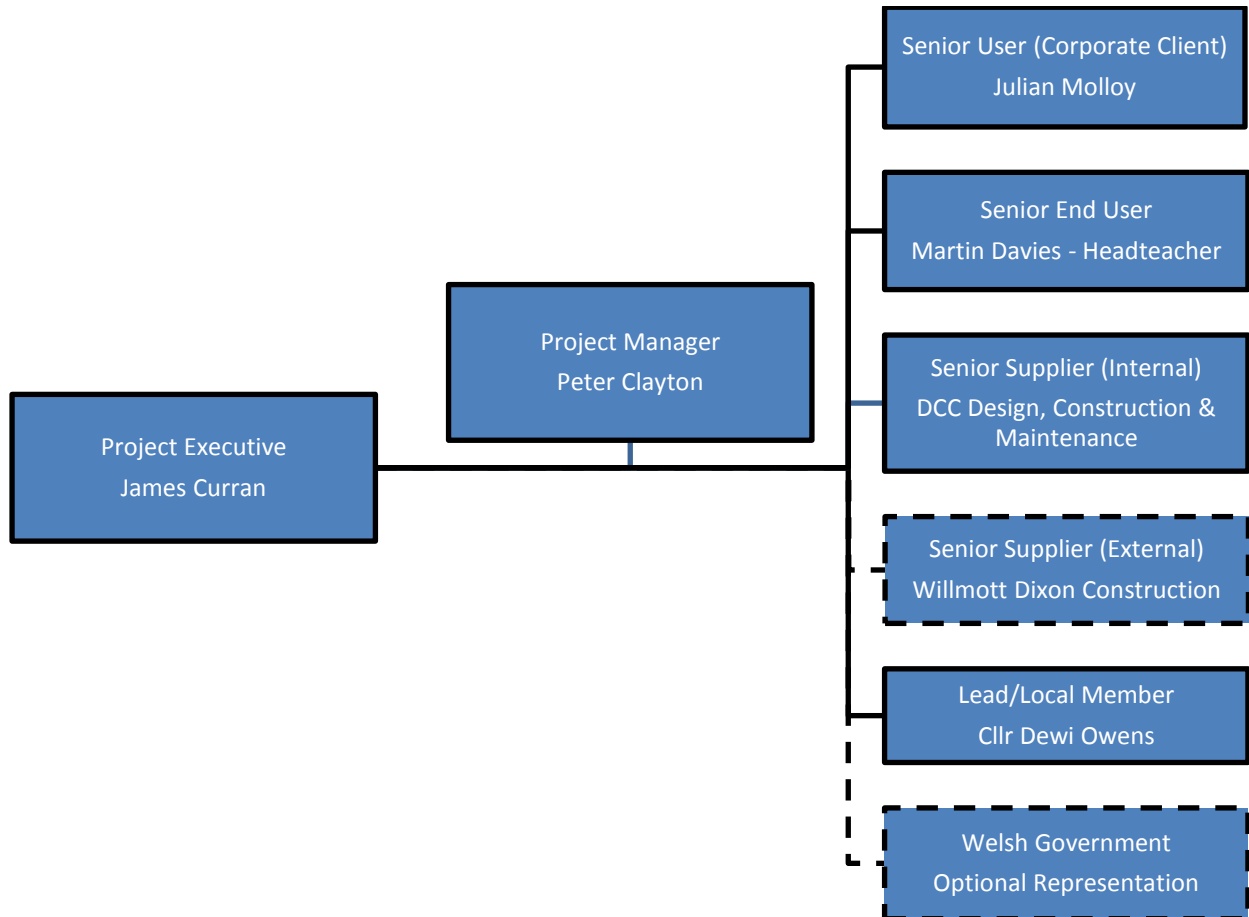
Denbighshire County Council has developed and implemented a corporate project management methodology, based on PRINCE 2, which ensures that projects are properly led, planned, resourced, monitored and controlled. The methodology has a prescribed structure of governance, structure and reporting for projects tailored according to magnitude, scope and complexity to enable successful and efficient project delivery.

A Project Board has been established to oversee the development and progress of the project. The Project Team reports to, and advises the Project Board and is responsible for the development, planning and delivery of the project. The membership of the team is dynamic and evolves over time with some roles increasing or diminishing in profile as the project progresses through its sequential stages. The team is led and coordinated by the Project Manager.

Similarly to the Programme Board, the Project Board is supported as appropriate by advisers in key areas. Where external advisers are to work on projects

consideration will be given to the role of local authority managers to supervise such work and provide line management as appropriate.

The outline reporting arrangements for the project are as indicated below:



Ysgol Glan Clwyd Project Board

It is the intention for the Project Board to meet at key milestones during the project development and delivery where key stage sign off is required before progress to the next stage; this will include at design Stage C and Stage D sign off and Pre-contract. Additional Boards may be called as and when required.

The role of Project Executive will be filled by James Curran as C21 Programme Manager.

The role of Project Manager will be filled by Peter Clayton.

The School will be represented by the Head Teacher, Martin Davies.

Further specialist roles & advice will be provided by DCC internal Design, Construction & Maintenance Department covering areas including design advice, CDMC, QS and Contract Administration.

Local political representation will be via the local elected Member for the area where the school is located, in this case currently Cllr Dewi Owens.

The External Senior Supplier, as described in the Commercial Section, will be Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd (and their design team) and they will be represented and play a role in the Project Board arrangements as required.

There is also included the option for Welsh Government representation at the Project Board as deemed required.

Key milestones

The list below details the key milestones within the design process and key approval and review stages anticipated:

Milestones					Actions Help	
Title	Start Date	End Date	Percentage Complete	Active		
▼ PR000247 Extending Secondary Welsh Medium Provision - Ysgol Glan Clwyd Extension & Refurbishment						
00001 Submit OBC to WG	11/09/2013	11/09/2013	100%	No	Actions	
00002 WG OBC Assessment Panel	17/10/2013	17/10/2013	100%	No	Actions	
00003 Contractors Framework Finalised	04/11/2013	30/04/2014	100%	No	Actions	
00004 Project Team Established - this includes appointment of consultants	01/05/2014	17/10/2014	100%	No	Actions	
00005 Phase 1 - Feasibility	19/09/2014	16/01/2015	100%	No	Actions	
00011 Phase 1 - Output Approval - via Project Board	16/01/2015	23/01/2015	100%	No	Actions	
00014 Prepare Full Business Case	19/09/2014	13/02/2015	100%	Yes	Actions	
00015 Submit FBC to SIG - targeting a SIG Feb 17 2015	13/02/2015	17/02/2015	100%	Yes	Actions	
00016 Submit FBC to WG (pending approval at Cabinet & Full Council)	06/03/2015	06/03/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00017 Submit Report & FBC to Cabinet for Cabinet Meeting on 24 Mar 2015	10/03/2015	10/03/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00018 Submit Report & FBC to Full Council on 14 April 2015	31/03/2015	31/03/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00010 Stage D Output Report	02/04/2015	02/04/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00019 Anticipated WG Panel Assessment Date to approve FBC	28/04/2015	28/04/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00012 Stage D Output - Approval - via Project Board	07/04/2015	01/05/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00009 Phase 2 - Detailed Design & Target Cost Preparation	07/04/2015	28/07/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00022 Submit Works Information		28/07/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00013 Phase 2 - Output Approval - via Project Board	11/09/2015	11/09/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00020 Submit Report to Cabinet for meeting on 29 Sept 2015 approval to proceed to Phase 3 - Construction	15/09/2015	15/09/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00021 Award Contract for Phase 3 - Construction following Cabinet Approval & 5 day standstill period	08/10/2015	08/10/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00023 Construction Phase - Start		05/11/2015	0%	Yes	Actions	
00007 Construction Phase - End	05/11/2015	25/08/2017	0%	Yes	Actions	

Risk Management

The strategy, framework and plans for dealing with the management of risk are described in the Risk Management Plan. In addition there is a DCC Risk Register for the 'preferred' option.

The DCC Risk Register is a County specific Risk Register that rolls up key general risks, in addition, as referred to in the Commercial Case is the risk profile developed with the main contractor that allocates specific risks to the party best able to deal plus an accompanying risk value.

These risk registers and management plan detail which party is responsible for the management of each risk and the required counter measures as required.

All these documents will be reviewed and updated as the design develops and specific risks are retired or mitigated.

Benefits Realisation

The strategy, framework and plan for dealing with the management and delivery of benefits are described in the Benefits Realisation Plan.

In addition there is a Benefits Register for the 'preferred' option and a Benefits Realisation Plan. In addition, there is also a document summarising the Outcomes / Benefits anticipated from the project based on an approved Welsh Government template.

These documents set out who is responsible for the delivery of specific benefits, how and when they will be delivered and the required counter measures, as required.

Gateway reviews

For individual projects within Denbighshire a Stage Review process has been established for all projects. This process allows relevant professional views to emerge on individual projects prior to moving forward to the next formal stage.

A Stage Review, via the Strategic Investment Group (SIG) for this project was undertaken prior to the submission of this document. This review process

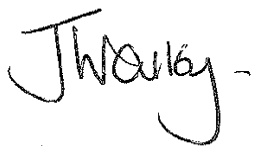
highlighted a number of minor changes and amendments that were required which have been reflected in the latest document update.

Further key Gateway Reviews, linked to Project Board approval, are planned for key stages in the development of the design and at pre-contract stage.

The Council will discuss further proposed engagement with the Welsh Government Programme and Project Management Team regarding securing external gateway reviews of the project at appropriate milestones.

Contingency Plans

In the event that this project fails, the County will have to maintain the service within the existing facilities however they will not meet the aspirations of both the County and WG to provide facilities fit and suitable in which to deliver a 21st Century curriculum.



Signed:

Printed: Jackie Walley

Position in organisation: Head of Customers & Education Support

Date: 10.03.2015

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Ysgol Glan Clwyd
10 March 2015

Equality Impact Assessment

Ysgol Glan Clwyd

Contact: James Curran, Education and Support Services

Updated: 10.03.2015

1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A project proposal

2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

The proposal is for funding for a project to deliver an extension, remodel and refurbishment of Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St Asaph to deliver a modern school with a capacity of 1250 fit for delivery of a 21st century curriculum.

3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

Yes

4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)

Consideration of equality issues has occurred at all stages of the development of the project to date via the Council as clients and by Wilmott Dixon and Bond Bryan, the contractors and architects for the project.

The intentions have been to provide buildings which meet the current requirements of the legislation in the provision of services, education and employment, within the scope of the brief recognising Denbighshire's policy for 'access for all' and the site conditions. The overall approach to the design being new build will aim to meet the standards set by the ADM and the BS8300:2009 as a minimum and will reflect good practice guidance (it should be noted that BS8300:2009 supersedes ADM). In relation to particular spaces the level of accessibility will be agreed within the constraints of the brief that enables the needs of new users and the existing school population and staff; which may

require accessibility above the standards of the ADM.

- 5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?**
(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)

Yes, the project will deliver improved learning accommodation for all of the pupils and wider building users at Ysgol Glan Clwyd.

- 6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?**

No

- 7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.**

Yes	<p>The approach to inclusion and disabled access and use of the building has been to incorporate access for all into every aspect of the design. This will include (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ample disabled parking bays close to the main entrance.• Step free external environment.• Level access thresholds to all external and internal doors. The floor level will be designed at the same level as the external ground level.• Lifts solely for the use of disabled pupils, staff or visitors as well as deliveries.• Sufficient disabled sanitary provision as well as ambulant sanitary provision within the main toilet blocks.• Changing Places hygiene suite.• Furniture design to allow for disabled use.• Main circulation doors held open during the school day.• Colour schemes to provide the correct colour contrast between surfaces etc. .
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8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?

Yes	
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Action(s)	Owner	By when?
Review Proposals at end of Stage D	Peter Clayton	07.04.2015
Review Proposals prior to site construction works	Peter Clayton	October 2015
Monitor during progression of works	Peter Clayton	November 2015
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9. Declaration

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date:	10.03.2015
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Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
James Curran	10.03.2015

Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 24th March 2015

Lead Member / Officer: Councillor Eryl Williams / Karen Evans

Report Author: Karen Evans

Title: GwE Governance Arrangements

1. What is the report about?

The proposed Governance Arrangements for GwE (Regional School Improvement Service).

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To recommend changes to the membership of the GwE Joint Committee in response to the adoption of the National Model for Regional Joint Working.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That members approve the amended governance arrangements for GwE.

4. Report Details

Introduction

The guidance document – National Model for Regional Working was published by the Welsh Government in February 2014. The 6 partner Councils resolved in the Spring of 2014 to:

- To approve the National Model for Regional Working in Wales in relation to School Improvement.
- To adopt the National Model for Regional Working on School Improvement and develop a business plan with the intention that the additional services listed in the Model be incorporated into the GwE regional model, in phases, subject to a satisfactory business case for each and a supporting transition plan to ensure service continuity and performance.

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

At its meeting of 6th of November 2014 the Joint Committee gave detailed consideration to a revised governance structure in response to the National Model. The revised structure reflected the arrangements set out

in Appendix 1 to this report. The current delegated functions of the Joint Committee are considered sufficient to address the requirements of the National Model.

Appendix 2 sets out revisions to the membership of the Joint Committee and establishment of an Advisory Board and Management Board to support the Managing Director and Senior Management Team in the management of GwE. The Advisory Board membership and functions reflect the “Executive Board” concept in the National Model but with powers of recommendation. The Management Board will have decision making powers. The apportionment and delegation of functions are set out in the Table in Appendix 3. The approach was adopted because of legal advice that there was sufficient uncertainty about delegating decisions to the Advisory Board to favour an alternative model. The model also formalises the supportive role which the Directors of Education have provided in supporting the GwE management team and provides a forum for providing input from the six authorities on more operational matters which has facilitated decision making. It can also act as an authorising body for financial decisions at an intermediate level below the Joint Committee. As a result it is recommended that they attend the Joint Committee in an officer function in future as opposed to being members of the Committee.

As part of the Joint Committee review it is suggested that Gwynedd Standing Orders are adopted in relation to quorum which would mean, in the case of the Joint Committee that three voting members would need to be present to effect a quorum. The current quorum of five elected members is considered too high and practically difficult to manage.

Background Documents

National Model for Regional Working – Welsh Government Guidance 2014.

Report to GwE Joint Committee 29.9.2014 – “GwE Governance Arrangements”

Report to GwE Joint Committee 6 November 2014– “GwE Governance Arrangements”

- 6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**
N/A
- 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.**
EqIA attached.
- 8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**
N/A
- 9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

There are no financial implications from this proposal.

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

The risk of not adopting this proposal is that the LA and the region will not be compliant with the requirements of the National Model for Regional Working on School Improvement.

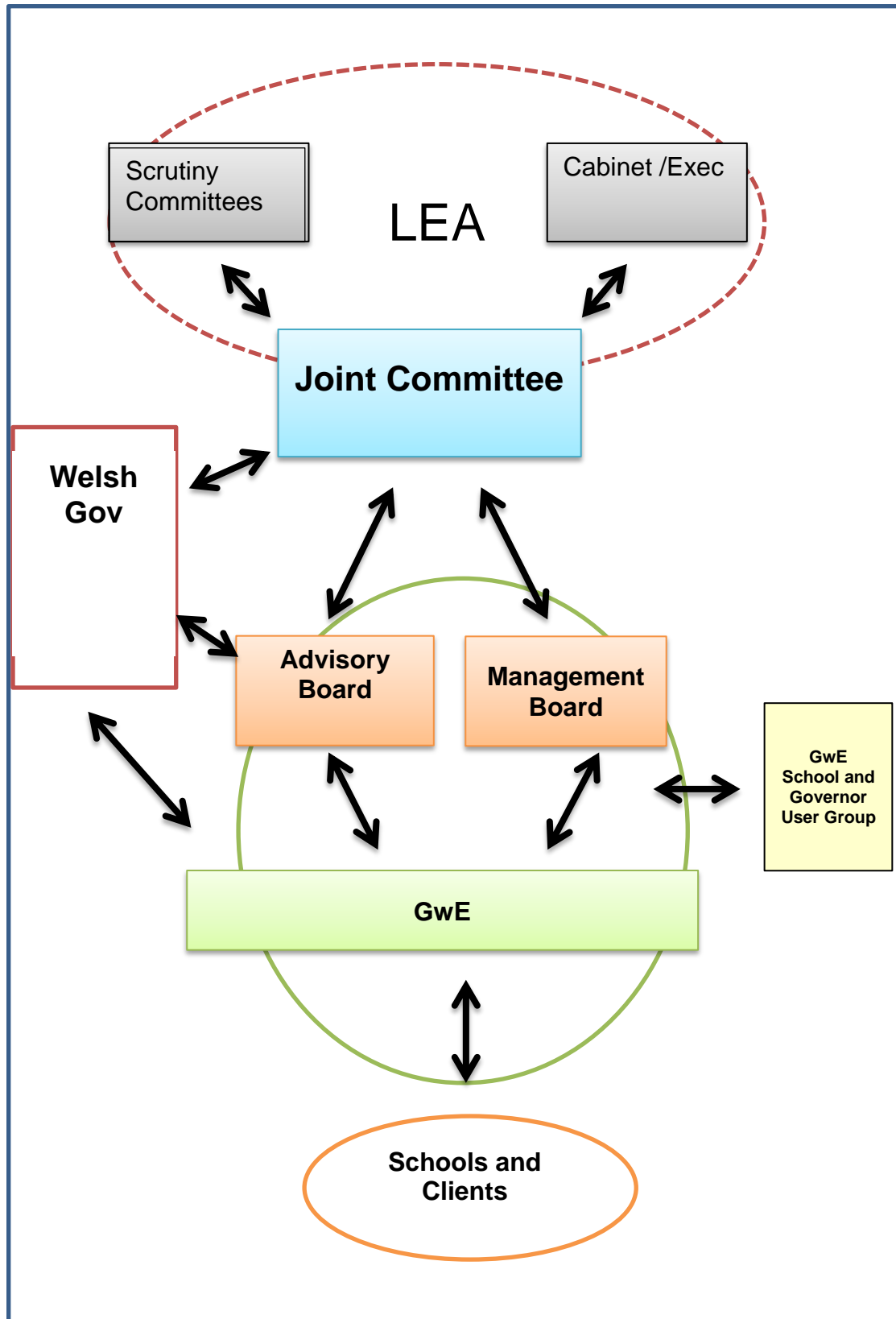
11. Power to make the Decision

S101 Local Government Act 1972

S20 Local Government Act 2000

Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Discharge of Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2002

Appendix 1 - Proposed Structure



Joint Committee (Existing)		Joint Committee (Proposed)	Advisory Board	Management Board	
Voting Members	Officer Members –Non Voting	Voting Members			
6x Education Portfolio Members <i>one from each NW LA</i>	6x Statutory Chief Education Officers <i>one from each NW LA</i>	6x Education Portfolio Members <i>one from each NW LA</i>	1 x Education Portfolio Holder (Lead for Region) Lead CEEdO Managing Director No more than 5 experts (Individuals to be appointed by Joint Committee) WG Nominee	6x Statutory Chief Education Officers <i>(one from each NW LA)</i> Managing Director Members of GwE SLT as required	
Co-opted Non-voting Members	Officers in Attendance	Co-opted Non-voting Members			
1x Diocese Representative <i>nominated from across the Wrexham, St Asaph and Bangor Diocese, on a rotating two year term</i>	1x Legal Representative 1x S151 Representative Other specialists as requested	1x Diocese Representative <i>nominated from across the Wrexham, St Asaph and Bangor Diocese, on a rotating two year term</i>			

1x Primary Schools Representative		1x Primary Schools Headteacher			
1x Secondary Schools Representative		1x Secondary Schools Headteacher			
1x Special Schools Representative		1x Special Schools Headteacher			
1x Governor Representative		1x Governor Representative			
		Officers in Attendance (Non-voting)			
		Lead Chief Exec 6x Statutory Chief Education Officers <i>(one from each NW LA)</i> 1x Legal Representative 1x S151 Representative Other specialists as required			

Appendix 3 Functions of Advisory and Management Boards

Advisory Board	Management Board
<p>Reporting regularly to the joint committee, the Advisory Board will:</p> <p>Constructively challenge and contribute to the development of strategy to enable the organisation to achieve its goals;</p> <p>Consider and make recommendations to the joint committee in relation to the annual Business Plan;</p> <p>Monitor and review the performance of management in meeting assigned goals and objectives and monitor the reporting of performance;</p>	<p>Reporting regularly to the joint committee, the Management Board will:</p> <p>Co-construct the annual Business Plan, including the individual appendices to identify specific requirements at individual LA level;</p> <p>Monitor progress against the priorities and outcomes identified in the Business Plan on a regular basis;</p> <p>Have arrangements in place to make sure that GwE financial controls and systems are robust;</p> <p>Provide professional advice to the joint committee with regard to the appointment of the Managing Director.</p>

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GwE Governance Arrangements 11th March 2015

Equality Impact Assessment

GwE Governance Arrangements

Contact: Karen Evans

Updated: 11th March 2015

1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A new or revised policy

2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

The purpose of this proposal is to recommend changes to the membership of the GwE Joint Committee in response to the adoption of the National Model for Regional Joint Working. There will be no change to staff or community in the LA as a result of this recommendation.

3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

No

There is no impact on staff or community in the LA.

4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)

N/A

5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)

N/A

6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

N/A

7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.

No	There will be no impact on staff or community in the LA.
----	--

8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?

No	There will be no impact on staff or community in the LA.
----	--

Action(s)	Owner	By when?
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<Unrestrict editing to insert additional rows>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>

9. Declaration

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date:	31/03/2016
--------------	------------

Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
Karen Evans	11/03/15

Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.

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Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 24th March 2015

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

Report Author: Rod Urquhart

Title: Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy

1. What is the report about?

To seek approval for a new policy dealing with Revenues Services changes in address, changes in circumstances and claims for discounts and reliefs. This will enable further efficiencies in processing and better customer service levels to our citizens.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To introduce the Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy, enabling more efficient working practices and better customer service.

3. What are the Recommendations?

Members approve the revised 'Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy' as shown in Appendix A to this report.

4. Report details.

Background

The Revenues Services functions deals with the billing, collection and enforcement of Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Benefit Overpayments and Sundry debts. On an annual basis there are a significant amount of changes such as people claiming a discount or relief, moving in or out of our area or setting up payment plans.

The service receives notifications of changes in a number of ways either by post, email, face to face or by telephone. The service has also gone live with a number of web portal forms that will automatically update the back office systems from our corporate website.

Denbighshire County Council like all other public sector organisations is facing significant financial challenges and there is both a desire and necessity to change the way we interact with our customers, by offering an immediate service but at a reduced cost.

4.1 Issues for consideration

Most Local Authorities and Government Departments have an electronic forms and e-enablement, their customers are accessing these channels as a first choice in a greater number than in previous years, however the alternative channels still remain.

Whilst Denbighshire County Council offers all of these access channels there is still a very large proportion on our customer base that comes into reception areas to see an advisor.

The Council is changing the way it interacts with our customers, through the digital choice project. By putting in place an assisted moves, discounts and exemptions process and using the technology we have already invested in, we will be providing a more efficient and effective customer service. It is anticipated that this service will reduce the number of face to face enquiries to complete forms or changes in circumstances.

Currently we will action from a customer over the telephone, however the information could be challenged at a later date eg if a Single Person Discount was claimed fraudulently. This could lead the authority open to abuse of its taxbase, which in turn could lead to a drop in income levels.

Denbighshire County Council is investing in a new telephony system, which has call recording capabilities. It is anticipated the new system will be rolled out across the Council by 1st April 2016. The Revenues and Benefits Service has volunteered to be an early pilot.

The evidence from other Local Authorities who use a telephone recording process have seen a decrease in the levels of fraud as the customer is advised their change in circumstances will be recorded and could be used as evidence in any investigation and subsequent prosecution.

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

By offering more choices to for customers to claim discounts, exemptions or report changes we will help vulnerable people more promptly by speeding up the claim process, ensuring they live as independently as possible.

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

There is no additional cost, apart from the amounts agreed for the new telephony system. It will have a direct impact on customer services as we will be providing a better and more efficient service as well as paying the most vulnerable citizens more quickly.

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.

This policy and the assisted changes service will enhance the customer journey and will be beneficial to all elements of society.

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

The draft policy has been issued to Customer Services, Housing Department, Social Landlords, the third sector, stakeholders and partners. To date no requests have been received to change any part of the policy. The organisations have given their support to the policy, indicating it will have a positive impact on the residents of Denbighshire.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no financial implications directly related to this report, however, this new approach to Revenues changes will improve customer service and act as a deterrent to fraudulent claims.

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

Not applicable as the telephone recording process may reduce the likelihood of fraud

11. Power to make the Decision

- Council Tax Regulations 1992
- Business Rates Regulations (Local Government Finance Act 1988).

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Denbighshire County Council
Revenues and Benefits Service

**Council Tax and National Non Domestic
Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and
Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy**

Revenues & Benefits
Service
Author: Rod Urquhart

1 December 2014

Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy

REVISION HISTORY

	Description	Date	Author(s)
1.0	Original Draft Policy	Dec 2014	Rod Urquhart

1. Introduction

To enable the use of checkbox signatures for telephone declarations as part of our electronic notifying of changes procedure it is necessary to retain evidence of the details provided during the notification of a change and the customer's verbal agreement to that declaration.

Such evidence is required as part of fraud and error detection and for any subsequent fraud investigations. It may be used as evidence in a court of law.

As such Denbighshire County Council will install telephone recording equipment for the sole use of taking any electronic changes in circumstances over the telephone. The software installed will not be used for recording the content of any other internal or external calls within the Revenues Service, without prior notice to the customer and only in exceptional circumstances eg where a customer is being abusive and could so lead to a prosecution by DCC.

2. Policy Statement

Denbighshire County Council (DCC) will use a telephone recording system, for the purpose of recording telephone changes in circumstances, which will affect liability for Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates liability. Calls will be recorded under the guidelines set out in this Policy, in a professional manner that shows respect for customers, members of staff and anyone else involved in the process and deal with each case as stated in this Policy document. This document has been developed in consultation with stakeholders throughout the DCC area.

This policy will be available to all internal and external stakeholders and will be on Denbighshire's website:

www.denbighshire.gov.uk or www.sirdinbych.gov.uk

3. Aims

This policy will come into effect as soon as the software has been installed and is intended to ensure that the use of telephone call recordings is fair.

This policy aims to provide:

- Guidelines for communicating the Call Recording System
- Guidelines for informing the parties that a conversation will be recorded
- Procedures for managing and releasing call recordings

The policy also aims to ensure and that we comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation. This includes:

- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- The Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000
- The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- The Human Rights Act 1998

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) permits a company to lawfully record conversations only to:

- ***Establish facts;***
- ***Ensure regulatory compliance; or***
- ***Demonstrate standards that are achieved or need to be achieved by training***

Any recording retained must be relevant to that business and only used for that business and all reasonable efforts must be made to inform the parties that the conversation is or was recorded.

4. Equality

DCC is committed to equality of opportunity and valuing diversity in both the provision of services and in its role as a major employer. We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We are committed to the elimination of unfair and unlawful discrimination in all our policies, procedures and practises. We are determined to ensure that no member of the public, employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of their age, child care or other caring responsibilities, disability, gender, HIV status, language, marital status, race, religion, sexuality, membership or non-membership of a trade union, or by any requirement which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

5. Data Protection

This policy is compatible with all requirements under the Data Protection Act 1998.

6. Communicating the Call Recording System

Denbighshire County Council is required to make reasonable efforts to communicate that calls will be monitored and recorded. The Revenues Manager will be responsible for doing this by:

- Putting a notice on the Council's website.
- Sending an e-mail message to all staff and councillors when the service starts
- Including a note on brochures and forms which promote the telephone claiming / changes in circumstance service.
- Adding a notification to the relevant standard letter templates
- Informing partner organisations who may advise individuals on the different claiming channels available.

7. Informing the parties that a conversation will be recorded

The Officer/Assistant taking a telephone claim or change of circumstance will inform the other party at the outset of the call, prior to starting the recording, that the call will be recorded and the reason for doing so. The set dialogue used should cover the following:

'Before continuing with this call I am required to let you know that your call will be recorded. At the end of the call I will read out a declaration and your verbal agreement to this will be recorded as confirmation that the details you have provided are correct'

Any party refusing to take part in a recorded telephone conversation will be unable to take part in the check box signature process of notifying us of a change in circumstances and will be required to use an alternative method.

8. Procedures for managing and releasing call recordings

8.1. The recordings shall be stored securely, with access to the recordings controlled and managed by the Call Recording System Administrators. This will be an allocated member of the ICT team and the Revenues Manager will communicate this to the Revenues and Benefits Teams, and update any changes.

8.2 Access to the recordings is only permitted if the requirement is in relation to fraud detection/investigation or where there is the need to check on the details stated by the claimant or officer, in cases such as complaints etc. Any access must also be in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The reason for requesting access must be formally authorised by either the Corporate Fraud Officer, the DWP, Police or the relevant Head of Service who will ensure that the request complies with the Data Protection Act, and requests should include the following details:

- The reason for the request
- Date and time of the call
- Telephone extension used to make/receive the call
- External number involved if known
- Where possible, the names of all parties to the telephone call
- Any other information on the nature of the call

8.3 The Call Recording System Administrator on receiving an approved request for a call recording will provide a copy of the recording to the relevant officer. Copies of the recordings must be disposed of securely as soon as it is no longer of use for the purpose for which it has been obtained.

8.4 Browsing of recordings for no specific purpose are not acceptable and is an offence in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 for which individuals may be prosecuted. Any such incidents may result in the matter being referred to the Head of Service and Human Resources as this is a serious offence.

8.5 The Data Protection Act allows persons access to information that we hold about them. This includes recorded telephone calls. Therefore, the recordings will be stored in such a way to enable the Data Protection Officer to retrieve information relating to one or more individuals as easily as possible.

8.6 Requests for copies of telephone conversations made as Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection Act must be notified to the relevant Council's Data Protection Officer immediately and, subject to assessment, he will request the call recording and arrange for the individual concerned to visit the Council Offices to hear the recording.

8.7 In the case of a request from an external body in connection with the Detection / prevention of crime e.g. the police, the request should be forwarded to the relevant Council's Data Protection Officer who will complete the request for a call recording.

8.8 Requests for copies of telephone conversations as part of staff disciplinary processes will only be released with the written agreement of the Council's Head of Human Resources who will consult with the Council's Data Protection Officer before approval is granted.

8.9 Recordings of calls will be securely disposed of after six years in line with Denbighshire County Council's data retention policy. However, if there is a justified need to retain a specific recording for a longer period, this may be reviewed and the retention period amended. Information will not be retained for a longer period than necessary.

9. Implementation and training

This policy will be made available to all staff. This will be reinforced with training and management supervision of all staff involved.

10. Complaints

Denbighshire County Council's 'Compliments and Complaints Procedure' (available on the each of the Councils' websites) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this policy.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be managed and reviewed every year and, from time to time, updates and re-issues will be circulated. However, the policy will be reviewed sooner if a weakness in the policy is highlighted, in the case of new risks, and/or changes in legislation. The Revenues service will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to and effective.

<Council Tax and National Non Domestic
Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and
Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy>
03 March 2015

Equality Impact Assessment

<Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy>

Contact: <Rod Urquhart, Revenues and Benefits Service

Updated: <03.03.2015

1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A new or revised policy

2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

<To provide a telephone service to our residents, allowing them to report changes in their circumstances or put in new claims for discounts or exemptions

3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

No

<This policy will benefit all customers within DCC regardless upon age, gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, sexual orientation etc. because it is giving the customer an additional channel of communication to deal with the Council

4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)

<Type here>

5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-

reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?
(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)

<It will enable citizens to interact with the Council from their home, having a positive impact on people who have difficulty in travelling

6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

<No

7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.

<Please Select> <If yes, please provide detail>

8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?

<Please Select> <If yes please complete the table below. If no, please explain here>

Action(s)	Owner	By when?
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9. Declaration

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date: <03.03.2017

Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
<Rod Urquhart	<03.03.2015

Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 24th March 2015

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

Report Author: Rod Urquhart

Title: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme Telephone Recording Policy

1. What is the report about?

To seek approval for a new policy dealing with Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction new claims and changes in circumstances. This will enable further efficiencies in processing and better customer service levels to our citizens.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To introduce the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme Telephone Recording Policy, enabling more efficient working practices and better customer service.

3. What are the Recommendations?

Members approve the revised 'Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme Telephone Recording Policy' Policy as shown in Appendix A to this report.

4. Report details.

Background

Denbighshire County Council must adhere to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction legislation. The legislation states that a person can claim benefits in a multitude of different ways, via a standardised claim form.

Denbighshire County Council had previously issued paper claim forms but this is changing and by April 2015 fully functional electronic forms will allow claims to be completed online.

However it is recognised that some customers may not be able to access the internet or would prefer to speak to an adviser either by phone or face to face. Whilst we deal with the face to face contact through our reception areas we cannot offer a telephone claims service at present, which is perceived as limiting the levels of customer service.

4.1 Issues for consideration

Most Local Authorities and Government Departments have an electronic claim form / e-enablement. Furthermore different parts of the DWP, eg the Pension Service also takes telephone claims. The telephone claims, also known as Assisted Claims facility is now being rolled out across a number of authorities in England.

To enable this the DWP developed and approved a Risk Based Verification policy which sets out the information and evidence required before assessing claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction. Risk Based Verification is a method of applying different levels of checks according to the risk of fraud associated with those claims.

Members recently approved some changes to the Risk Based Verification Policy in order to streamline the claims process.

The evidence from other Local Authorities who use the assisted claims process have seen a decrease in the levels of fraud as the customer is advised their claim will be recorded and could be used as evidence in any investigation and subsequent prosecution.

Denbighshire County Council is investing in a new telephony system, which has call recording capabilities. It is anticipated the new system will be rolled out across the Council by 1st April 2016. The Revenues and Benefits Service has volunteered to be an early pilot.

The Council is changing the way it interacts with our customers, through the digital choice project. By putting in place an assisted claim process and using the technology we have already invested in, we will be providing a more efficient and effective customer service. It is anticipated that this service will reduce the number of face to face enquiries to complete claim forms or changes in circumstances.

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

By offering more choices to for customers to claim benefits or report changes we will help vulnerable people more promptly by speeding up the claim process, ensuring they live as independently as possible.

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

There is no additional cost, apart from the amounts agreed for the new telephony system. It will have a direct impact on customer services as we will be providing a better and more efficient service as well as paying the most vulnerable citizens more quickly.

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.

This policy and the assisted claims service will enhance the customer journey and will be beneficial to all elements of society.

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

The draft policy has been issued to Customer Services, Housing Department, Social Landlords, the third sector, stakeholders and partners. To date no requests have been received to change any part of the policy. The organisations have given their support to the policy, indicating it will have a positive impact on the residents of Denbighshire.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no financial implications directly related to this report, however, this new approach to claims handling will improve processing times of benefit claims, which will in turn reduce overpayments made to claimants that then need to be recovered.

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

Not applicable as the assisted claims process may reduce the likelihood of fraud

11. Power to make the Decision

- Department of Work and Pensions Circular S11/2011.
- Housing Benefits Regulation 86.

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Denbighshire County Council
Revenues and Benefits Service

**Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support
Telephone Claims – Call Recording Policy**

**Revenues & Benefits
Service
Author: Rod Urquhart**

1 December 2014

Housing Benefits and Council Tax Benefit Telephone Claims – Call Recording Policy

REVISION HISTORY

	Description	Date	Author(s)
1.0	Original Draft Policy	Dec 2014	Rod Urquhart

1. Introduction

To enable the use of checkbox signatures for telephone declarations as part of our telephone electronic claiming procedure it is necessary to retain evidence of the claim details provided during the making of such a claim and the customer's verbal agreement to that declaration.

Such evidence is required as part of fraud and error detection and for any subsequent fraud investigations and may be used as evidence in a court of law.

As such Denbighshire County Council will install telephone recording equipment for the sole use of taking any electronic claims or changes in circumstances over the telephone. The software installed will not be used for recording the content of any other internal or external calls within the Benefits Service, without prior notice to the customer and only in exceptional circumstances eg where a customer is being abusive and could so lead to a prosecution by DCC.

2. Policy Statement

Denbighshire County Council (DCC) will use a telephone recording system, for the purpose of recording telephone claims or changes in circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction only. Calls will be recorded under the guidelines set out in this Policy, in a professional manner that shows respect for customers, members of staff and anyone else involved in the process and deal with each case as stated in this Policy document. This document has been developed in consultation with stakeholders throughout the DCC area.

This policy will be available to all internal and external stakeholders and will be on Denbighshire's website:

www.denbighshire.gov.uk or www.sirdinbych.gov.uk

3. Aims

This policy will come into effect as soon as the software has been installed and is intended to ensure that the use of telephone call recordings is fair.

This policy aims to provide:

- Guidelines for communicating the Call Recording System
- Guidelines for informing the parties that a conversation will be recorded
- Procedures for managing and releasing call recordings

The policy also aims to ensure and that we comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation. This includes:

- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- The Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000
- The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- The Human Rights Act 1998

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) permits a company to lawfully record conversations only to:

- ***Establish facts;***
- ***Ensure regulatory compliance; or***
- ***Demonstrate standards that are achieved or need to be achieved by training***

Any recording retained must be relevant to that business and only used for that business and all reasonable efforts must be made to inform the parties that the conversation is or was recorded.

4. Equality

DCC is committed to equality of opportunity and valuing diversity in both the provision of services and in its role as a major employer. We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We are committed to the elimination of unfair and unlawful discrimination in all our policies, procedures and practises. We are determined to ensure that no member of the public, employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of their age, child care or other caring responsibilities, disability, gender, HIV status, language, marital status, race, religion, sexuality, membership or non-membership of a trade union, or by any requirement which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

5. Data Protection

This policy is compatible with all requirements under the Data Protection Act 1998.

6. Communicating the Call Recording System

Denbighshire County Council is required to make reasonable efforts to communicate that calls will be monitored and recorded. The Benefits Manager will be responsible for doing this by:

- Putting a notice on the Council's website.
- Sending an e-mail message to all staff and councillors when the service starts
- Including a note on brochures and forms which promote the telephone claiming / changes in circumstance service.
- Adding a notification to the relevant standard letter templates
- Informing partner organisations who may advise individuals on the different claiming channels available.

7. Informing the parties that a conversation will be recorded

The Officer/Assistant taking a telephone claim or change of circumstance will inform the other party at the outset of the call, prior to starting the recording, that the call will be recorded and the reason for doing so. The set dialogue used should cover the following:

'Before continuing with this call I am required to let you know that your call will be recorded. At the end of the call I will read out a declaration and your verbal agreement to this will be recorded as confirmation that the details you have provided are correct'

Any party refusing to take part in a recorded telephone conversation will be unable to take part in the check box signature process of claiming and will be required to use an alternative claiming method.

8. Procedures for managing and releasing call recordings

8.1. The recordings shall be stored securely, with access to the recordings controlled and managed by the Call Recording System Administrators. This will be an allocated member of the ICT team and the Benefits Manager will communicate this to the Revenues and Benefits Teams, and update any changes.

8.2 Access to the recordings is only permitted if the requirement is in relation to fraud detection/investigation or where there is the need to check on the

details stated by the claimant or officer, in cases such as complaints etc. Any access must also be in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The reason for requesting access must be formally authorised by either the Corporate Fraud Officer, the DWP, Police or the relevant Head of Service who will ensure that the request complies with the Data Protection Act, and requests should include the following details:

- The reason for the request
- Date and time of the call
- Telephone extension used to make/receive the call
- External number involved if known
- Where possible, the names of all parties to the telephone call
- Any other information on the nature of the call

8.3 The Call Recording System Administrator on receiving an approved request for a call recording, will provide a copy of the recording to the relevant officer. Copies of the recordings must be disposed of securely as soon as it is no longer of use for the purpose for which it has been obtained.

8.4 Browsing of recordings for no specific purpose is not acceptable and is an offence in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 for which individuals may be prosecuted. Any such incidents may result in the matter being referred to the Head of Service and Human Resources as this is a serious offence.

8.5 The Data Protection Act allows persons access to information that we hold about them. This includes recorded telephone calls. Therefore, the recordings will be stored in such a way to enable the Data Protection Officer to retrieve information relating to one or more individuals as easily as possible.

8.6 Requests for copies of telephone conversations made as Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection Act must be notified to the relevant Council's Data Protection Officer immediately and, subject to assessment, he will request the call recording and arrange for the individual concerned to visit the Council Offices to hear the recording.

8.7 In the case of a request from an external body in connection with the Detection / prevention of crime e.g. the police, the request should be forwarded to the relevant Council's Data Protection Officer who will complete the request for a call recording.

8.8 Requests for copies of telephone conversations as part of staff disciplinary processes will only be released with the written agreement of the Council's Head of Human Resources who will consult with the Council's Data Protection Officer before approval is granted.

8.9 Recordings of calls will be securely disposed of after six years in line with Denbighshire County Council's data retention policy. However, if there is a justified need to retain a specific recording for a longer period, this may be reviewed and the retention period amended. Information will not be retained for a longer period than necessary.

9. Implementation and training

This policy will be made available to all staff. This will be reinforced with training and management supervision of all staff involved.

10. Complaints

Denbighshire County Council's 'Compliments and Complaints Procedure' (available on the each of the Councils' websites) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this policy.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be managed and reviewed every year and, from time to time, updates and re-issues will be circulated. However, the policy will be reviewed sooner if a weakness in the policy is highlighted, in the case of new risks, and/or changes in legislation. The Benefits section will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to and effective.

<Council Tax and National Non Domestic
Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and
Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy>
03 March 2015

Equality Impact Assessment

<Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates Moves, Discounts, Exemptions and Reliefs Telephone Call Recording Policy>

Contact: <Rod Urquhart, Revenues and Benefits Service

Updated: <03.03.2015

1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A new or revised policy

2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

<To provide a telephone service to our residents, allowing them to report changes in their circumstances or put in new claims for discounts or exemptions

3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

No

<This policy will benefit all customers within DCC regardless upon age, gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, sexual orientation etc. because it is giving the customer an additional channel of communication to deal with the Council

4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)

<Type here>

5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-

reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?
(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)

<It will enable citizens to interact with the Council from their home, having a positive impact on people who have difficulty in travelling

6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

<No

7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.

<Please Select> <If yes, please provide detail>

8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?

<Please Select> <If yes please complete the table below. If no, please explain here>

Action(s)	Owner	By when?
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Unrestrict editing to insert additional rows>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>

9. Declaration

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date: <03.03.2017

Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
<Rod Urquhart	<03.03.2015

Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 24th March 2015

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

Report Author: Rod Urquhart

Title: Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Policy

1. What is the report about?

To adopt a new all wales policy framework dealing with Discretionary Housing Payments.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To introduce the new framework, this takes account of best practice across the UK and is being adopted in 20 of the Welsh Local Authorities.

3. What are the Recommendations?

Members approve the revised 'Discretionary Housing Payments Policy' framework as shown in Appendix A to this report.

4. Report details.

Background

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) allocates grant funding annually to Local Authorities so they can assist claimants with shortfalls in their Housing Benefit on a temporary basis or protect the most vulnerable groups of citizens on a longer term basis.

The amount of funding increased for a couple of years to offset some of the changes made under the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Examples of this include:

- The Benefit Cap
- Under Occupancy Room Restriction (also known as the Bedroom Tax)
- Local Housing Allowance Rate changes

However the DWP had indicated the amount of increased funding would be temporary and that with the implementation of Universal Credit the amounts available would diminish at a greater rate.

Denbighshire County Council received the following funding amounts

- 2013/14 £217,914
- 2014/15 £202,519

- 2015/16 £158,793

Concerns had been raised by Welsh Government that Local Authorities were not applying a common framework to the application and assessment of DHP claims and suggested that the Welsh Local Authorities should consider creating a national framework. It should be noted Denbighshire County Council has used the guidance issued by the DWP when it has assessed DHP claims

4.1 Issues for consideration

Denbighshire County Council joined 19 other Welsh Local Authorities, the Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government. As a collective an external organisation (The Welfare Reform Club) was appointed to undertake a review on Discretionary Housing Payments and the way they are administered.

This review researched the way in which the scheme is administered currently and any future changes that are planned. The Welfare Reform Club then collated this information and produced a series of documents. Following reviews by the Local Authorities the final documents have become the All Wales framework.

All the other 19 participating Local Authorities have, or will be adopting this framework, which makes the process of claiming, administering and understanding Discretionary Housing Payments more transparent.

With the levels of funding for Discretionary Housing Payments being reduced by Central Government it is essential that we have a robust framework and policy in place to deal with the excess demand we are likely to have, which is fair, transparent and takes into account all claimant events in a standard way, but still allows the flexibility to make local decisions.

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

By adopting a pan wales policy framework there is transparency and fairness to the customers from most of the Welsh Councils in terms of how their entitlement to Discretionary Housing Payments are calculated.

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

There was a cost of £1,500 per Local Authority for the work of the Welfare Reform Club which was paid for within existing budgets. The framework and reduction in funding will have a direct impact both for our Housing Services and Customer Services.

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.

Not applicable as an EQIA was undertaken by the Department of Works and Pensions on both Discretionary Housing Payments and the Welfare Reform Act

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

The policy and framework has been shared with other local authorities, Welsh Government and the third sector. Any changes and suggestions have been incorporated within the framework

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no financial implications directly related to this policy framework, however with the reductions in funding some difficult decisions will need to be taken in assessing customers' entitlement to Discretionary Housing Payments

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

Not applicable

11. Power to make the Decision

- Department of Work and Pensions Circular S1/2015.
- Housing Benefits Regulations.

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DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

*OPERATIONAL POLICY FOR DENBIGHSHIRE'S
DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS
(DHP)
ALLOCATION
2015/16*

MARCH 2015

DHP POLICY 2015/16:

INTRODUCTION

1. This policy sets out an agreed approach to deciding who should get a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) award for 2015/16. It is designed to make discretionary decision-making more systematic, consistent and transparent. It is not intended to impose a standard solution for all claims. The exercise of discretion remains at the heart of the scheme.
2. DHPs are paid from a cash-limited budget and are intended to help people meet housing costs, usually where there is a shortfall between their Housing Benefit (or housing element of Universal Credit) and their rent.
3. It is not possible to make an award in every case where there is such a shortfall. This policy is a way of helping to decide priorities for payment when demand exceeds supply, as will usually be the case.
4. Given that DHPs will inevitably have to be targeted at those who need them most, it is of course important to check at the outset that all DHP applicants are receiving their full entitlement to HB, as it would be wasteful to award a DHP in circumstances where additional HB could be paid instead.

KEY POLICY OBJECTIVES

5. In making decisions about priorities, there are some overall objectives:
 - To give all applicants as fair and consistent a decision as possible.
 - To make decisions that are designed to improve outcomes for people.
 - To spend the annual DHP budget and keep to a minimum any in-year changes to priorities (which may be needed to avoid overspends or underspends).
 - Generally to give greater priority to:
 - helping those who are making efforts to help themselves;
 - supporting those that have done all they can to manage their situation, and can't realistically do any more;
 - preventing negative outcomes such as homelessness which are likely to involve further hardship for the household as well as additional and avoidable costs for the council.

POLICY FOR DECIDING PRIORITIES

6. In order to meet these objectives, it is insufficient to simply make awards to certain broad *categories* of people (such as lone parents and disabled people). It is necessary to define which people in these and other categories should, as a rule, have the most priority.

7. The critical factors in deciding priorities are:

- The financial circumstances of the household;
- The priority group that the household is in;
- The extent to which members of the household are able, and willing, to manage the situation they are in, or can't be reasonably expected to do more;
- The wider financial consequences of not making an award.

All of these factors are covered in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Stage 1: Financial assessment

8. For all applications, a financial assessment is made, comparing income with expenditure. This is as simple as possible but sufficient to make a reasonable judgement. All income and outgoings are considered and any capital taken into account. **No source of income is disregarded and all expenditure is taken into consideration.** If there are non-dependants in the household, the income they contribute to the household is normally included in the financial assessment, though it is accepted that household expenditure on food and heating will be higher. The fundamental principle is that help should go to those who have no other means of meeting the need.

9. Therefore, the first test is whether or not a household's total commitments are equal to or exceed their income. If there is income available, or could be made available, sufficient to meet the shortfall in rent or other housing need, a DHP application will not normally succeed unless or until circumstances change.

10. If there is some income available, but insufficient to meet the shortfall in rent, the application for a DHP is processed and, if other criteria are met and it is decided to make an award, the available income is deducted from the award.

11. The test is slightly different in the case of lump-sum payments (e.g. rent deposits, rent in advance and removal costs). The test is in two parts:

a) Are there any savings that can meet the need?

b) If not, is income at or below expenditure, or not significantly above, and has the applicant no prospect of saving the amount needed?

Stage 2: Priority groups

12. Having applied the financial assessment, the second stage is to decide the priority to be given to the particular circumstances of each application. To make the process as simple as possible, the particular circumstances are put into five groups, A-E, in descending order of priority. See Annex 1 for details of each group.

Stage 3: Ability to manage the situation

13. The next stage is to look at general policy considerations. DHPs can often be most

effectively used as a temporary measure whilst a household seeks a more long-term solution to the situation they are in. Where this is possible, higher priority is given to those who are actively taking steps themselves, for example those with an Local Housing Allowance shortfall looking for cheaper accommodation, or those with spare rooms who are arranging to move or take in a lodger.

14. However, there are also some situations where a DHP may be needed for a longer period. There will be some households who cannot realistically alleviate the situation they are in by taking action themselves. For example, a household with a severely disabled member unable to work or take in a lodger, and who are already managing the household budget as effectively as possible. Such households are also given higher priority.

15. There are also households who are not currently helping themselves in the way described above but who are prepared to start doing so. In these cases, the DHP may be conditional on certain action being taken and the award may be of shorter duration.

Stage 4: Avoid further cost (and hardship)

16. DHPs can be used to help prevent further hardship such as eviction and the associated costs to the council of dealing with homelessness. The risk of losing a tenancy could arise for a number of reasons but no judgement is made about the factors giving rise to the problem. This criterion is simply about avoiding further cost and hardship.

17. However, it is unlikely to be viable to pay DHPs indefinitely in these circumstances. If a household is threatened with eviction, the situation cannot be left to continue indefinitely. A solution needs to be found, whether it is the provision of alternative accommodation or some action by the household to reduce arrears. The highest priority under this criterion is applied when there is a solution in sight.

PRIORITY SETTING MATRIX

18. In order to help with deciding priorities, a simple matrix is constructed, which combines priority groups with the policy considerations described above. Each applicant is given a baseline score based on the priority group they are in – the baseline scores are **A=12**, **B=9**, **C=6**, **D=3** and **E=0**.

19. Additional points depend upon the extent to which the general policy considerations (stages 3 and 4 above) are met, and range from 0 to 9. The highest points (9) are awarded to those who are

- a)** actively trying to manage the situation they are in, or
- b)** can't reasonably do any more to help themselves, or
- c)** where paying a DHP avoids further cost to the council (and hardship to the applicant), particularly where a solution is possible.

If a), b) or c) above are met in part, six points are awarded and, if none of these considerations are met, no additional points are scored. Only one of the general policy considerations needs to be met to earn the highest score. No additional points are scored

for meeting more than one consideration: this allows a fairly broad range of circumstances to be given a high or highest priority rating.

20. It is important not to apply the matrix rigidly in every case, *there will be individual cases that will fall outside the guidelines but which justify an award.*

ONGOING PAYMENTS – Baseline Scores

		Priority groups and total points				
Policy consideration and additional points		A (12)	B (9)	C (6)	D (3)	E (0)
Ability to manage the situation – doing everything possible or cannot reasonably be expected to do any more.	9	21	18	15	12	9
Complies with 19 a), b) or c) above						
Ability to manage – commitment made	6	18	15	12	9	6
Complies with 19 a), b) or c) above in part.						
Ability to manage – not doing anything (but could do)	0	12	9	6	3	0
Does not comply with 19 a), b) or c) above						

One-OFF PAYMENTS – Baseline Scores

		Priority groups and total points				
Policy consideration and additional points		A (12)	B (9)	C (6)	D (3)	E (0)
Avoid further cost/hardship – solution in sight	9	21	18	15	12	9
Avoid further cost/hardship – solution possible in time	6	18	15	12	9	6
Avoid further cost/hardship – no solution	0	12	9	6	3	0

Table of Scores:

- 21 highest priority
- 18 high
- 15 medium to high
- 12 medium
- 9 medium to low
- 6 low
- 3 lowest

21. The matrix can be used to assess an application in the first place, and also as a way of helping to ensure that decisions are as consistent as possible.

22. When a score has been established for each application, DHP will be granted according to the following table for 2015/16.

Calculated Score	DHP award -% of shortfall	Maximum length of Award
	(this is the maximum – see	
	30(a) to (d))	
21	100%	Up to 26 weeks, followed by 75%
		for up to a further 26 weeks
18	75%	Up to 26 weeks, followed by 50%
		for up to a further 26 weeks
15	50%	Up to 26 weeks
12	40%	Up to 26 weeks
9	25%	Up to 26 weeks
6	0	0
3	0	0

23. The above method will be used to make determinations for a period of 6 months from the 1st April 2015, and the policy will be reviewed at the end of that period.

CONDITIONALITY

It's not anticipated that these provisions will need to be used often, but some awards will be made on condition that the applicant takes specific actions, and payments can be granted for shorter periods than those shown in the table at 22 above.

24. Most of the highest priority awards are paid unconditionally, either because there is not likely to be any short-term change in the circumstances giving rise to the DHP, or the household is already doing everything possible to manage the situation they are in.

25. All other awards are subject to at least some conditionality, designed to encourage the applicant to resolve the shortfall in rent without access to DHPs. The extent of the conditionality depends on the circumstances – in some cases it will be relatively light, but more strict in others. In many cases, conditionality will involve signposting to support and advice agencies.

REPEAT AWARDS/EXTENSIONS

26. An award may be extended for a short period, without the need for a new application, in certain circumstances:

- Where a request has been made by support workers for a valid reason;
- When awaiting a change of events (e.g. house move, birth of child);

- When further time is required to meet the conditions attached to an award.

PARTIAL / FULL AWARDS

27. Awards can be made for a weekly amount which will meet the shortfall between the rent and Housing Benefit payable in full. However, the Council will make partial awards in most cases due to budget restrictions, and also because there may be occasions when it will be more appropriate to make a partial award, as described in a) to d) below:

- a)** Some income is available to the household, but not enough to pay the shortfall, including situations where more income becomes available because debts are paid off.
- b)** There is a deliberate policy to allow a household to adjust gradually to a new situation, such as the Social Size Criteria (“bedroom tax”) or the Benefit Cap.
- c)** Conditions have been attached to an award but the conditions have not been met.
- d)** At the discretion of the Council in certain other circumstances (e.g. where there is an unreasonably high rent in private sector cases).

CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

28. All applicants are expected to report changes of circumstances as they would for Housing Benefit. It is particularly important that applicants notify changes in income, expenditure patterns or the composition of the household. Most notifications of a change of circumstances are related to Housing Benefit, but where a DHP is payable, they can result in the cancellation or amendment of the DHP award. This can be followed by a new application if appropriate.

29. Overpayments of DHPs are generally calculated and, if recoverable, they will be recovered as a sundry debts (private tenants) or via the rent account (council tenants).

AUTHORISING DHPs

30. As from 1st April, 2015 Civica will prepare the submission and pass to a delegated officer from Denbighshire County Council for approval. Once approved the DHP will be granted by Civica.

CONCLUSION

31. This policy is not intended to restrict Denbighshire Council’s discretion in making DHP decisions. In a discretionary scheme, there will always be some cases with special or unusual circumstances where a decision maker will consider a DHP award justified. The advantage of a discretionary scheme is that, whatever policy is used, such awards can and should be made in those unusual or special circumstances.

PRIORITY GROUPS

ONGOING PAYMENTS

GROUP A:

HOUSEHOLDS WHERE ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS ARE NOT A REALISTIC OPTION.

*This is the **Top Priority group** which includes those who are subject to circumstances that are exceptional and where making alternative housing arrangements is exceptionally difficult, or where there are severe obstacles preventing the claimant or their partner from improving their financial position.*

- Households subject to the **Social Sector** under occupancy rules (“bedroom tax”) with a child or children in the household.
- Households subject to the under-occupancy rules where there is a disabled person and, on account of that disability, either significant adaptations have been made to their property, or the property is particularly suited to their particular needs.
- Households subject to the under-occupancy rules but where the age of the child/children means that they will soon have the appropriate number of bedrooms.
- Elderly households in the **Private Rented Sector** who have a rent increase that takes their rent above the Local Housing Allowance.
- Households where children have had to be removed for their own safety and placed in foster care where there is evidence that the children will return to the property, and applicants awaiting a court judgement regarding custody of their children.
- Households subject to the under-occupancy rules, where there is a serious medical reason for an additional room supported by a formal medical opinion.

For example where partners are unable to share a bedroom because of medical circumstance prevent them from doing so.

- Where someone in the household is pregnant, including those currently in shared accommodation or subject to an under-occupation reduction (to be reviewed after the baby is born).
 - Applicants awaiting a court judgement regarding custody of children.
 - Applicants with joint custody arrangements of children but who are not receiving Child Benefit payments for those children.
-

GROUP B:

- **HOUSEHOLDS WHERE THE CLAIMANT AND/OR THEIR PARTNER ARE SUPPORTING OTHER HOUSEHOLD OR FAMILY MEMBERS, OR WHO THEMSELVES ARE BEING SUPPORTED, AND CHANGING HOUSEHOLD ARRANGEMENTS WOULD JEOPARDISE THAT SUPPORT.**
- **HOUSEHOLDS SUBJECT TO THE “BEDROOM TAX” WITH NO DEPENDENT CHILDREN LIVING WITH THEM.**

*This group is the **second highest group** because members of the family are supporting other members of the household and making alternative housing or employment arrangements would have a negative impact on the level or type of support being given. This group also recognises people subject to the “bedroom tax” with Gwynedd being designated as one of Britain’s “least densely populated” areas, and with fewer options available to tenants affected by this measure.*

- Households subject to the **Social Sector** under occupancy rules (“bedroom tax”) with no child or children in the household.
- Households subject to the under-occupancy rules where there is a foster carer whose circumstances mean they are not exempt.
- Families with an active social services intervention, for example highly dependent adults, children at risk or involvement in a family intervention project.
- Those engaged in caring full time for a family member and, as a result, face additional difficulties or obstacles entering work.
- Households subject to benefit cap reductions where there are children in the household.
- Homeless people being supported to settle in the community.
- Households where there is evidence to support that children cannot share a room, where an application for DLA or PIP has been applied for or refused, awaiting the outcome of an appeal.

GROUP C

Households where there are exceptional short-term personal or social barriers to moving

This Group represents those who have short-term barriers that prevent them from changing their housing arrangements. These could be either personal or social obstacles or both. The challenges may be addressed but only through additional external support. This could be support that is offered by the council or its partners or third sector providers such as charities and voluntary sector.

- Pensioners who live in the area, and would find it difficult to establish support links in a new area.
- Households living in a rural area who because of caring or similar responsibilities would find it particularly difficult to move, or to obtain employment locally.
- Where the applicant is single and under thirty-five years old and has children who stay with them at least one night per week but who are deemed for Housing Benefit purposes to be living with another adult (who is in receipt of Child Benefit for the child).
- Single households supported in rehabilitation for addiction, and where living in smaller or alternative accommodation would present a significant risk of relapse.
- Households where the claimant or their partner has children who are deemed for Housing Benefit purposes to be living with another adult (who is in receipt of Child Benefit for the child), and who stay with them at least one night a week

GROUP D

Households where changing housing arrangements could affect their ability to maintain employment.

The group includes households where employment or additional employment offer them the best opportunities to improve their circumstances but the risk of moving could reduce their prospects of employment or further employment.

- People who are working in a temporary job where making alternative housing arrangements could impact on their ability to secure more stable work.
 - People who need to live near their jobs because they work unsocial hours or split shifts.
 - People for whom moving would significantly increase travelling costs to the extent that retaining employment would not be viable.
-

GROUP E

Households experiencing rental shortfalls but would benefit from some short-term financial support.

Short-term is not in law defined by a specific time period. It a test of reasonableness, and in terms of this priority group, the Council has decided that a period of 13 weeks (or less) would be reasonable. Consideration will be given to the circumstances of each applicant rather than using a hard and fast rule.

- Households not in groups A to D with rental shortfalls arising from welfare reforms and who need to maintain their present accommodation whilst seeking suitable alternative arrangements.
-

ONE-OFF PAYMENTS

GROUP A:

Households where alternative arrangements are facilitated by a DHP Award.

*This is the **top priority group**. It includes those who are able to change their household living arrangements to more appropriate accommodation*

- To cover the cost of rent deposits/rent in advance for a tenancy, or removal costs which would mean that the under-occupancy rules, benefit cap or LHA restriction would no longer apply.

GROUP B

Households where the claimant and/or their partner need assistance to improve their ability to work.

*This group is the **second highest group** because members of the family require assistance obtaining work or additional work in order to improve their circumstances, and this would either mean that they could then afford the difference between rent and HB or could move to another area where there was work.*

- Assistance with travel.

GROUP C

Households where it is a possible to take in a lodger or others who may assist with housing costs.

This group represents those who need to need to make some investment in their home in order to accommodate a lodger or sub-tenants who can assist with the household rent.

- Financial assistance with decorating or adaptations to the home to accommodate a lodger.
- Financial assistance towards the cost of furnishing and bedding.

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Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 24th March 2015

Lead Member / Officer: Julian Thompson Hill - Lead Member
Finance and Assets
Paul McGrady - Head of Finance and Assets

Report Author: Gerald Thomas - Valuation and Estates Manager

Title: Long Term Strategy for the Agricultural Estate

1. What is the report about?

The report provides information on the proposed strategy for the Agricultural Estate from 2015 onwards.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Following concerns raised via Performance Scrutiny Committee in March 2014, and June 2014 it was resolved that the existing Agricultural Estate Strategy (as adopted in 2010) was no longer representative of the Council's current position in terms of existing and future financial constraints. Consequently, Performance Scrutiny established a deadline of February 2015 for an agreed new strategy to be taken through the decision making process and approved prior to April 2015.

3. What are the Recommendations?

Cabinet is asked to approve the future strategy of the Agricultural Estate.

4. Report details.

4.1. The Agricultural Estate represents a substantial capital resource which must be seen to work both for the Council and its tenants. The Council no longer has the resources to support the Agricultural Estate in its current form.

4.2. The future strategy for the estate has been considered together with input from the Council's agricultural estate working group. This group comprises members of the Council. The proposed strategy which also includes information about the estate is attached at Appendix 1.

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

5.1 The generation of capital receipts will assist the Council to deliver projects which support all Corporate Priorities and support the efficiencies agenda.

5.2. The removal of onerous maintenance and management liabilities will ensure greater efficiency of Council resources and will mitigate the impact of cuts in other corporate areas.

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

Management costs will be contained within existing Revenue budgets. Any costs in respect of disposals will be met through receipts gained.

Additional Resources needed

ICT - Not applicable

Legal - There is potentially an increased workload for the Legal department, but additional costs can be met from capital receipts achieved from disposals.

Biodiversity - Not applicable at the moment and each disposal would be assessed individually at that point.

Effects on the environment - Not applicable at the moment and each disposal would be assessed individually at that point.

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.

Each disposal will be assessed individually and the EqIA will be undertaken at that point.

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

8.1. The Councils Agricultural Estate Working Group has been involved from the outset in the development of the strategy. Four meetings have been held with the group since June 2014 to consider the Strategy culminating in the support by the group to this proposed strategy at the groups' last meeting on the 18th December 2014.

8.2. The Councils agricultural tenants were contacted by letter during August 2014 to advise them that the estate would need to be reviewed as would all other Council services.

8.3. The Councils agricultural tenants were again contacted by letter on the 6th January 2015 and given an opportunity to respond to the proposals. Any responses were asked to be received by the 23rd January 2015.

To date, there are known to be 13 tenants who would be interested in being able to purchase either the whole or part of their holdings.

8.4. All members of the Council were contacted by email and given an opportunity to respond to the proposals. Cllr: Bobby Feeley responded stating her support to the proposals as outlined.

8.5 Other interested stakeholders, (the Farming Unions, the Clwyd Federation of Young Farmers, the Tenants Farmers Association, and the Country Land and Business Association) were contacted by letter and given an opportunity to respond

to the proposals. Again, any responses were asked to be received by the 23rd January 2015. No responses were initially received and therefore this group of stakeholders were contacted again by a second letter. The Tenants Farmers Association subsequently made contact to request another copy of the original letter. They have now responded and a copy of their response dated 6th February 2015 is attached at Appendix 2. The points that have been raised in their letter have been considered as part of the background process in the development of the proposed strategy.

8.6. A copy of the letter sent to all tenants, members and the above named stakeholders is attached at Appendix 3.

8.7 The proposal was presented to Performance Scrutiny at its February 2015 meeting, and they resolved to recommend to Cabinet that it approves and adopts the future strategy for the Agricultural Estate. Details of the draft minutes of the Committee are attached at Appendix 4.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 Revenue costs must be contained within existing budgets. The value and timing of capital receipts will be uncertain and this must be factored into financial planning assumptions.

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

10.1. Rationalisation of the estate will result in loss of revenue income, however as highlighted in the rationale in the proposed strategy at Appendix 1, agricultural investments do not provide a high rate of return. Unless the Council is prepared to accept this and the need to invest a large proportion of the income into maintenance and improvements, the farm estate will continue to decline and leave the Council exposed to increasing liabilities. The only alternative is to realise the capital value of the investment (.i.e. Dispose of holdings when the opportunity arises)

10.2. There is a risk that a farm could be sold on for alternative development purposes once in private ownership. Covenants restricting land use and overage provisions can be incorporated into any disposals as mitigation, although regard must be had to the effect this may have on receipts.

11. Power to make the Decision

11.1 S123 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the power to dispose of land.

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DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGRICULTURAL ESTATE

STRATEGY PROPOSALS

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. The Agricultural Estate comprises approximately 1,053 hectares, (2600 acres) of land. The estate is a mixture of dairy and stock farms with bare land grazing and some woodland. Appendix 1 provides details of the holdings and bare land and their location

1.2. The holdings are let via either Full Agricultural Tenancy agreements subject to the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, or Farm Business Tenancy agreements subject to the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995. The two Acts are subject to different statutory provisions and place different responsibilities on the Landlord and Tenant.

Table 1: Summary of Lettings (Holdings and bare land)

Numbers:	AHA(a)	FBT(b)	TOTAL
Farms	9	14	23
Land		15	15
TOTAL	9	29	38

a) Agricultural Holdings Act. b) Farm Business Tenancy.

1.3. The annual income generated from the estate is in the region of £230,000 but this revenue is bolstered each year by miscellaneous ad hoc income. An annual revenue budget of around £130,000 is provided from the gross income to cover repairs & maintenance, salaries and other sundry costs. Historically the repairs & maintenance budget has been insufficient to cover the yearly calls on a reactive maintenance basis. In addition, the nature of the Agricultural Holdings Act tenancies places additional burdens on the estate. Capital investment requirements for the estate for the next three years are estimated to be in excess of £1million but are £1.5 to £2 million if looking at a period of over 3 years.

1.4. An in depth review of the agricultural estate was undertaken in 2010.

The Councils agricultural estate team, together with the agricultural estates working group in conjunction with Bruton Knowles, considered the following options:

- Retention in broadly the current format,
- Outright disposal of the estate as an investment in whole or in lots.
- Progressive disposal particularly as vacant possession becomes available.
- Progressive rationalisation into a more viable and sustainable estate. This would involve the disposal of some units and the investment of capital funds into other units.

APPENDIX 1

1.5. The option adopted at the time was progressive rationalisation. It was considered to be the only policy option which could deliver a more viable and sustainable estate by targeting investment into certain holdings and disposing of other holdings. This review was for a five year timescale and that period is therefore coming to its conclusion. It is anticipated that all the actions resulting from the 2010/2011 review will be completed and in place by spring 2015.

1.6. Notwithstanding the above and following concerns raised by the Performance Scrutiny Committee in March 2014, it was decided that in view of the change in the current financial reality for public authorities as compared to that which existed in 2010/11, the agricultural estate strategy was no longer representative of the Council's current position in terms of existing financial constraints.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Local authority agricultural estates (also known as County Council Smallholdings) were created over a century ago in 1908 by legislation intended to create opportunities to provide land for new entrants into food production and agriculture.

2.2. Technological advances and improved mechanisation in agriculture has resulted in the increase in the average size of farms. Fixed costs have to be spread on larger areas in order for farms to become more viable and to enable them to compete in an increasingly challenging industry. Local Authority farms have followed this trend.

2.3. In addition to the above, agricultural tenancy legislation means that there is limited tenancy turnover. Holdings initially let as starter holdings may still be occupied under the same tenancy a generation later. In Denbighshire, a smallholding was last re-let some 10 years ago.

2.4. Denbighshire's agricultural holdings no longer provide the opportunity for new entrants into the farming industry. As mentioned above, the level of investment now required for new entrants in terms of the machinery and infrastructure needed in order to establish a sustainable farming operation -which can survive in the context of the modern farming industry- is far in excess of the traditional 20 acre starter farm model. Together with the number of long term tenancies still in operation, opportunities for new entrants are extremely limited.

2.5. Agricultural estates are non-statutory otherwise known as discretionary services.

2.6. The investment value of Denbighshire County Councils estate is estimated to be in the region of £22.5 million. The rate of return for the estate is therefore less than 1%.

2.7. Investors in agricultural property will traditionally accept a low rate of return for various reasons such as: - Capital growth with the value of agricultural land generally increasing (in real terms) over time, many investors may prefer capital gain as opposed to income as this can be tax efficient, there are tax reliefs available on the sale of agricultural land (e.g. roll over relief), for inheritance tax- agricultural land & buildings can qualify for agricultural tax relief, and some investors will traditionally have an investment strategy of buying land.

APPENDIX 1

2.8. Other than the benefit of capital growth, none of the above investment advantages will apply to local authorities and capital growth will only provide a benefit to the Council if the investment is sold at a time when land prices are high and when money is required to fund services.

2.9. For this reason, agricultural property is considered to be a poor investment for the Council to hold especially when considering that providing smallholdings for new starters is not a statutory responsibility for the Council and also bearing in mind the limited (if any) opportunities that exist for new entrants.

2.10. In view of the above, the Council has started discussions with a local college with regard to facilitating a process that enables interested new entrants to the farming industry to gain experience of a practical nature through assistance provided by the Council.

3. PROCESS

3.1. The future strategy for the estate has been considered in light of the above rationale together with input from the Councils agricultural estate working group. This group comprises of members of the Council.

3.2. Interested stakeholders (Farming Unions, Clwyd Federation of Young Farmers Club, Tenant Farmers Association, Country Land and Business Association, all tenants, and all Members) have been consulted regarding the proposed strategy.

4. PROPOSED STRATEGY

4.1. Discussions and negotiations regarding tenancies and farm rationalisations which are still ongoing from the Bruton Knowles review will be completed. (Unless it is the wish of the tenant not to proceed)

4.2. With regard to holdings where a tenancy is coming to an end, the existing tenant will be given the option- where appropriate - to purchase the freehold of the farm or parts thereof. Where this is the case, any remaining land forming part of the holding will be offered on a short term tenancy to the existing tenant on the understanding that they are expected to either purchase or relinquish this land when the tenancy expires. Where a tenant declines to purchase the holding in these circumstances, the tenancy will not be renewed and the farm will be placed on the open market.

4.3. Where new requests are received from a tenant for the succession of tenancy to a son or daughter - which has not been previously agreed under the Bruton Knowles review, discussions will commence with the tenant - where appropriate - regarding the sale to the tenant of part or whole of the holding. Where the offer of a sale to the tenant is declined, the succession tenancy will be declined. If the freehold purchase does not proceed as anticipated, the tenancy will not be renewed and the farm will then be placed upon the open market.

APPENDIX 1

4.4. Existing tenants occupying holdings under long term tenancies will - where appropriate -be offered the option of purchasing all or part of the freehold of their holdings as in the above, taking into consideration the value of the existing lease and any investment made by the tenant in the holding.

4.5. Opportunities may arise on an ad hoc basis where a tenant may express his interest in purchasing part or whole of the holding. Such discussions may take place during rent review discussions or during other discussions relating to the management of the holding. Such potential disposal opportunities which arise from unforeseen occurrences will be taken as and when they arise. Strategic sites will be identified and dealt with on an individual basis.

4.6. Disposals will in the main be subject to covenants restricting the use of the land for agricultural purposes and/or overage agreements in respect of any increased values obtained through alternative use and/or retention of rights across any disposed land (as far as this can be done legally to protect the rights of the Council and its future needs).

4.7. In all cases, the scheme of delegation and democratic process of the Council at the time will be adhered to in the making of decisions affecting the estate.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. The Agricultural Estate represents a substantial capital resource which must be seen to work both for the Council and its tenants. The Council no longer has the resources to support the agricultural estate in its current form.

5.2. Without taking action now to address these issues, the condition of the estate will deteriorate further resulting in a likely decrease in the value of the built element of the estate. Doing nothing is not an option. There are financial, legal and reputational risks to the Council in not addressing the issue.

5.3. The holdings and bare land currently owned by the Council will remain as farmed units even if they are sold by the Council.

5.4. The Councils agricultural estate is not meeting its objective of providing land for new entrants into food production and agriculture.

5.5. Existing tenants who have the opportunity to purchase their holdings will have better access to funds to further invest and improve their holdings.

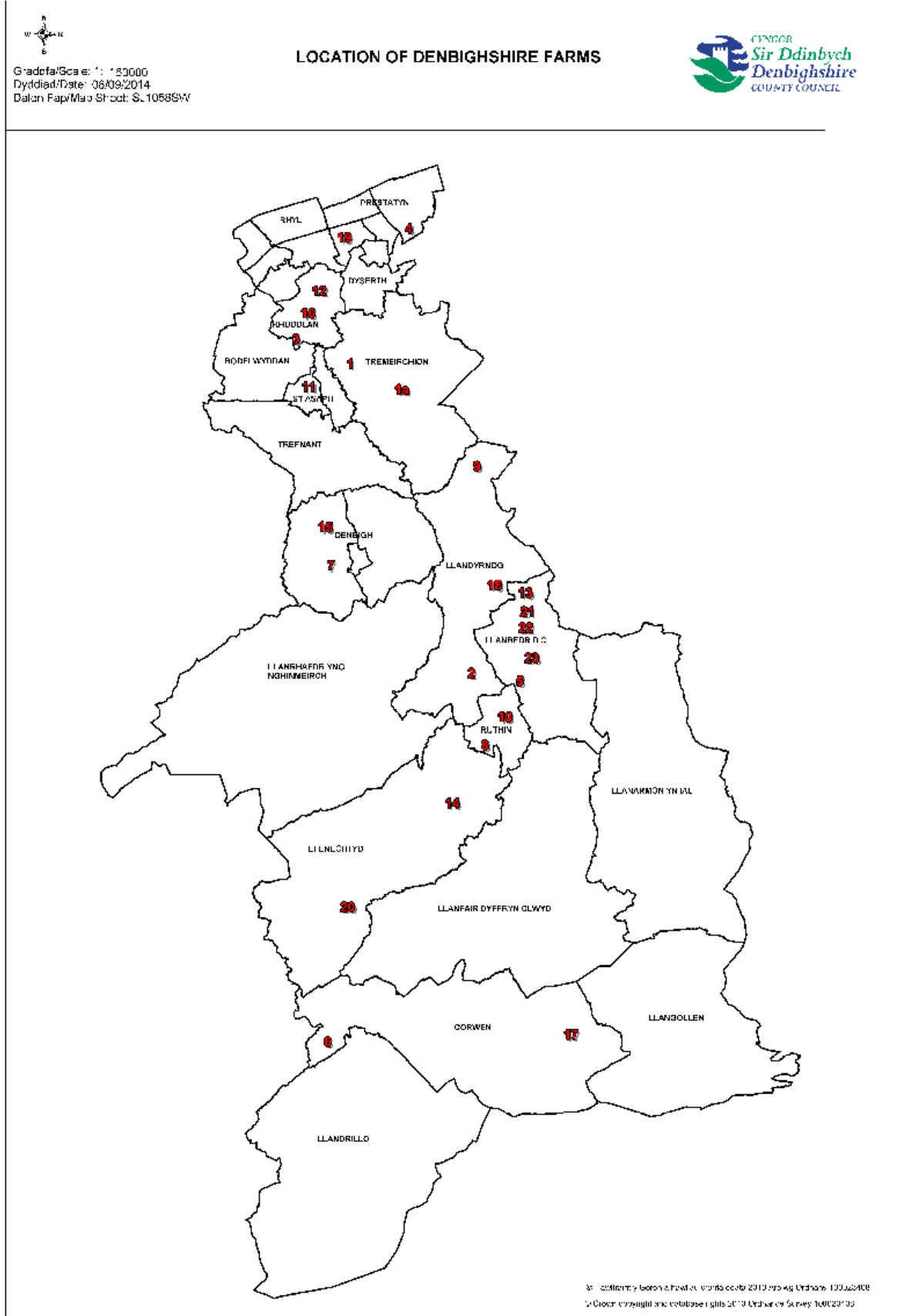
5.6. Improved opportunities for new entrants to farming can be provided by the Council working with local colleges to facilitate more practical solutions to training requirements.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1

FARMS WITHIN DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL		
1	Plas Coch	Rhuallt
1a	Bareland at Pant Ifan Newydd	Rhuallt
2	Bodynys	Rhewl
3	Bryn Gwyn	Rhuddlan
4	Bryn Llwyn	Gwaenysgor
5	Caerfamaeth	Llanbedr DC
6	Corwen Estates	Corwen
7	Denbigh Estates	Denbigh
8	Detached Land at Ruthin	Ruthin
9	Efail Y Waen	Bodfari
10	Glasdir	Ruthin
11	Green Gates	St Asaph
12	Land at Rhuddlan - Tirionfa	Rhuddlan
13	Lletty farm	Llangynhafal
14	Maesglas	Efenechtyd
15	MaesyGroes	Henllan
16	Meadowbrook and Morfa Lodge	Rhuddlan
17	Pant y Ffynnon	Glyndyfrdwy
18	Pentrefelin Ucha	Llandyrnog
19	Pydew	Meliden
20	Ty Cerrig	Melin Y Wig
21	Ty Coch	Llangynhafal
22	Tyn y Caeau	Llangynhafal
23	Ty'n y Celyn	Llanbedr DC

APPENDIX 1



gwd/1415
06 February 2015



Gerald Thomas MRICS
Valuation and Estates Manager
Denbighshire County Council
Caledfryn
Smithfield Road
Denbighshire
LL16 3RJ

Dear Mr Thomas

Denbighshire County Council – Agricultural Estate

Thank you for your letter of 02 February and responding to my subsequent email from today to which you attached a copy of your original letter of 6 January 2015. I hope that in the circumstances there will still be time for the County Council to take into consideration the views of the Tenant Farmers Association as set out below.

The Tenant Farmers Association acknowledges the difficult financial circumstances that many local authorities, including Denbighshire, face at the current time and that there is therefore a need to ensure that the local authority has at its disposal sufficient financial resources to meet its frontline services and that, as a result, all services need to be reviewed.

The TFA would argue that the County Council should view its farms' estate as an income earning asset. With sound asset management it is possible for the county council to see a net contribution to its annual income through the management of its rural estate. This income will not only arise in the form of rent but also from disposals of land for development or marriage value at many times the land's agricultural value. Of course to achieve this there needs to be a sound asset management plan drawn up and for there to be strategic thinking about particular sites on the estate which could attract significant value at disposal due to their development potential. The TFA believes that this route should be fully explored before the Council considers its proposed policy of disposal over time.

The TFA contends that a policy of disposal as and when existing tenancies come to an end is short sighted. Whilst it could provide additional financial resources for the local authority to meet its demand for frontline, statutory services at this stage, this will be on a once and for all basis. When the local authority is in need of resources in the future for hospitals, care homes, schools and the like, it will not have these assets available to sell at that time. That is why the TFA believes there is need for the local authority to make a proper assessment of the potential net present value to the local authority of retaining the assets and making them work more effectively as income earning assets into the future as opposed to what

might be gained from a progressive sell-off. From the correspondence seen, we do not believe that such a comparative net present value approach has been taken and it is therefore impossible to judge whether or not the decision to progressively sell the estate achieves best value for Council tax payers. The TFA believes that county council has a statutory responsibility to ensure the best value is attained and that can only be assessed on the basis of a comparative net present value calculation.

In this respect, I attach some guidance which has been prepared by the Tenancy Reform Industry group (and is due to be published shortly) which I hope will be of assistance to the local authority.

Whilst very much a second-best option, notwithstanding the TFA's views, should the local authority decide that disposal is the best approach, then we would wish existing tenants to have first refusal on purchasing the freehold of their Holdings and that there in put over the years into those farms should be recognised in the price they are asked to pay for acquiring the freehold of those units. It is stressed however that this is very much a second-best option as the TFA believes that the Holdings should be retained by the local authority.

Ownership of County farms will also assist the local authority in meeting its wider objectives in relation to countryside and environmental issues, access to the countryside, learning outside the classroom, planning policies, greenbelt management and assisting in the management of flood risk. These benefits were the focus of a report entitled: "The Importance of County Farms to the Rural Economy" prepared by Sir Don (now Lord) Curry. A copy of that report is submitted as part of our input to the County Council's Review and we would ask that the wider benefits to which it refers are also considered alongside the other, perhaps more tangible, benefits referred to above.

Of course, the TFA also believes that county council smallholdings continue to contribute to the farming ladder both in providing opportunities for individuals to be farmers in their own account and to progress within the industry. Notwithstanding the comments made in your letter about the concentration of occupation, it is the county council smallholding estates nationally and in England that most new entrants gain entry to the sector.

In conclusion therefore the TFA would argue that the county council turns away from its proposed approach and looks to put in place a proper asset management plan which will deliver best value to Council Tax payers through identification of blocks of land with development opportunity whilst at the same time continuing to acquire wider community, environmental and social benefits through the ownership and management of the farms.

Yours sincerely



**George Dunn BA MSc FRAgS
Chief Executive**

<u>Eich cyf / Your ref</u>	
<u>Ein cyf / Our ref</u>	GRT
<u>Dyddiad / Date</u>	6 January 2015
<u>Rhif union / Direct dial</u>	01824 70 6791

Dear Sirs

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – AGRICULTURAL ESTATE

You may recall that Denbighshire County Council undertook a review of its Agricultural Estate in 2010 /2011. A policy of managed rationalization was adopted where the Council would target investment into certain holdings and would dispose of other holdings. This review was for a five year timescale and that period is therefore coming to its conclusion. It is anticipated that all the actions resulting from the 2010/2011 review will be completed and in place by spring 2015.

As background information, the agricultural estate currently comprises approximately 1,053 hectares, (2600 acres) of land. The estate is a mixture of dairy and stock farms with bare land grazing and some woodland. The holdings are let via either Full Agricultural Tenancy agreements subject to the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, or Farm Business Tenancy agreements subject to the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995. The two Acts are subject to different statutory provisions and place different responsibilities on the Landlord and Tenant

Notwithstanding that the 2010 review is now in its final stages, concerns were raised by the Councils' performance scrutiny committee in March 2014 which concluded that in view of the change in the financial position of public authorities as compared to that which existed in 2010/11, the agricultural estate strategy is no longer representative of the Council's current position in terms of existing financial constraints. Performance scrutiny established a deadline of February 2015 for an agreed new strategy to be taken through the decision making process and approved prior to April 2015.

Local Authority agricultural estates (also known as County Council smallholdings) were created over a century ago by legislation intended to create opportunities to provide land for new entrants into agriculture.

Improved mechanization in agriculture has resulted in the increase in the average size of farms. Fixed costs have to be spread on larger areas in order for farms to become more viable and to enable them to compete in an increasingly challenging industry. Local Authority farms have followed this trend. Together with the number of long term tenancies still in operation, opportunities for new entrants are extremely limited. Denbighshire's agricultural holdings are therefore no longer providing opportunities for new entrants into the farming industry. Local Authorities offer a wide range of services, many are statutory but others, like the agricultural estates are non-statutory otherwise known as discretionary services.

The Council's Agricultural Estate team together with the Agricultural Estate Working Group has therefore been working on a new strategy to take effect from 2015 onwards. The strategy needs to reflect the current reality for public authorities in Wales.

The following outlines the main proposals in the strategy:-

Existing tenants of tenancies coming to an end will be given the option, where appropriate, to purchase the whole or part of the freehold of the holding prior to the Council disposing the holding on the open market.

Any tenants who make new requests for another succeeding tenancy to a son or daughter and this has not been previously raised under the Bruton Knowles review, will be given an opportunity, where appropriate, to discuss with the Council, their purchase of part or the whole of the holding. If a freehold purchase does not proceed as anticipated, the tenancy will not be renewed and the farm will then be placed upon the open market.

Existing tenants occupying holdings' under long term tenancies will, where appropriate, be offered the option of purchasing all or part of the freehold of their holdings as in the above, taking into consideration the value of the existing lease and any investment made by the tenant in the holding.

Opportunities may arise on an ad hoc basis where a tenant may express his interest in purchasing part or whole of the holding. Such discussions may take place during rent review discussions or during other discussions relating to the management of the holding. Such potential disposal opportunities which arise from unforeseen occurrences will be taken as and when they arise. Strategic sites will be identified and dealt with on an individual basis.

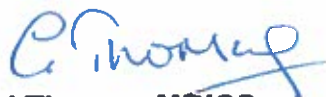
Disposals will in the main be subject to covenants restricting the use of the land for agricultural purposes and/or overage agreements in respect of any increased values obtained through alternative use and/or retention of rights across any disposed land (as far as this can be done legally to protect the rights of the Council and its future needs).

In all cases, the scheme of delegation and democratic process of the Council at the time will be adhered to in the making of decisions affecting the estate.

It would not be appropriate to consult on how the strategy will affect the future of individual holdings nor will the Council be in a position to consult on any detailed financial projections. The officers in the Agricultural estates team will however be in touch with all the individual tenants to discuss how the proposed strategy will affect them individually.

Should you have any comments on these proposals, we would be pleased to hear from you by Friday 23rd January 2015 so that the proposals can be put to the Council.

Yours faithfully,



Gerald Thomas MRICS
Valuation and Estates Manager –
Valuation & Estates

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APPENDIX 4

Draft Minutes from Performance Scrutiny Meeting 26th February 2015

LONG TERM STRATEGY FOR THE AGRICULTURAL ESTATE

A copy of a report by the Valuation and Estates Manager (VEM), which provided information on the proposed strategy for the Agricultural Estate (AE) from 2015 onwards, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Lead Member for Finance and Assets introduced the report and draft long term strategy for County's Agricultural Estate. He advised that the Agricultural Estate Working Group, on which each Member Area Group (MAG) was represented, had drawn up a future strategy for the estate which would remove onerous maintenance and management liabilities and ensure greater efficiency of Council resources whilst mitigating the impact of cuts in corporate areas. He explained that, if the strategy was approved and adopted, there would be a managed disposal of agricultural holdings, with sitting tenants being given the first option to purchase their entire holding or part of it. (where appropriate). If they opted initially to buy part of it, the remainder of it would be rented to them for a set period of time under a short-term tenancy agreement on the understanding that they would be expected to buy the remainder of the land at the end of the short-term tenancy, or otherwise relinquish it. Any holdings or land relinquished would be sold on the open market to realise a capital receipt. All disposals would be as agricultural holdings, with appropriate covenants and overage agreements being applied to the sales.

In response to Members' questions officers confirmed that overage agreements could legally be applied to the sale of agricultural holdings and land for specific periods of time. Any holdings which became vacant would be disposed of on the open market under powers delegated to officers/Lead Member/Cabinet dependent upon the estimated value of the holding. The Lead Member for Finance and Assets referred to discussions underway with a local college with respect to facilitating a process to enable interested new entrants to the industry to gain experience of a practical nature through assistance provided by the Council. These discussions were currently at the negotiation stage, no agreement had yet been reached. The Lead Member for Education suggested that it would be worthwhile to approach other organisations where new entrants into the industry were given an opportunity to run a farm for a year to gain valuable practical and managerial experience.

In response to members' questions the Lead Member and officers confirmed that:

- covenant and overage agreements could be applied for a specific period of time;
- for 'market rents' to be charged the dwellings, farm buildings, boundaries and land etc. had to be in 'market condition';
- the majority of the Council owned holdings were outside any designated LDP sites and therefore could not benefit from LDP land value;
- a lot of the recent investment on the Estate had been financed either via Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) grant funding or by the tenants themselves;
- the last new fresh re- letting on the estate took place approximately 10 years ago;

- private estates could benefit from tax advantages for re-investment, these were not available to public estates;
- the Council had written to tenants outlining the contents of the proposed strategy and to date 13 tenants had expressed an interest in purchasing their holdings or part of their holdings;
- it was anticipated that the Strategy would be a long-term one due to the terms of current tenancies, some tenancies were due to expire next year, but it would probably take another 10 to 15 years to deliver the entire strategy as some tenants had longer term tenancies;
- the length of tenancies could not be renegotiated without valid legal reasons;
- all undertakings made under the 2010 Agricultural Estate Strategy would be honoured

Councillor Eryl Williams referred to a Council owned holding which had been bequeathed to the Council under a covenant that it be let to a new entrant into the farming industry. The local Community Council had long held concerns that the County Council would attempt to dispose of this holding as part of a future strategy. He requested that it be placed on record that if the County Council decided to dispose of this holding the Community Council had indicated that it would instigate a legal challenge to that decision on the basis of the covenant in the original bequest.

Following an in-depth discussion the Committee by a majority vote:

Resolved: - to recommend to Cabinet

- (i) that it approves and adopts the future strategy for the Agricultural Estate; and
- (ii) the Committee noted that covenants(s) relating to the above mentioned holding, and any other Estate holdings would be researched and clarified prior to the disposal of the holding(s)."

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 24th March 2015

Lead Member / Officer: Cllr Julian Thompson Hill – Lead Member Finance and Assets
Paul McGrady – Head of Finance and Assets

Report Author: C D Mathews, Commercial Development Manager

Title: To declare surplus to Council requirements the Council land buildings at Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn with a view to disposing on the open market.

1. What is the report about?

The declaration of Council land and buildings at Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn as surplus to requirements.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

A decision is required to declare the following surplus to the Councils requirements;

Plot 1

Extending to 0.170ha / 0.42acres as shown edged red on the attached plan comprises 6-8 Nant Hall Road associated car parking and the public convenience.

Plot 2

Extending to 0.636 ha / 1.57 acres as shown edged red on the attached plan and comprises the former Library, Ty Nant offices and associated car park

3. What are the Recommendations?

To declare the land and buildings detailed in Section 2.0 above as surplus to requirements with a view to being disposed of on the open market on an Expression of Interest basis.

4. Report details.

4.1 The Council has vacated 6-8 Nant Hall Road, Ty Nant and the Former Library. The WC block and Nant Hall Road car park are still operational at the present time.

4.2 Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) have a team providing Primary Care Services in North Denbighshire operating from the ground floor of 6-8 Nant Hall Road with four hot desks for DCC Housing staff. The first floor is currently used by the Police as a back office facility.

- 4.3 Prestatyn Town Council (PTC) have use of a Mayors Parlour and monthly use of the Chamber based on established user provisions that predate Local Government Reorganisation in 1974. The Council has consulted with PTC and their representations are provided in Section 8.0.
- 4.4 The former Library is currently let to the Artisans Collective Community Interest Company for a short term contracted out Lease with early break provisions.
- 4.5 The public convenience to the rear of 6-8 Nant Hall Road is operational and will remain open pending an agreed closure timeline with the service department.
- 4.6 The 76 space pay and display car park was included within review by Mott McDonald and its recommendation for car parking provision in Prestatyn is provided in Para 8.3.
- 4.7 The Church of Wales hold an easement to access their land to the south of the car park. The Council has put forward a proposal whereby they surrender their rights of access across the Councils land conditional on making land available on the western boundary of the car park to create an adoptable highway to serve both the Councils land and the Church.
- 4.8 There is a public right of way that bisects the site shown by the bold purple line. The section of highway running to the C of W Community Hall shown in purple is owned by the Council but is subject to rights of way from the Church.
- 4.9 The Council is currently consulting on a draft Development Brief to include adjacent third party landownerships. It is anticipated that the report on the consultation on the Development Brief will report to the June 2015 Planning Committee.
- 4.10 The site will be disposed of as part of an Expression of Interest on the open market where the Council seeks to obtain the 'best' scheme for the town and the site.

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

- 5.1 Corporate Aims & Objectives
The disposal of these land and buildings will assist the Council in modernising and delivering efficiencies to its customers.
- 5.2 Corporate Asset Objectives
The reduction in the Councils asset base will deliver revenue savings of circa £110,000 in year one.
- 5.3 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act/Biodiversity Duty
A Biodiversity Survey for the site will be made available to interested parties.
- 5.4 Equalities Act
See EqIA attached.

- 5.5 Carbon Reduction Commitment
The disposal of the properties will reduce the Councils carbon footprint by 149.5 tonnes per annum.
- 5.6 Town and Country Planning
The Council will dispose of the property with a Development Brief prepared by Planning Services and adopted by the Councils Planning Committee.
- 5.7 The property is a Key Strategic Site for employment and wealth creation and the disposal by means of an Expression of Interest exercise to achieve a scheme that is weighted to deliver the economic ambitions the Council has for the site.
- 6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**
Revenue costs associated with the ownership of the buildings will be required until the site is sold. Third party occupiers in 6-8 Nant Hall Road will require common areas and services to be maintained to a certain standard whilst the disposal process is ongoing.
- 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.**
Please see attached EqIA for further information.
- 8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**
- 8.1 Lead Member has been consulted both in his capacity as a local member as part of the Member Area Group and as Lead Member at Asset management Group on 5th March 2015 where the decision to declare the property surplus was approved.
- 8.2 The Prestatyn Member Area Group has discussed this site on 6th November 2014 and again on 28th January 2015. Although supportive of the disposal of the land edged red a majority of MAG Members supported the retention of the Council Chamber within 6-8 Nant Hall Road for future Council meetings.
- 8.3 Highways and Environmental Services have been approached about the sale of the WC block at the rear of 6-8 Nant Hall Road and have no objection in principle to its closure. The summary and recommendation of the car park review is as follows
- ‘It is concluded that the current parking and traffic management arrangements in Prestatyn serve the retail needs of the town adequately. Only the following measures are recommended to complement the retail offer in Prestatyn:
1. Change all on-street parking to 1 hour limited waiting and improve enforcement
 2. Retain at least some of the spare capacity offered by the Offa’s Tavern and Council Offices car parks to accommodate future growth that the town had

adequate parking for the short to medium term allowing for the loss of the Council and Town Councils car park on Nant Hall Road’.

8.4 Prestatyn Town Council has provided the following written representations in consultations with them:

8.4.1 Sec 23(8) Local Authorities (Wales) (Property Etc) Order 1973 – Established User Rights 6-8 Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn.

The Town Council wish to retain use of the Council Chambers, Municipal Offices, Prestatyn.

The Finance and Management Committee was mindful of the wider commercial development of the site and demand to have further discussion with the County Council. It is paramount for local government / local services that this area should feature in the towns future service plans, There is also the opportunity to maintain / deliver shared accommodation with other public serviced and voluntary bodies.

8.4.2 A resolution was passed on the 14th January 2015 by the Finance and Management Committee (subject to PTC ratification) as follows:

1. That DCC be requested to ensure car parking events / civic area, potential shared use of Ty Nant and or Municipal Building as shared public building and the provision of public conveniences are included in any future development proposals.
2. That further detailed consultation upon future development proposals and options for the above site are required prior to the disposal by the County Council

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The disposal of the Councils property assets reduces the Councils liabilities and generates capital receipts to assist in the delivery of the Councils Corporate Plan.

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

Third party occupations;
North Wales Police, BCUHB, Prestatyn Town Council, Church of Wales, adjacent residential owners holding access rights off rear gardens.
Car Park Stopping Up Order – Highways Act 1980.
Negotiations and offers of alternative accommodation (as far as the Council is able to offer).

11. Power to make the Decision

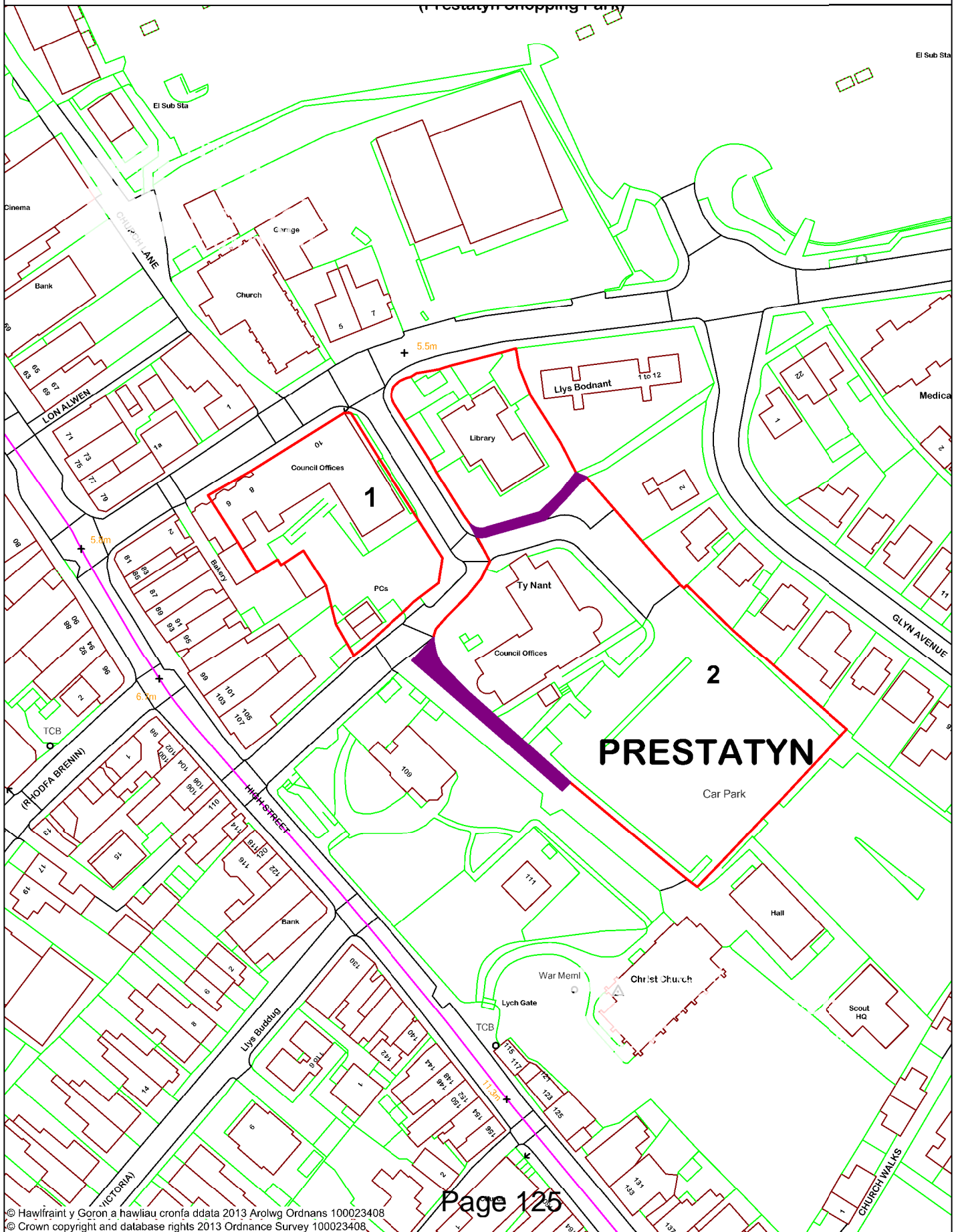
S123 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the power to dispose of land and buildings.



Ty Nant



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Dyddiad/Date: 23/10/2014
Dalen Fap/Map Sheet: SJ0682NE



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TY NANT, 6-8 NANT HALL ROAD,
FORMER LIBRARY, PUBLIC
CONVIENIENCE AND CENTRAL CAR
PARK, NANT HALL ROAD, PRESTATYN

10th MARCH 2015

Equality Impact Assessment

TY NANT, 6-8 NANT HALL ROAD, FORMER LIBRARY, PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND CENTRAL CAR PARK, NANT HALL ROAD, PRESTATYN

Contact: < C D MATHEWS, PROPERTY SERVICES, FINANCE AND ASSETS

Updated: 10.03.15

1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A project proposal

2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

The proposal is to declare the above land and buildings as surplus to requirements with a view to disposing on the open market.

3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

No

The proposal is to dispose of the land and buildings and any redevelopment of the site will be required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010 and detail any proposals in a Design and Access Statement. To undertake a detailed EIA at this stage in advance of any certainty of the future use of the site is premature.

4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)

Knowledge of the site and measures taken by the County Council to ensure compliance with legislation to date.

5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)

It is probable that the decision will have a neutral impact on the above protected characteristics.

6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

No.

7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.

No

No potential disproportionate negative impact would be permitted as a condition of any sale.

8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?

No

<If yes please complete the table below. If no, please explain here>

Action(s)	Owner	By when?
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Unrestrict editing to insert additional rows>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>

9. Declaration

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date:	01.07.2015
--------------	------------

Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
C D Mathews	10.03.15

Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 24th February 2015

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

Report Author: Richard Weigh, Chief Accountant

Title: Finance Report

1. What is the report about?

The report gives details of the council's revenue budget and savings as agreed for 2014/15. The report also provides a summary update of the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Plan.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the council's current financial position.

3. What are the Recommendations?

Members note the budgets set for 2014/15 and progress against the agreed budget strategy.

4. Report details

The report provides a summary of the council's revenue budget for 2014/15 detailed in (**Appendix 1**). The council's net revenue budget is £188m (£192m in 13/14). The position on service and corporate budgets is a forecast under spend of £705k (£639k under last month). Further narrative is outlined below. Savings of £7.1m were agreed as part of the budget and are detailed as **Appendix 2**. The appendix shows that 96% are classed as achieved. There is a cash contingency to cover any savings not fully achieved within the financial year and approximately £100k of this may be required this year.

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

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

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

Relevant service narrative is shown in the following paragraphs.

Communications, Marketing & Leisure - the current forecast shows a potential underspend of £58k which is mainly due to the continued increased

demand on membership numbers at the leisure centres as well as some of the 2015/16 budget savings agreed as part of the Freedoms & Flexibilities exercise starting to be implemented in readiness for the new financial year.

Cabinet has previously agreed to the setting up of an Equipment Reserve as part of the Council's mid-term budget strategy of working towards net zero budgets for leisure centres and therefore any final underspend in 14/15 can be transferred to the Reserve subject to Cabinet agreement. In addition the Department is earmarking some of the final underspend to fund some one-off staff costs that are required as part of the savings proposals agreed for 2015/16.

The Foryd Harbour continues to develop and as previously agreed any revenue funding shortfall will be met corporately in 14/15. Currently the requirement is forecast to be £60k which includes marine licensing costs required as part of the Harbour Empowerment Order.

School Improvement & Inclusion – The service is currently projected to under spend by £214k (£224k last month) due to expenditure being lower than planned on Early Years placements for 3 year olds (approx. £50k less than budget) and vacancy savings, relating partly to a secondment to Welsh Government and partly due to the restructures within the service in response to the Freedoms and Flexibilities exercise.

Business Improvement and Modernisation – the service is currently projected to underspend by £30k due to a delay in spend relating to some ICT projects which will now be incurred in 2015/16. The under spend of £31k is after the transfers to specific reserves actioned following last month's report:

Legal, HR & Democratic Services - the service is currently projected to underspend by £53k largely due to a delay in the procurement of Case Management Software to replace an existing system which will not now proceed until next financial year. It is recommended that the service underspend be carried forward into 2015/16 to fund this expenditure along with anticipated expenditure to upgrade or replace the equipment in the Council Chamber.

Finance & Assets – is forecast to under spend by £88k. The movement is a result of some delays to works on grade listed buildings. It is requested that the additional under spend be carried forward to fund the Repair & Maintenance programme in 2015/16. Vacancy savings in Finance account for £18k of the under spend which is earmarked to fund restructure costs in April 2015.

Highways & Environmental Services – As indicated in previous reports the service has faced a number of pressures and risks in 2014/15. An over spend of £181k (£319k last month) is currently projected. The improved position largely relates to the early achievement of some planned efficiency savings which were agreed as part of the 2015/16 budget proposals alongside the release of some contingency budgets which have not been required due to the

favourable weather conditions over the winter. The current projection still includes some contingencies which will be reviewed over the coming weeks with the aim of trying to bring the service into a break-even position by the end of the financial year.

Underlying overspends around school transport, car parking income and the reduction in the number of jobs received from North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency will continue to be a risk in the new financial year.

Planning & Public Protection - currently reporting a break-even position but this includes significant one-off incurred as part of restructuring the service. Any final overspend is to be offset centrally and repaid over the next two years as agreed by the Head of Finance & Assets.

Community Support Services (Adult & Business Services) - the current forecast for 2014/15 is for a non-recurring underspend of £104k (£81k reported last month). The under spend is due to staffing costs that would normally be charged to the revenue budget being allocated against the one-off Intermediate Care Fund grant for 14/15.

It is proposed that part of the current year underspend be earmarked to finance the costs of employing two independent agency social workers for a six month period to assist with the consultation process as part of the review of future delivery of social care provider services. In addition a proposal is being considered that would enable support staff to vacate the Trem-y-Dyffryn premises in Denbigh to reduce future year revenue costs. In order to achieve this however there will be a need to fund some upfront ICT costs to enable the staff to relocate to the offices in Ruthin. The move is likely to take place early in the new financial year and therefore any remaining underspend from 14/15 could be set aside to fund these one-off costs.

Economic Business Development - it is assumed that any under spend on Town & Area Plan budgets will be carried forward as agreed as part of the 2015/16 budget savings proposal. Latest indications are that this under spend could be up to £150k depending on actual spend between now and the financial year end. In addition £45k was carried forward from the 13/14 underspend to fund costs in respect of coastal facilities support and it now seems likely that only £25k will be spent this financial year. However the balance will need to be rolled forward to fund the remaining costs that will fall in 15/16.

Also the Economic Community Ambition (ECA) priority originally had £152k revenue budget for 14/15, of which £50k was transferred to Property Services to fund the Strategic Commercial Development Team. Of the budget remaining £56k has been spent to date and it seems likely that there might be circa £30k remaining.

Children & Family Services – the current forecast is for a net under spend of £215k, which is down slightly from the £227k reported last month due to a new independent specialist placement. The overall underspend is partly due to

several of the agreed budget savings proposals for 15/16 having already been fully implemented this year.

Schools - At the end of February the projection for school balances is £3.025m, which is a reduction of £0.867m on the balances brought forward from 2013/14 (£3.892m). The non-delegated budget is currently projected to break even.

Corporate budgets are forecast to be under spent by £90k. It is assumed that any in-year corporate under spends or unallocated contingencies will contribute to the funding of the Corporate Plan. The forecast underspend has reduced this month as assumptions around writing off costs associated with the Scala Cinema have been included.

Although not part of the current revenue budget, the council has previously made a provision to cover the cost of payments arising from historic equal pay claims. The provision was established several years ago when the risk of claims first emerged but there was a level of uncertainty around the final cost and timing of the outcome. The claims are now substantially resolved and will result in part of the provision not being required – this could be approximately £1m. The council acted prudently to make the provision based on the best information available at the time. The outcome allows the remaining provision to be released and to be invested in other priorities. As such it is assumed that the benefit from this will transfer to support the funding of the Corporate Plan.

Corporate Plan cash reserves at the beginning of 2014/15 were £14.4m. Accounting for the transfer above, cash raised to fund the Plan by the end of the year will total £18.3m, of which £11m is either spent or committed to current schemes, such as Rhyl High School. The remainder is required to fund future schemes identified in the Plan.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The latest revenue position assumes an increase in balances at year end of £35k compared to a budgeted increase of £163k. HRA balances are forecast to be £1.322m at the end of the year. The Housing Capital Plan forecast expenditure is £5.3m.

Treasury Management - At the end of February, the council's borrowing totalled £148.546m at an average rate of 5.45%. Investment balances were £37.4m at an average rate of 0.59%

Expenditure on the council's **Capital Plan** was £23.7m against a Plan of £34.5m at the end of February. This suggests £10.8m of expenditure before the end of the year. However, given the nature and timing of capital expenditure this is feasible as effectively there is still two months' worth of works to be paid for. By comparison, the figure at the same point last year was £11m and this was spent by the time the accounts closed. The Capital Plan includes an estimated £11.8m expenditure on the Corporate Plan. A summary of the Plan is included as **Appendix 3** and an update on the major projects is included as **Appendix 4**.

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

A summary EqIA was submitted to Council to support the savings in this year's budget.

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

Prior to approval by County Council, the savings were agreed with Heads of Service and Lead Members, presented to member budget workshops and circulated to staff. The proposals to balance the budget were discussed in detail at member workshops and members were given the opportunity to raise issues prior to the final report going to Council. The Corporate Governance Committee was provided with regular updates as it has an oversight role in respect of the budget process.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

It is important that services continue to manage budgets prudently and that any in-year surpluses are considered in the context of the medium-term financial position, particularly given the scale of budget reductions required over the coming two or three years.

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

This is the most challenging financial period the council has faced and failure to deliver the agreed budget strategy will put further pressure on services in the current and future financial years. Effective budget monitoring and control will help ensure that the financial strategy is achieved.

11. Power to make the Decision

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

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Appendix 1

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2014/15

Feb-15	Net Budget	Budget 2014/15			Projected Outturn							Variance
	2013/14	Expenditure	Income	Net	Expenditure	Income	Net	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Previous Report
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
Communication, Marketing & Leisure	5,958	11,857	-6,130	5,727	12,684	-7,015	5,669	827	-885	-58	-1.01%	-23
Customers & Education Support	2,004	2,969	-515	2,454	2,966	-512	2,454	-3	3	0	0.00%	0
School Improvement & Inclusion	4,873	13,307	-8,752	4,555	13,533	-9,192	4,341	226	-440	-214	-4.70%	-224
Business Improvement & Modernisation	3,733	4,958	-1,224	3,734	5,153	-1,450	3,703	195	-226	-31	-0.83%	-145
Legal, HR & Democratic Services	2,445	3,502	-1,108	2,394	3,566	-1,225	2,341	64	-117	-53	-2.21%	-13
Finance & Assets	6,733	13,969	-5,615	8,354	14,461	-6,195	8,266	492	-580	-88	-1.05%	-75
Highways & Environmental Services	19,866	36,029	-17,200	18,829	36,388	-17,377	19,011	359	-177	182	0.97%	319
Planning & Public Protection	2,540	4,229	-1,749	2,480	4,817	-2,337	2,480	588	-588	0	0.00%	0
Community Support Services	33,505	46,726	-14,457	32,269	47,255	-15,090	32,165	529	-633	-104	-0.32%	-81
Economic & Business Development	1,879	1,557	-136	1,421	1,723	-334	1,389	166	-198	-32	-2.25%	0
Children's Services	8,779	10,735	-2,314	8,421	10,748	-2,544	8,204	13	-230	-217	-2.58%	-227
Total Services	92,315	149,838	-59,200	90,638	153,294	-63,271	90,023	3,456	-4,071	-615	-0.68%	-469
Corporate	17,593	45,137	-28,995	16,142	45,047	-28,995	16,052	-90	0	-90	-0.56%	-170
Precepts & Levies	4,593	4,342	0	4,342	4,342	0	4,342	0	0	0	0.00%	0
Capital Financing	13,230	13,330	0	13,330	13,330	0	13,330	0	0	0	0.00%	0
Total Corporate	35,416	62,809	-28,995	33,814	62,719	-28,995	33,724	-90	0	-90	-0.27%	-170
Council Services & Corporate Budget	127,731	212,647	-88,195	124,452	216,013	-92,266	123,747	3,366	-4,071	-705	-0.57%	-639
Schools & Non-delegated School Budgets	63,840	73,855	-10,124	63,731	74,057	-9,459	64,598	202	665	867	1.36%	791
Total Council Budget	191,571	286,502	-98,319	188,183	290,070	-101,725	188,345	3,568	-3,406	162	0.09%	152
Housing Revenue Account	-102	13,097	-13,260	-163	13,045	-13,080	-35	-52	180	128		263

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APPENDIX 2 SAVINGS AGREED 2014/15			Status	Savings
Service Area	Description			
CORPORATE EFFICIENCIES				
Reduce Contingency for balances and impact of Recession	Phase out budget provision over 3 years	Achieved		£k 600
Pension Costs	Introduction of 50/50 Scheme	Achieved		300
Workforce Efficiencies	Includes Removal of Essential Car User Allowance	Achieved		363
Modernising the Council	Agreed target per 2013/14 Budget only - further projects being developed and will be included within Service targets	In Progress		300
Removal of one-off funds	Social Care Additional Funds in 12/13	Achieved		905
Carbon Reduction Commitment	Dropping out of payment scheme	Achieved		150
Capital Financing Budget	Repayment of loans to generate ongoing revenue saving	Achieved		250
Single Status	Scheme now fully implemented, no additional budget needed	Achieved		315
Property Running Costs	Energy efficiency, NNDR reductions	Achieved		120
Insurance Premiums	Negotiated reductions in some premiums	Achieved		20
Inflation Budget	Balance of 2013/14 allocation	Achieved		142
LDP contribution	Reduce Corporate contribution to LDP from £25k p.a to £15k p.a	Achieved		10
				3,475
SERVICE EFFICIENCIES				
Communication, Marketing & Leisure				
Modernise Library Service Provision	Better use of space eg Gallery, Museum, TIC, location and suitability of some buildings etc	Achieved		30
Scala	Reduced Council subsidy	Achieved		12
Clwyd Leisure	Reduced Council subsidy	Achieved		50
ECTARC	Reduced Council subsidy	Achieved		30
Ruthin Craft Centre	Reduce Council's financial support	Achieved		20
Llangollen Pavilion	Reduce Council's financial support	Achieved		25
Youth Services	Reconfiguration of elements of the service	Achieved		40
				207
Highways & Environmental Services				
Renegotiate recycle and disposal contracts	Contracts currently being tendered - increased competition likely to drive down prices	Achieved		27
Environmental Services	Other Small savings	Achieved		10
WAG Waste Target Pressures	Increase in Landfill Tax, costs of collection etc	Achieved		-50
Reduced subsidy of School Meal Service	Increased take up of meals	Achieved		50
Management Restructure	Integration of Environment & Highways into one structure	Achieved		400
Emergency Planning	Savings arising from joint service with Flintshire	Achieved		30
Waste Management	Efficiencies from investment in transfer station and reduced contribution to Sustainable Waste Management Grant reserve	Achieved		200
Fleet Efficiencies	Reduction in vehicle numbers	Achieved		80
Building Cleaning	Renegotiation of Contracts	Achieved		100
				847
Planning and Public Protection				
Review Pest Control	Only carry out statutory part of function	Achieved		20
Review of Planning Policy Service	Reduce LDP contribution	Achieved		20
Review of CCTV service	Reduction of overtime costs and collaborative project	Achieved		65
Review of Management	Management Restructure	Achieved		30
				135
Adults & Business Services				
Cefndy Healthcare	Planned reduction in Council subsidy	Achieved		31
Impact of investment in reablement	Reduced need for care services as more people are able to live independently for longer	Achieved		75
Residential Care - Impact of Extra Care	Less people needing residential care due to preventative services and more independent living opportunities	Achieved		150
Reablement Intervention	Reduce need for care services through targeted intervention	Achieved		13
Telecare	Regional partnership will reduce running costs	Achieved		10
Systems Thinking and Vacancy Control	Process improvements to reduce admin and other costs	Achieved		90
Social Care Regional Board - Procurement Hub	Better commissioning of high cost placements	Achieved		18
Service Managers	Streamline Management structure	Achieved		60
Day & Work Opportunities	Modernise Day & Work Opportunities (Learning Disability)	Achieved		50
Mental Health Services	Reduce management commitment within service	Achieved		46
Welfare Rights Service/CAB Grant	Channel Shift	Achieved		50
Community Development	Refocus service delivery	Achieved		25
				618
School Improvement & Inclusion				
Special Education	Review of Recoupment and Out of County Placements	Achieved		200
Pupil Support	University related fees	Achieved		8
ABA	Specific budget no longer required	Achieved		25
Training	20% reduction in budget	Achieved		6
Outreach	Budget Re-alignment	Achieved		5
Music & Arts	Review of Service Provision	Achieved		52
				296
Customers & Education Support				
Supplies & Services	Targeted reduction in spend	Achieved		30
				30

APPENDIX 2 SAVINGS AGREED 2014/15			Status	Savings
Service Area	Description			
Children's Services				
Budget used to fund external placements for looked after Children to reflect revised demand	Currently exceptionally high due to type of placements. These will change as certain individuals become adults	Achieved		64
West Rhyl Young Peoples Project	Reduce / remove grant funding	Achieved		41
Social Care Regional Board - Procurement Hub	Better commissioning of high cost placements	Achieved		17
Outcome Agreement	Funding no longer needed in CS	Achieved		69
Tir Na Nog	Reconfigure service provision	Achieved		64
Staffing Budgets	Adjust budgets to account for staff turnover	Achieved		195
				450
Housing & Community Development				
Review of Economic & Business Development	Review of Management Structure	Achieved		50
Non HRA	Review of commissioning	Achieved		10
				60
Finance & Assets				
Property Services	Management Restructure and review of process / admin	Achieved		100
Finance	Includes not replacing vacant posts and reduction in hours	Achieved		75
Internal Audit	Not replacing vacant post and reduction in hours	Achieved		25
				200
HR				
Training	Re provision of service	Achieved		10
Occupational Health	Review of service	Achieved		3
Lead Business Partner	Efficiency saving	Achieved		3
Capital Financing	Investment repaid following 2010 Restructure	Achieved		12
				28
Legal & Democratic Services				
Registration of Electors	Capacity within the budget for canvassers fees	Achieved		30
Registrar	Improved efficiencies within the service	Achieved		20
Civics	Reduction in resource available for civic events	Achieved		5
Legal Library	Reduce expenditure on publications	Achieved		8
Administration	Review administration provision	Achieved		20
				83
Business Planning & Performance				
Improvement Team	Delete Vacant Manager Post	Achieved		81
Partnership & Communities Team	Delete Performance Officer Post	Achieved		45
Programme Office	Reduce Core Funding	Achieved		13
Partnership & Communities Team	Restructure Phase 2 (net savings)	Achieved		68
				207
Schools				
School Reorganisation	Non-pupil related elements of budget (Area 2)	Achieved		150
School Reorganisation	Saving related to Formula Review for Middle Schools	Achieved		80
Schools	Release of Non-delegated contingency fund	Achieved		200
School Reorganisation	Non-pupil related elements of budget (Area 1)	Achieved		88
				518
Total Service Savings				3,679
Total Council Savings				7,154
Summary:			£'000	%
Savings Achieved/Replaced or Pressures Confirmed			6,854	96
Savings In Progress/Being Reviewed			300	4
Savings Not Achieved or Deferred and not replaced			0	0
Total			7,154	

General Capital Plan

Capital Expenditure

Total Estimated Payments - General
Total Estimated Payments - Corporate Plan
Contingency
Total

Capital Financing

- 1 External Funding
- 2 Receipts and Reserves
- 3 Prudential Borrowing
- 5 Unallocated Funding

Total Capital Financing

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Total Estimated Payments - General	23,440	14,134	100	100
Total Estimated Payments - Corporate Plan	10,873	21,390	2,418	394
Contingency	281	700	500	500
Total	34,594	36,224	3,018	994
External Funding	18,805	12,693	5,021	4,605
Receipts and Reserves	4,166	9,296	562	61
Prudential Borrowing	11,623	14,235	1,540	433
Unallocated Funding	0	0	(4,105)	(4,105)
Total Capital Financing	34,594	36,224	3,018	994

Corporate Plan

Approved Capital Expenditure included in above plan

Cefndy Healthcare Investment
 Highways Maintenance and bridges
 Feasibility Study - New Ruthin School
 Feasibility Study - Llanfair/ Pentrecelyn
 Rhyl High School
 Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy - Dee Valley West Review
 Bodnant Community School
 Ysgol Glan Clwyd
 Faith Based Secondary

Estimated Capital Expenditure

Total Estimated Payments

Approved Capital Funding included in above plan

External Funding
 Receipts and Reserves
 Prudential Borrowing

Estimated Capital Funding

External Funding
 Receipts and Reserves
 Prudential Borrowing

Total Estimated Funding

	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Cefndy Healthcare Investment	100	341		
Highways Maintenance and bridges	5,373	1,750		
Feasibility Study - New Ruthin School	50			
Feasibility Study - Llanfair/ Pentrecelyn	10			
Rhyl High School	4,273	17,046	1,856	333
Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy - Dee Valley West Review	119			
Bodnant Community School	466	2,253	562	61
Ysgol Glan Clwyd	465			
Faith Based Secondary	17			
Estimated Capital Expenditure	0	7,763	31,971	25,748
Total Estimated Payments	10,873	29,153	34,389	26,142
External Funding	2,425	3,928	416	
Receipts and Reserves	1,473	8,207	562	61
Prudential Borrowing	6,975	9,255	1,440	333
External Funding		2,535	8,537	17,277
Receipts and Reserves	0	5,052	3,593	2,497
Prudential Borrowing		176	19,841	5,974
Total Estimated Funding	10,873	29,153	34,389	26,142

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Appendix 4 - Major Capital Projects Update

Rhyl Harbour Development

Total Budget	£10.648m
Expenditure to date	£10.505m
Estimated remaining spend in 2014/15	£ 0.030m
Future Years estimated spend	£ 0.113m
Funding	WG £2.613m; WEFO £6.165m; Sustrans £0.700m: RWE £155k; WREN £69k and DCC £0.946m
Comments	<p>Programme</p> <p>The replacement barrier at the entrance to the harbour has been manufactured and erected but the surfacing around the posts needs to be completed.</p> <p>The contract for the WREN works in the dunes is now in place. The works to the boardwalk were due to have commenced last month, but further to a delay related to the supply of materials, will now commence this month.</p> <p>Work has commenced to rectify any remaining defects.</p> <p>The project has been audited by the European Funds Audit Team (EFAT). The EFAT audit found some procedural irregularities in the procurement process for the pedestrian and cycle bridge that took place in 2008/09, and as a result have clawed back some grant funding. The total is £224k and this will be funded by the project contingency budget (£183k) and the corporate capital contingency (£41k).</p>
Forecast In Year Expenditure 14/15	£0.265m

Rhyl Going Forward

Total Budget	£14.319m
Expenditure to date	£13.374m
Estimated remaining spend in 14/15	£ 0.615m
Future Years estimated spend	£ 0.330m
Funding	WG £14.319m
Comments	<p>Former Honey Club Site</p> <p>This project is no longer under the control of the Council, but officers continue to monitor progress to ensure compliance with the Development Agreement.</p> <p>The tenants of the development are confirmed as Premier Inn, operating a 70 bed hotel with Brewers Fayre at ground floor. There will also be a small retail outlet.</p> <p>The agreement between the developer – Chesham</p>

	<p>Estates and Premier Inn was signed on Friday 12th December 2014. Start on site is anticipated during the second quarter of 2015. Construction is likely to take 12 months.</p> <p>West Rhyl Housing Improvement Project</p> <p>Green Space Construction This has successfully completed, and a community fun day/grand opening event will take place on Saturday 28th March 2015.</p>
Forecast In Year Expenditure 14/15	£2.975m

21st Century Schools Programme – Bodnant Community School Extension and Refurbishment

Total Budget	£3.441m
Expenditure to date	£0.308m
Estimated remaining spend in 14/15	£0.158m
Future Years estimated spend	£2.975m
Funding	WG £1.687m, DCC £1.754
Comments	<p>Bodnant Community School</p> <p>This scheme is one of five projects within the Band A proposals for 21st Century Schools Programme. The project will build 7 classrooms, a new school hall and supporting facilities on the current Juniors site. This will allow the Infants pupils to move to the Juniors site and the school to operate on a single site. The Infants site will then become surplus to requirements.</p> <p>The contract for the works has recently been awarded to Read Construction, and work started on site on 16 February 2015. The contract period of 70 weeks should see the extension and refurbishment work completed by mid-June 2016.</p> <p>The project should be delivered in readiness for the start of the new school year in September 2016.</p>
Forecast In Year Expenditure 14/15	£0.466m

21st Century Schools Programme - Rhyl New School

Total Budget	£24.586m
Expenditure to date	£4.008m
Estimated remaining spend in 14/15	£1.441m
Future Years estimated spend	£19.137m
Funding	DCC £12.293m; WG £12.293m
Comments	The project will provide a new school building for Rhyl High School to serve up to 1,200 pupils in mainstream

	<p>education whilst also housing approximately 45 pupils from Ysgol Tir Morfa, the community special school in Rhyl.</p> <p>Construction works are progressing well; the pile caps and ground beams have been completed.</p> <p>The erection of the steel frame for the building is due to complete at the end of March and the scaffolding and netting installation has commenced in preparation for the installation of the floors and roof deck.</p> <p>Works to replace the existing boundary fence with the new permanent fence will take place over the next couple of months.</p> <p>The scope of the works to the Leisure Centre has been reviewed and costs submitted; further work will now take place to refine the works that have been prioritised within the funding allocation.</p> <p>The new school is programmed to complete in February/March 2016, at which point the pupils will transfer to the new school, and the existing school buildings will be demolished and the grounds re-instated to school playing fields.</p> <p>The anticipated completion date of the project is August 2016.</p> <p>There is ongoing consultation with key stakeholders which includes the neighbours.</p>
Forecast In Year Expenditure 14/15	£4.273m

Nova Development

Total Budget	£4.424m
Expenditure to date	£0.603m
Estimated remaining spend in 14/15	£0.397m
Future Years estimated spend	£3.424m
Funding	DCC £4.380m; Other contributions £0.044m
Comments	<p>The refurbishment of Prestatyn Nova Centre commenced on 5th January 2015. This scheme includes external environmental improvements to improve the look of the building as well as the creation of a new entrance , reception, 60 station fitness suite, café, retail units, three storey soft play structure, multi-purpose</p>

	<p>studios and refurbishment of associated toilets and changing areas throughout the complex. The scheme has also been extended to include the complete refurbishment of the public toilet block to the East of the property together with improvements to the promenade area.</p> <p>Works continue to progress well on site although the poor weather has hampered some external works. A considerable amount of demolition and site clearance works have been undertaken to date.</p> <p>Significant structural works are currently being undertaken with additional steel framing required in order to reinforce the concrete foundations and support a new cladding system. This additional structural work will also require further demolition and reinstatement works. This has led to a delay and our revised programme has a hand over date of late October 2015. This 11 week delay has no impact on costs and the scheme remains within budget. Local members and the Coastal Board have been informed of the delay.</p> <p>Initial negotiations have been undertaken with a commercial catering company who will manage and operate the food and beverage offer. An expression of interest for this aspect of the business went out in February 2015.</p> <p>The next phase of work will see the first fix of mechanical and electrical installations, roofing works, internal partition walling and cladding.</p>
Forecast In Year Expenditure 14/15	£1.0m

West Rhyl Coastal Development Ph 3

Total Budget	£4.469m
Expenditure to date	£1.650m
Estimated remaining spend in 14/15	£1.238m
Future Years estimated spend	£1.581m
Funding	DCC £0.520m; WG/WEFO £3.949m
Comments	<p>This coastal defence scheme is the final phase of works designed to protect 2,700 properties from coastal flooding.</p> <p>On site, the piling is now complete and the majority of</p>

	<p>the scour apron and capping beam is in place. Work is currently concentrating on laying the Dycell mattresses which are 20% complete and being laid at an increasing rate.</p> <p>A funding package for the coastal flood defence works has been agreed with Welsh Government, but funding for amenity/betterment is still unresolved. A number of avenues are being pursued and any approvals are likely to be in the new financial year.</p> <p>The contractor has been active on site for over two months and the flood defence works remain scheduled for completion by 31st May 2015.</p>
Forecast In Year Expenditure 14/15	£3.006m

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Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
28 April	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group	To report the key findings and recommendations of the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group	Yes	Cllr David Smith / Angela Loftus / Sue Lewis
	3	Draft Denbighshire Housing Strategy	To present the Draft Denbighshire Housing Strategy for endorsement before final approval by Council	Yes	Angela Loftus / Sue Lewis
	4	Business Rates Write Offs	To seek approval for uncollectible Business Rates Debts to be written off	Yes	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Rod Urquhart
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
26 May	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor 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	Ruthin Primary Proposals	To consider the formal consultation reports following the publication of proposals for the amalgamation of Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn and the closure of Ysgol Rhewl and to consider whether to publish the relevant statutory notices.	Yes	Councillor Eryl Williams / Jackie Walley
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
30 June	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Corporate Plan Performance Report 2014/15 Q4	To consider progress against the Corporate Plan	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
28 July	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor 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	The Future of In-house Care Services	To consider the results of the consultation with existing users of in-house care services	Yes	Councillor Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
29 September	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 Q1	To consider progress against the Corporate Plan	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
27 October	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
24 November	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the	Tbc	Councillor Julian

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			current financial position of the Council		Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
15 December	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 Q2	To consider progress against the Corporate Plan	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve
	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>April</i>	14 April	<i>May</i>	11 May	<i>June</i>	16 June

Updated 11/03/15 - KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc