

To: Members of the Communities
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2 May 2019

Direct Dial: 01824 712554

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 9 MAY 2019** in **CONFERENCE ROOM 1A, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS A BRIEFING FOR ALL MEMBERS AT 9:15 A.M
IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO THE MEETING.**

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 AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

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

4 MINUTES (Pages 7 - 16)

To receive the minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 14 March 2019 (copy enclosed).

5 DENBIGHSHIRE'S LEARNER TRANSPORT POLICY (Pages 17 - 34)

To consider a report by the Education Resources and Planning Manager (copy enclosed) which seeks the Committee to discuss potential steps for the Council to consider in relation to the non-statutory transport which it presently provides

10.05am – 10.45am

6 IMPACT OF THE CLOSURE OF YSGOL RHEWL (Pages 35 - 44)

To consider a report by the Principal Manager – Education Support (copy enclosed) which outlines the support provided to Ysgol Rhewl during the closure process and the feedback from stakeholders on the support received

10.45am – 11.15am

BREAK 11.15am - 11.30am

7 UNIVERSAL CREDIT (Pages 45 - 62)

To consider a report by the Contracts and Performance Project Manager – Finance (copy enclosed) which outlines the impact to date of Universal Credit (UC) on Council services and the county's residents. The report also assesses the effectiveness of mitigation measures to date and outlines plans for future impact mitigation measures

11.30am – 12.15pm

8 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 63 - 82)

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

12.15pm – 12.25pm

9 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

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

12.25pm – 12.30pm

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Councillor Huw Williams (Chair)

Councillor Graham Timms (Vice-Chair)

Brian Blakeley
Meirick Davies
Rachel Flynn
Tina Jones
Merfyn Parry

Anton Sampson
Glenn Swingler
Andrew Thomas
Cheryl Williams

Voting Co-opted Members for Education (Agenda Item No. 5 and 6 only)

Kathleen Jones
David Lloyd

Neil Roberts

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information
Press and Libraries
Town and Community Councils

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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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COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1A, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 14 March 2019 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Brian Blakeley, Meirick Davies, Rachel Flynn, Tina Jones, Anton Sampson, Glenn Swingler, Andrew Thomas, Graham Timms (Vice-Chair), Cheryl Williams and Huw Williams (Chair)

Councillors Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance, Performance & Strategic Assets and Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People, were in attendance for Agenda Item 5 at the Committee's request.

Councillors Hugh Evans, Leader, and Councillor Tony Thomas, Lead Member for Housing, Regulation and the Environment were in attendance for Agenda Item 6 at the Committee's request.

Co-opted Members – Kathleen Jones, David Lloyd, and Neil Roberts

Observers: Chief Executive, Judith Greenhalgh.

Councillors Bobby Feeley, Alan James, Brian Jones, Peter Scott, Rhys Thomas and Mark Young.

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director: Economy and Public Realm (GB), Corporate Director: Communities (NS), Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services (GW), Head of Education & Children Services (KIE), Lead Officer – Contracts & Facilities (NH), Lead Officer – Corporate Property & Housing Stock (DL), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE), and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Merfyn Parry

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Graham Timms, Glenn Swingler, Meirick Lloyd Davies, Brian Blakeley, Cheryl Williams, Anton Sampson, Tina Jones, Peter Scott, Mark Young, Rhys Thomas and Tony Thomas together with David Lloyd and Neil Roberts all declared a personal interest in item 5, as they were all School Governors.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters were raised.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Communities Scrutiny meeting held on 13 December, 2018 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Communities Scrutiny meeting held on 13 December, 2018 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 SCHOOL MEAL DEBT POLICY

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets introduced the joint report by the Principal Manager Modernising Education and the Lead Officer: Facilities, Assets and Housing (previously circulated) which presented the Committee with the revised School Meal Debt Policy for examination.

In light of recent high profile and national press coverage in relation to school meal debts, and with a view to ensuring that the policy included tighter safeguarding measures, a decision had been taken to redraft the policy. Whilst re-drafting the policy, officers had taken the opportunity to tighten the procedures regarding the non-payment of school meal debts and to highlight the support available from the Council in relation to school meals debts to parents.

During his introduction the Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets emphasised the importance of safeguarding pupils and how the provision of school meals and the application of the school meal debt policy supported the safeguarding agenda, through early intervention and signposting parents to appropriate assistance and support that was available to them. He emphasised that the issuing of a school meal debt letter was the very last resort, after all other 'softer' measures, including the offer of advice, help and support had failed. He confirmed that the level of school meal debt in the county had reduced significantly since the end of the 2018 calendar year, from circa £48K to approximately £20K. Letters were used as a last resort, when all else had failed, and issued to those families whom the authority was aware were in a position to pay the outstanding debt.

The Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People advised members that the Council had learnt lessons following the letters issued in relation to school meal debt at the end of 2018. The County had a clear policy which it now applied consistently across all schools which was to feed every child to ensure that they flourished in all aspects of their education.

Estyn, when inspecting the Council's Education Service, had rated the Service as having excellent leadership and concluded that children in the county were well supported. As both Education Services and Children's Services were managed by the same Head of Service they were able to share information freely with each other which led to the services having a detailed understanding of every school pupil's education and welfare needs. The Head of Education emphasised that whilst poverty could be a cause for the accrual of a school meal debt, that aspect could be counteracted and supported through supporting parents to apply for free school meals (FSMs) and signposting them to other support. Safeguarding

concerns were different as they could occur anywhere, regardless of affluence or poverty.

She advised that the county's Headteachers and staff within both Education and Children's Services had been consulted on the revised policy.

Responding to members' questions both Lead Members, the Head of Education and Children's Services and the Lead Officer: Facilities, Assets and Housing:

- confirmed that the wording of the letter in Annex A to the draft policy could be amended to be more sympathetic and supportive, rather than demanding. Less use of bold lettering would also lessen the hostile 'tone';
- advised that school meal debts were only recharged to school budgets in the event of the school refusing to engage with the debtor. Where schools had engaged with the debt recovery process any outstanding debts would be reassigned to Catering Services;
- confirmed that parents/guardians used the ParentPay app to pay for school meals for their children. This system was an effective system as it gave a breakdown of exactly what food and beverages pupils had purchased;
- drew attention to Annex B to the draft policy which contained a flow chart to be followed by all schools once the 'trigger point' for school meal debt, arrears of £11 or more, had been reached;
- advised that schools and headteachers were best placed to commence and undertake the process detailed in the flowchart, as they knew their pupils and families better than anyone else. They would be aware of any issues or contributory factors which could well be behind the reason for the debt;
- confirmed that a Well-being Impact Assessment (WBIA) had not yet been completed for the redrafted policy as it was still in draft format. Once approved, a WBIA would be undertaken;
- clarified the point in the Chief Finance Officer's statement regarding any school meal debt being a pressure on the Catering Service's Budget. Any debt not recovered, despite the school pursuing it, would eventually have to be met from within the Catering Service's budget, hence why it would be a direct pressure on that service. If it became apparent during the school's efforts to recover the debt that a family qualified for FSMs that would have a positive impact on the Council's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) entitlement and pupil based grants;
- confirmed that there was no correlation between school meal debt levels and geographical areas of the county or areas where FSM take-up was above average;
- advised that the trigger for the commencement of the school meal arrears process was £11, the weekly cost of school meals per child;
- advised that the average debt per school per week was £7, the reason for a debt in a large number of cases was due to parents/guardians busy lifestyles, forgetting to 'top-up' their ParentPay accounts. Once it was brought to their attention the majority settled their outstanding debts very quickly;
- advised that it would be difficult for school cluster Finance and Business Managers to be responsible for school meal debt recovery work as each

individual school operated their own systems in relation to school meal payments;

- informed the Committee that both headteachers and parents were supportive of the ParentPay system, as parents could monitor their children's eating habits. Officers undertook to enquire whether ParentPay could be adapted to include a family as well as an individual pupil pay facility;
- 'snack policies', including the management of any debt related to them, was a matter for each individual school to administer and monitor. Officers undertook to contact schools to ensure that their snack policies were in line with the county's school meal policy ;
- agreed to explore whether the school meal arrears letter could be issued to arrive on a working/school day, rather than on a Saturday, to enable parents to contact the school immediately to address any issues or problems;
- advised that the aim of informing parents/guardians of the debt immediately the £11 threshold had been triggered was to ensure that the debt did not accrue to an unmanageable level;
- confirmed that if a pupil was deemed vulnerable and his/her parents/guardians had been sent the school meal arrears letter, the child would still be provided with a hot meal. A pupil who was not deemed vulnerable would be provided with a packed lunch. Every effort would be made to ensure that that the child's circumstances were not obvious to his/her peers;
- confirmed that special dietary requirements were taken into account in all schools, including special schools, and would be taken into account if a pupil was to be supplied with a packed lunch under the School Meal Debt Policy; and
- advised that the policy was clear that the welfare of individual children was paramount when applying the school meal debt policy

The Committee was keen that initially a reminder letter was issued to parents/guardians drawing their attention to the debt and the help and support available if they were struggling financially, prior to the more formal school meals arrears letter being sent.

Both Lead Members and the officers drew particular attention to the quality of Council's School Catering Service, who was ranked in the top three school catering services in Wales and in the top ten in the UK. Recently, Jane Jones, a cook at Ysgol Twm o'r Nant, Denbigh had been awarded the accolade of the Best School Cook in Wales and would shortly be representing Wales in the UK finals at Stratford-upon-Avon. The Committee requested that their congratulations be conveyed to Ms Jones.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee:

RESOLVED - *having examined the draft revised School Meal Debt Policy, subject to the above observations;*

- (i) *that the draft policy be amended to include the sending of a reminder letter initially;*

- (ii) followed, if necessary, by an amended version of the letter included at Annex A, which should be worded in a more sympathetic and supportive manner and be issued on a day of the week that ensured it was received on a working/school day;*
- (iii) that enquiries were made to establish whether ParentPay could be adapted to include a family as well as an individual pupil pay facility; and*
- (iv) once amended as per the Committee's recommendations that the Policy be approved via a joint Delegated Decision by both Lead Members and circulated to all councillors for information*

At this juncture (11.05 a.m.) there was a 10 minute break.

The meeting reconvened at 11.15 a.m.

6 GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITE PROVISION - UPDATE FOLLOWING THE PRE-PLANNING CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Lead Member for Housing, Regulation and the Environment introduced the report (previously circulated) to update Scrutiny on the Pre Planning Consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the provision of residential and transit Gypsy & Traveller sites.

The report provided a breakdown and overview of the responses to the Council's Pre Planning Consultation process.

During his introduction the Lead Member advised that over 700 responses had been received to the consultation exercise and he thanked all who had responded for engaging with the process.

The Corporate Director: Communities, via a PowerPoint presentation:

- emphasised that Cabinet had chosen to undertake this exercise, although it was not a process it was required by law to undertake in relation to this proposal;
- gave an overview of the pre-planning consultation process;
- summarised local activity around the consultation;
- highlighted the Equality concerns raised as part of the consultation;
- confirmed that a total of 774 responses had been received from respondents whose addresses covered a wide geographical area. Of the 774 responses received, 20% of respondents had used a template letter to submit their response, and within the responses received a total of 4526 issues had been recorded;
- advised that the Equalities Commission had been taking an interest in the proposal and process. Approximately 17% of the responses received had contained inappropriate comments, however these responses had not been disregarded in their entirety. Any inappropriate elements had been disregarded, with all appropriate comments considered as part of the overall analysis. One complaint in relation to an equalities matter had been registered with the Council;

- advised that 160 people had attended the 'drop-in' event held as part of the consultation exercise;
- advised that the main issues raised in the feedback received were location, information in relation to the proposals, highways matters, economic impact, the Local Development Plan (LDP), security matters and crime rates, impact on the community, financial costs, health and health and safety matters, the proximity of both sites to one another and the visual impact on the local area;
- confirmed that whilst not all of the issues raised were material planning matters, they were important and of concern to local residents. Officers were satisfied that the material planning matters could be satisfactorily mitigated against and addressed via the formal planning process, whilst extensive research suggested that the perceived impacts of the sites on the area and community were unlikely to be realised.

Prior to opening the session to the Committee for questions the Chair emphasised that the purpose of the discussion at the meeting was to analyse the pre-planning exercise undertaken, and the responses received, in relation to the proposed transit and residential Gypsy and Traveller sites on the Green-gates Farm (East) site in St. Asaph. It was not to revisit any earlier decisions in relation to the gypsy and traveller needs assessment or the proposed location as these matters had already been approved, reviewed and confirmed. The Council Leader advised the Committee that Cabinet had taken Scrutiny's views very seriously. Cabinet needed to satisfy itself that sufficient work had been undertaken before it could re-affirm its original decision and was reassured that this had been done.

The Vice-Chair reiterated the disappointment he had felt after presenting the Committee's concerns and recommendations to Cabinet, following the call-in of the October 2018 decision to approve the Green-gates Farm (East) site for the transit Gypsy and Traveller site as well as the residential site. He was of the view that Cabinet had not given itself sufficient time and due consideration to Scrutiny's comments and recommendations before confirming its original decision.

Responding to members' questions the Lead Member for Housing, Regulation and the Environment, Corporate Director: Communities and the Lead Officer Property and Housing:

- confirmed that the Council could not apply for Welsh Government (WG) grant funding to develop any of the sites until planning permission for them had been granted;
- advised that whilst the proximity of both the residential and transit site to each other was in this case closer than that suggested in WG guidance, officers had discussed this problem with WG officials, who had sought reassurances that the proposed locations had been discussed with the gypsy and traveller communities. Whilst there was some slight level of concern with the gypsy and traveller community about the proximity of the sites the WG had indicated that it was satisfied with the decision to locate both on the Green-gates Farm (East) site;
- confirmed that undertaking an Assessment of Accommodation Needs for Gypsies and Travellers residing or resorting to a local authority area was a requirement under The Housing Act (Wales) 2014. To comply with this requirement, the Council had, in 2017, undertaken the required

Assessment. This had resulted in a need being identified for both a residential and transit site in the county. The Assessment had identified a need for 6 residential pitches and 5 transit pitches in the county. Upon submission to WG they had endorsed the Council's assessment process and conclusions and consequently the authority was now legally obliged to provide these sites;

- advised that the Council had, in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being and Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 assessed each proposed site's impact on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world (copies of the Well-being Impact Assessments (WBIA's) for both the residential and transit sites had been published with the Committee papers). Whilst these WBIA's included an assessment of the economic impact their scope was far wider than the scope of an industrial/business impact assessment. Initially one WBIA had been undertaken which included both the residential and transit site. However, having received advice from the Critical Friends Panel who reviewed the WBIA it had been decided that it would be opportune to review the original WBIA and split it into a separate WBIA, one for each site. Both WBIA's had since been reviewed by the Critical Friends Panel;
- advised that all letters and correspondence received from local businesses had been fed into the consultation process. In addition, the Lead Member and officers from the Council's Economic and Business Development Team had met with a number of businesses and business leaders/representatives in the area to discuss the proposals. All businesses had been afforded the same opportunity as any other member of the public to engage with the consultation process;
- confirmed that there was no evidence to substantiate a claim from the local Assembly Member (AM) that businesses who had previously indicated an interest in moving or establishing on the nearby business park had withdrawn their interest as the result of the proposed development of gypsy and traveller sites in the area;
- advised that the Lead Member had spoken to the Chief Executive of one of the largest businesses in the vicinity on three occasions over the preceding month;
- advised that the Council recognised that there would be an impact from this development, similar to any other development in the county. However, a number of information channels had been utilised for the purpose of informing and advising residents and businesses on matters relating to the development i.e. a 'drop-in' event at St. Asaph Library which 160 people had attended, a 'myth buster' on the Council website, over time information was built up on the website on how the proposals were developing;
- confirmed that the WBIA assessed the impact on all residents, including those with disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups;
- advised that the process to identify and agree on proposed sites had been open and transparent. The initial 'call for sites' had been made in public, as had the Gypsy and Traveller Assessment of Accommodation Needs. The only elements which had been discussed under Part II business were the sites identified as potential locations for the sites, this was due to commercial sensitivity requirements;

- advised that to have in excess of 700 people responding before a planning application was submitted was extremely encouraging;
- confirmed that whilst the proposed sites at Green-gates Farm (East) had not been identified as a development site under the current LDP any application made on the site would be tested against policy BSC10 , relating to building sustainable communities, of the LDP. Similarly, if an application was received to build affordable/social housing on a piece of land not within the LDP area that application would be tested against the BSC4 policy of the LDP. Such applications would need to demonstrate a justified need for the development outside of settlement areas;
- confirmed that Cabinet was operating within its rights when seeking and identifying potential sites for this particular purpose. Planning Committee would decide on whether or not to grant planning permission for any site. It would be expected to base its decision on adopted policies and material planning matters;
- acknowledged that whilst a number of studies of provision made for gypsy and traveller residential and transit sites across the UK and in Europe had been used when responding to a number of the comments received as part of the feedback, this was because similar studies on sites in Wales were not available, despite there being a number of sites in Wales i.e. the photographs of sites shown on the presentation were of a site on an industrial park in Conwy County Borough Council and a site located within the Brecon Beacons National Park;
- confirmed that the Council had worked closely with other local authorities, WG and the Gypsy and Traveller Community when developing the proposals for the sites in Denbighshire;
- confirmed that an ecology test had been undertaken on the proposed sites. If the proposal(s) proceeded to the formal planning stage, further more intensive ecological and other studies would be undertaken. This was a practice followed for all planning applications relating to new developments;
- re-affirmed that the pre-planning consultation exercise was about the development and not about who would be eventually residing there;
- advised that whilst there was a family currently residing within the county whose needs had been identified for a residential site, as a recognised ethnic group they had a right to expect that their needs would be met. As a Gypsy or Traveller family their needs was not a house within the county but the provision of pitches for them to locate their caravan or mobile home;
- advised that if the Council did not meet the need identified under its own Assessment of Accommodation Needs it would be open to litigation via the High Court. The Equalities Commission may consider supporting legal action against the Council for breaching its statutory duty in relation to the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Even if Cabinet deferred a decision on any of the proposed sites for the foreseeable future, the requirement to meet the identified need would still be there and required to be addressed; and
- confirmed that officers were satisfied that the sites had been identified as per the guidance prepared by WG and had taken into account all aspects covered by the guidance in relation to suitability, affordability etc.

Addressing the Committee, the local member for St Asaph (West) highlighted the efforts made by the City Council to notify all residents and businesses of the proposals and to engage them with the pre-planning consultation process.

The Council's Monitoring Officer outlined to all present the public sector's equality duty which necessitated the need to disregard any derogatory comments made on ethnicity or stereotypical grounds. On this basis the Council was within its rights to disregard all points made by respondents who had made derogatory or offensive representations in their submissions, however it had been decided not to use this approach but rather to redact the responses and include all other non-derogatory feedback in the analysis.

Prior to formulating a recommendation for presentation to Cabinet the Committee requested the meeting to be adjourned to enable a clear recommendation to be formulated.

**At this juncture (12.50 p.m.) the meeting was adjourned.
The meeting reconvened at 1.00 p.m.**

When the meeting resumed two recommendations were put forward. They were :

- (i) that the residential and transit Gypsy & Traveller sites are not developed close to each other, wherever they are located; and
- (ii) that the location of the residential and transit Gypsy and Traveller sites are determined through the ongoing Local Development Plan process

Recommendation (i) was approved unanimously with recommendation (ii) being approved by a majority vote.

It was therefore:

RESOLVED - that the Committee, having considered the analysis of the pre-planning consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the proposed transit and residential Gypsy and Traveller sites on Green-gates Farm (East) site in St. Asaph, recommends to Cabinet –

- (i) that the residential and transit Gypsy & Traveller sites are not developed close to each other, wherever they are located; and*
- (ii) that the location of the residential and transit Gypsy and Traveller sites are determined through the ongoing Local Development Plan process*

7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Coordinator submitted a report (previously circulated) seeking members' review of the Committee's work programme and provided an update on relevant issues.

Due to the number of items on the forward work programme for the meeting taking place on 9 May 2019, it was agreed that two items be moved. Therefore, the following were agreed:

9 May 2019

- (i) Universal Credit
- (ii) Denbighshire's Learner Transport Policy: Non-Statutory Elements
- (iii) Ysgol Rhewl

4 July 2019

- (i) Planning Compliance Charter
- (ii) Caravan and Holiday Park Regulation Procedure
- (iii) Seagull Management Update
- (iv) Car Park Asset Management Plan

5 September 2019

- (i) Flood Management Responsibilities in Denbighshire
- (ii) Tourism Signage Strategy for Denbighshire
- (iii) Proposed new Waste and Recycling Service Design

The Scrutiny Coordinator confirmed that a Briefing would be held 45 minutes prior to the commencement of the Special Meeting regarding the Llantysilio Mountain Fire on Wednesday 20 March 2019.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the forward work programme as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

None.

The meeting concluded at 1.25 p.m.

Report to:	Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	9th May 2019
Lead Member/Officer:	Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People/ Head of Education and Children Services
Report Author:	Education Planning and Resources Manager
Title:	Denbighshire's Learner Transport Policy: Non-Statutory Elements

1. What is the report about?

1.1 Denbighshire's Learner Transport Policy 2018.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 To provide details of the non-statutory elements within Denbighshire's Learner Transport Policy 2018.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 That the Scrutiny Committee are invited to discuss potential next steps for Denbighshire regarding Learner Transport; giving consideration to the non-statutory transport which the Authority presently provides. It is noted that any changes made in regard to school transport policy are required to be finalised a full school year before implementation.

4. Report details

4.1 Denbighshire's current Learner Transport Policy came into effect from September 2018. The implementation of the policy followed consultation with all stakeholders in 2017 to finalise a full school year before implementation. The policy represents how the Authority discharges its duties under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008; hereafter known as the 'Measure'.

4.2 The Measure provides the statutory basis upon which all school transport is provided in Wales. Appendix 1 shows details of the Authority's obligations under statute.

4.3 Discretionary Transport

4.3.1 Notwithstanding the statutory elements of the Measure, Local Authorities have the ability to include discretionary elements within their policy. Authorities are also guided to apply discretion, in certain areas, under the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance, which accompanies the Measure. Where discretion is applied the Authority must clearly outline these areas in their policy. Many Authorities across Wales, Denbighshire included, use discretion to address specific circumstances in their areas. In Denbighshire the policy currently includes

the following discretionary elements shown below. In each case the relevant section in our policy is shown in Appendix 2.

- 4.3.2 **Post 16 Transport** – the Measure requires Authorities to assess the needs of all learners up to the age of 19. However, there is no statutory duty to provide transport for learners who continue post 16 studies in mainstream further education or training.
- 4.3.3 **Faith School Transport** – Denbighshire, along with many other Local Authorities, provides discretionary transport to nearest suitable faith schools, if this is the parents/carers request. The Authority also accounts for transport requests to non-faith schools where parents/carers specifically request not to attend a faith school, if that happens to be their nearest suitable school.
- 4.3.4 **Feeder School Arrangements** – In the 2018 policy revision the Authority sought to support the welfare of learners by including a discretionary feeder relationship from our primary schools to their designated secondary school. This process allows learners to have the choice, during transition to secondary school, of either having transport to their nearest suitable secondary school or the feeder secondary school. In most cases this school will be one and the same; however, in some outlying areas the nearest suitable secondary school may be out to county and some learners did not have the ability to stay with their cohort of friends and receive free transport. There are a number of caveats regarding the use of this discretion. These are shown in Appendix 2.
- 4.3.5 **Promoting Welsh Language** - Under section 10 of the Measure Local Authorities are required to promote access to Welsh Medium education – shown below:

***10 Promoting access to education and training through the medium of the Welsh Language** - Each local authority and the Welsh Ministers must promote access to education and training through the medium of the Welsh language when exercising functions under this Measure.*

This is interpreted across Wales as a requirement to provide free transport to the nearest suitable Welsh medium school, alongside any offer of free transport to the nearest suitable English medium school; whichever is the parents/carers choice. However, both are still dependent on the distance criteria being met.

As section 10 does not explicitly instruct that transport must be provided, this element sits within the Authority's discretionary arrangements since providing preferential transport is how Denbighshire chooses to 'promote access' to Welsh medium education.

- 4.3.6 **Moving Home** - Within the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance, Welsh Government recommends that during GCSE study learners who move home should continue to receive free transport to their previous school; providing the relevant distance criteria is still met. Where the learner moves to a neighbouring authority, that authority is expected to pay for and arrange the travel.
- 4.3.7 **School Reorganisation** – As part of Denbighshire's Modernising Education programme, the Authority can apply discretion when considering transport for

learners affected by changes. The nature and type of discretion will vary for the individual school circumstances; however, any agreements will be consulted on and documented within the formal school reorganisation process.

4.3.8 Managed School Transfers – The Authority can, in certain circumstances, provide discretionary transport for learners where it is agreed by Education and Schools that a managed transfer to another school is in the interest of the learner. This is also dependent on relevant evidence being available which supports this discretion from both the Authority and the school.

4.3.9 Other Discretionary Provisions – The Authority can apply discretion in other circumstances with the agreement of the Head of Education and Children Services. Such discretion usually relates to specific circumstances e.g. safeguarding, medical, disability etc.; with supportive evidence provided. Where such discretion is applied the Authority records this to ensure consistency of approach.

4.4 Other Transport

4.4.1 SEN Transport – It is noted that alongside the Authority's Learner Transport Policy decisions to provide transport may also be provided on the basis of special educational need (SEN). This follows the guidance provided in the SEN Code of Practice for Wales with separate SEN transport requests processed by the ALN & Inclusion team. Officers are developing further guidance in this area to ensure clarity around when SEN transport is provided, as well as highlighting parental / carer responsibility for sharing relevant information. The full cost of SEN transport is not presented in this report; however an example from one site is shown in Appendix 3.

4.4.2 TRAC and ADTRAC – There are also smaller numbers of learners who are in receipt of transport in support of their needs and the work of these teams.

4.5 Cost of Discretionary Services

4.5.1 Denbighshire's Passenger Transport team are responsible for arranging services for eligible learners. A summary of the costs associated with the discretionary areas mentioned in 4.3.1 to 4.3.5 (for 2017/18) is shown in Appendix 4. The other areas of discretion (4.3.6 to 4.3.9) have specifically not been included as these are either addressing individual circumstances for a smaller number of learners and/or they are more difficult to discern in terms of their percentage of totals costs; or they are shorter term arrangements to address specific needs.

4.5.2 Post 16 Transport Costs (See Table 1 Appendix 4)

4.5.3 Faith Transport Costs (See Table 2 Appendix 4)

4.5.4 Welsh Language Transport Costs (See Table 3 Appendix 3)

4.5.5 Feeder Transport - Prior to the new Learner Transport Policy coming in from 2018, Education Support undertook checks to ensure that learners previously assessed against only nearest suitable secondary school were correctly reassessed. The outcome of this process showed that this change in policy only impacted relatively small numbers of learners. In terms of cost, it primarily appears to have resulted in learners taking seats on services to Denbighshire secondary schools which may otherwise have been empty and available as a concessionary seats. It has also reduced the requirement for the Authority to provide individual services for learners to

other secondary schools, including those out of county. The net effect of this feeder arrangement is therefore expected to continue being low; although a summary of exact cost is not able to be presented here.

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

This associated policy is linked to the priority 'Younger people want to live and work in Denbighshire, and have the skills to do so'.

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

Relevant costs of this service are shown in the appendices of this report.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

A well-being impact assessment has not yet been carried out as this a pre-stage discussion to possible future amendments to the policy.

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

This is a first stage discussion to consider viability of options.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

This is a complex area with significant financial implications. Any amendments to policies have to be properly tested to ensure the full cost implications are understood

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

The report does not, at this stage, highlight specific changes. A risk analysis will therefore be completed once potential options have been agreed for further investigation.

11. Power to make the Decision

Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008

Scrutiny's powers with respect of policy development and review is outlined in Section 7.4.1 of the Council's Constitution.

Contact Officer:

Education Planning and Resources Manager

Tel: 01824 712692

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The duties contained in the Measure require Authorities to:

- Assess the travel needs for learners (up to the age of 19) who are ordinarily resident within Denbighshire; to and from where they receive education and training.

For the purposes of assessment the Authority must have regard to:

- the needs of learners who are disabled persons
 - the needs of learners with learning difficulties
 - the needs of learners who are children looked after, or formerly looked after, by a local authority
 - the age of the learners
 - the nature of the routes which learners could reasonably be expected to take to the relevant places where they receive education or training.
- The Authority must provide free home to school transport for those of compulsory school age attending primary school and living 2 miles or further from their nearest suitable school
 - The Authority must provide free home to school transport for those of compulsory school age (i.e. up to year 11) attending secondary school and living 3 miles or further from their nearest suitable school.
 - Promote access to Welsh medium education
 - Promote sustainable modes of travel

The Measure also requires the Authority to have due regard to the walking routes between home and school for non-eligible learners who live under the stipulated distances; as well as for those walking routes between home and pick-up points used by eligible learners. If routes are designated as hazardous for walking after appropriate assessment by Denbighshire's Highways Engineers, the Authority must provide transport either direct to school or to the pick-up point; whichever is most cost effective and efficient. The Authority presently has over 150 designated sections of hazardous routes and these are considered when assessing transport for learners.

Discretionary Elements in Denbighshire's Learner Transport Policy

Post 16 Transport

Section 3.5 - *The Local Authority provides discretionary transport beyond statutory school age where a Denbighshire learner resides 3 miles or more from the nearest suitable school or F.E. college. The learner must be studying full time and be less than 19 years of age on 1st September of the academic year in which the course is taken. Transport will be provided to the nearest secondary school designated by the Authority to serve the learner's home address only, or in the case of full-time vocational courses, to the nearest F.E. college. Transport between learning establishments working in a partnership with each other is provided by those partners.*

Faith School Transport

Section 3.2 - *On a discretionary basis the Authority will provide transport to the nearest suitable Faith school if this is the parental / carers preference. This will apply even if the school is not their nearest suitable school. The distance criteria in section 2.2 will still apply. See the table in Appendix 1 for further details of Faith schools.*

If the nearest suitable Faith school is outside of County then transport would still be provided by the Authority.

Where parents / carers have specifically cited Faith based education and the nearest suitable Faith school has no available places, then the next suitable Faith based school will be considered.

Feeder School Arrangements

Section 3.4 - *On a discretionary basis the Authority recognises that certain Primary schools are natural feeder schools for certain Secondary schools. Therefore in regard to Secondary education, free school transport may be provided to either the nearest suitable Secondary School or the recognised feeder Secondary school; providing that the learner lives over the distance criteria in section 2.2, and the journey is agreed to be reasonable; these criteria are shown below.*

The Authority reserves the right to apply a test of reasonableness to those parents / carers requesting secondary school transport on the basis of feeder schools. To receive free transport on this basis the learner must:

- *Have been attending their nearest suitable primary school from their home location as assessed at the point of admission.*
- *Meet the distance criteria in section 2.2 for secondary schools.*
- *If learners move house before commencing secondary school, their entitlement will require re-assessment, as per the criteria shown in section 2.*
- *In instances where learners have not attended their nearest suitable primary school by parental / carer preference, section 3.4 will not apply. The assessment of school transport applications will then be based solely on nearest suitable Secondary school.*

Welsh or English Medium Education

Section 3.3 - In accordance with section 10 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, the Authority promotes access to Welsh medium education by providing discretionary transport to the nearest suitable Welsh or English medium education, if this is parental / carer preference. This will apply even if the school is not their nearest suitable school.

For Welsh Medium education it would be a school which is categorised as either 1 or 2 within the Welsh Government guidelines on Welsh Medium Provision. For category 2 it would be a school where at least 80% of subjects (excluding Welsh and English) are taught through the medium of Welsh, but are also taught through the medium of English. The table in Appendix 1 shows Denbighshire's Welsh Medium School categories.

If the nearest Welsh or English medium school is outside of County then transport would still be provided by the Authority. Preference will only be considered against Welsh Medium or English Medium schools. The distance criteria in section 2.2 will still apply.

Moving Home

Section 3.7 - In cases where a learner, who has been in receipt of free school transport, moves home part way through the academic year, transport will cease if they are no longer attending their nearest suitable school.

If part way through a GCSE year (school years 10 and 11) the Authority will continue to provide discretionary transport until the academic years have been completed, i.e. until the end of year 11.

This undertaking is dependent upon the learner being ordinarily resident in the Authority's area. Note: The Local Authority also reserves the right to test the reasonableness of the transport requested under this condition, having regard to the distance, time of journey and the proximity of other suitable establishments.

All other reassessments of eligibility will follow the criteria set out in section 2. This section shall not apply where parents / carers have previously exercised a preference as detailed in section 2.7.

School Reorganisation

Section 3.6 - In cases where school reorganisation has taken place, the Local Authority will consider the most appropriate options for school transport. This may include providing free transport for a specified period of time dependant on circumstances. Such arrangements will be provided on a discretionary basis and will be documented within the reorganisation process; so that relevant schools, governing bodies, parents / carers, and any other stakeholders are all aware of the terms of the arrangement.

Managed School Transfers

Section 3.8 - Where managed school transfers are supported by both the new destination school head teacher and Education Services, parents / carers will be aware of this action and be included in these discussions at school level. School transport in these circumstances may be supported on a discretionary basis where it forms part of the action and agreement of all parties to pursue a change of school in the interests of the learner.

It is the parent / carer's responsibility to ensure that they fully engage with the Authority and the school when pursuing a managed transfer. These matters need to be verified and evidence available. This allows Education Support to make an informed decision based upon the evidence supporting the transport request.

Where no evidence is available, and/or where parent / carers refuse to engage in the process with the school and Education Services, the transport request will be refused. This will be based upon the lack of evidence available for an informed decision to be made.

Other Discretionary Provisions

Section 3.10 - *Other discretionary arrangements regarding school transport can be made under section 6 of the Measure. The Head of Education and Children Services may apply these powers for free transport in cases such as:*

- *The safeguarding of a learner, or where there is likely to be significant detrimental impact to that learner's welfare.*
- *Transport on medical grounds may also be applicable under this criteria, including cases where the parent has a disability that restricts the ability of a learner to travel to school without transport for period of time; or where a learner is temporarily incapacitated through illness or injury.*
- *Temporary housing of a family outside of the previous residential area due to emergency, normally through the Authority's Housing Service, to minimise disruption of education.*

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other circumstances where discretion can be applied; however, to ensure consistency of approach regarding discretion evidence may be requested from relevant professionals and the assessment will be recorded.

Where short term discretionary transport arrangements are put in place the Authority will inform parents / carers when these arrangements are to end.

Appendix 3 – SEN Example - Ysgol Tir Morfa Costs

	Total Cost (including Passenger Assistants)
Total	£645,512
Residing in Rhyl	£351,599

Appendix 4 – Cost Information from 2017/18

Table 1 – College Transport

Table 1 shows the total cost of college transport for Denbighshire for full school year 2017/18. It is noted that other North Wales Authorities have looked at this specific area and the current status of provision across North Wales is shown Appendix 5.

College Group	Net per annum
Cambria	£194,685
Llandrillo/Menai	£175,339

Table 2 – Faith Transport Costs

Table 2 shows the total cost of transport to faith schools; however, it does not show the split of individual learners who have selected faith schools over another nearer suitable school which is non-faith. Education Support are presently not able to report this level of detail within Capita ONE and are looking to develop this functionality from Sept 2019 for the new school year; neither do we hold information within ONE of when a non-faith school has been selected specifically due to not wanting a nearer faith school. Furthermore it is noted that some Authorities in Wales have previously proposed to remove faith based transport; although a successful challenge was brought against Swansea Council in 2015 which prevented the Authority from making any such changes. Some Authorities, e.g. Flintshire, do also request suitable evidence of adherence of faith before offering free transport.

Table of Mainstream Costs Faith Transport			
Faith Schools	Cost 2017/18		
Blessed Edward Jones (yrs 7-13)	£7,637		
Borthyn	£9,931		
Dyffryn Iâl	£21,482		
Esgob Morgan	£15,150		
Llanbedr	£8,550		
Llanfair¹	£63,467		
Mair	£13,222		
Pant Pastynog[†]	£85,601		
St Brigid's (Reception - yr 13)	£142,830		
Trefnant	£11,694		
Trelawnyd	£10,638		
Tremeirchion[†]	<u>£49,942</u>		
TOTAL	£440,004		

¹ No percentage split for Welsh/English streams

[†] Falls into Welsh medium and faith categories

Table 3 (Welsh Primary and Secondary Transport Costs)

The total cost of services to Welsh language schools is shown in Table 3; however, as with faith transport this does not show the percentage of this cost for those learners who have preferentially selected Welsh language as opposed to nearer English medium provision. This information is part of the eligibility assessment but is presently not reportable from ONE; neither are we able to discern costs for preferential requests to English medium schools over nearer Welsh medium schools. Note - there are a number of schools in Denbighshire which are both Welsh medium and faith schools, therefore their costs in Appendix 4 may appear in both tables 2 and 3.

Table of Mainstream Costs for Welsh Medium Transport			
Welsh Medium Primary	Cost 2017/18		
Betws GG	£10,890		
Bro Cinmeirch	£16,769		
Bro Dyfrdwy	£50,271		
Bro Elwern	£23,814		
Carreg Emlyn	£61,952		
Dewi Sant	£23,790		
Henllan	£4,654		
Pant Pastynog†	£85,601		
Pentrecelyn	£36,843		
Tremeirchion†	£49,942		
Twm o'r Nant	£25,214		
Y Gwernant	£38,756		
Y Llys	<u>£5,715</u>		
TOTAL	£434,211		

Welsh Secondary Yrs 7-11	Cost 2017/18	
Brynhyfyrd²	£286,714	
Dinas Brân¹	£114,821	
Glan Clwyd	£374,053	
Morgan Llwyd	£7,280	
Y Berwyn, Bala	<u>£17,976</u>	
TOTAL	£800,844	
Welsh Secondary - 6th Form	Cost 2017/18	
Brynhyfyrd²	£80,280	
Dinas Brân¹	£31,818	
Glan Clwyd	£48,102	
Morgan Llwyd	£5,460	
Y Berwyn, Bala	<u>£10,186</u>	
TOTAL	£175,846	
Grand Total for Welsh Secondary Yrs 7 to 13	£976,690	

¹ No percentage split for Welsh/English streams

² Welsh/English split is available but not shown (would take further time to discern)

† Falls into Welsh medium and faith categories

Appendix 5 - Post 16 Transport in North Wales

Authority	Current position	Issues (if any)
Anglesey	No transport provided for Post-16	Allow concessionary seats if they are available. Promote Wales travel ticket for use of public services at reduced student cost.
Gwynedd	Exact a charge	Post-16 is a chargeable travel ticket for use on public services. Term 1 (Autumn): £120 Term 2 (Spring): £120 Term 3 (Summer): £60.
Conwy	Currently free until Sept 2020	Following consultation a £240 charge from Sept 2020 will be levied.
Flintshire	Currently free to nearest suitable provision	Presently out for consultation on options to change.
Wrexham	No transport provided for Post-16	Provision removed in 2015 following a consultation; students to contact the 6th form / colleges directly.

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Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 9th May 2019

Lead Member/Officer: Principal Manager – Education Support

Report Author: Geraint Davies

Title: Impact of the Closure of Ysgol Rhewl

1. What is the report about?

The report seeks to outline the support provided to Ysgol Rhewl during the closure process.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The report was requested by the Committee at its meeting in October 2017.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the issues within the report be discussed and that the feedback received be used for future planning within the Service.

4. Report details

4.1 Actions undertaken by Education and Children's Services

4.1 During the academic year of 2017/18 officers worked closely with the Headteacher of Ysgol Rhewl to assist in the managed closure of Ysgol Rhewl. As of the final year of learning at the school there were 22 Full time pupils on roll at the school. 4 of these pupils were to transition to secondary provision meaning that the focus was on supporting the remaining 18 pupils in the process of seeking alternative provision for September 2018.

4.2 The process of support began following the decision by Cabinet to close the school and the importance of ensuring the opportunities for the school community to be engaged in events around the establishment of the new buildings for Ysgol Pen Barras and Rhos Street School. This included invitations to parents and pupils for the consultation events for the new building and ensuring involvement of pupils in site visits to the construction site so that they would be afforded the same level of involvement as pupils from Ysgol Pen Barras and Rhos Street.

4.3 In the build up to the closure of the school, support was provided to parents via the admission processes to enable them to secure a place in an alternative school. Although Ysgol Pen Barras / Rhos Street School was named as the alternative provision in the consultation and statutory notice, parents sought an alternative provision as follows:-

Destination School	Number of Pupils
Rhos Street School	8
Ysgol Borthyn	3
Ysgol Llanbedr	2
Ysgol Tremeirchion	2
Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch	1
Ysgol Esgob Morgan	1
Ysgol Trefnant	1

- 4.4 As a consequence of this, work was undertaken with the Acting Headteacher of Ysgol Rhewl and with those Headteachers of the 7 feeder schools to plan for transition. This included ensuring the relevant pupil specific information was provided to the school and an opportunity for the Headteacher at each school to discuss with the Acting Headteacher at Ysgol Rhewl the needs and requirements of these pupils. A transition day was also identified for these pupils to visit their new schools and to undertake a day's activity. To support this transportation was provided. To assist parents a uniform voucher was also provided to enable them to purchase a school uniform.
- 4.5 For teachers and staff at the school, personnel support was provided via Corporate HR. This involved a range of functions such as advice over options, recruitment support and general support.
- 4.6 After the school closed at the end of the summer term in July, officers from Education took over the responsibility for the management of the building. This included recycling suitable equipment for use elsewhere in other schools and then clearing the building of redundant equipment.
- 4.7 Feedback Received
- 4.7 In terms of the impact of this support the views of parents of former Ysgol Rhewl pupils; the views of other Headteachers together with the view of the former Acting Headteacher of Ysgol Rhewl have been sought.
- 4.8 Only 2 responses were received from parents of former pupils of Ysgol Rhewl (Appendix 1) following the issue of the questionnaire in early 2019. Due to this limited response it is difficult for any judgement to be formed. In previous school closures there has been a reluctance for parents to re-engage with the service in the immediate aftermath of an event and this may have impacted the response.
- 4.9 Of the 7 Headteachers contacted who received pupils, 5 of the Headteachers responded to the request (Appendix 2). These responses covers only 10 of the 22 pupils as the school which received the largest number of pupils did not respond to the request. There appears to be a mixture of views of the support received. The same level of support was provided to the 7 schools and it is difficult to establish why there is a different perception around the same information being received.

4.10 The response from the Acting Headteacher at the school also illustrates the level of support provided to them during a difficult period and provides suggestions for the future. (Appendix 3)

4.11 The information gained will be used to assist in supporting similar events in the future.

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

The decision was part of the wider Ruthin review. This is linked to the Corporate Plan to continue to modernise schools via the 21st Century Schools Programme. The savings from the closure of Ysgol Rhewl have been used for the investment in this programme.

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

There are no cost implications directly from this report.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

Not applicable as no decision making is required from this report.

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

The report includes feedback from consultation with former parents and Headteachers impacted by the proposal.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Not applicable as no cost implications directly from this report.

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

Not applicable as no decision making is required from this report.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 7.2.3 of the Council's Constitution states that Scrutiny may consider any matter which affect the Council's area or its inhabitants, whilst Section 7.4.1 outlines Scrutiny's powers in relation to policy development and review, including analysing the impact of decisions.

Contact Officer:

Modernising Education Officer

Tel: 01824 712043

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Appendix 1: Response 1 - Received 04/02/19

Ysgol Rhewl Parent Questionnaire – January 2019

Following the closure of Ysgol Rhewl in the summer of 2018, feedback is sought by Denbighshire County Council from the school's parents. The findings of this questionnaire will be reported to Denbighshire County Council Councillors.

We request that the questionnaire is completed and returned by the **21st of February 2019** to enable your anonymised views to be included within the report.

1. What do you think has been the effect of the closure of Ysgol Rhewl on:

	Very Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very Positive
a. The quality of education			✓		
b. Social / happiness of your child				✓	
c. Welsh language			✓		
d. Community		✓			
e. Travel time to school	✓				

2. What do you think have been the three biggest effects on the educational lives of your children?

Very busy classroom now. His abilities have not been stretched the same as availability is limited due to full classrooms.

3. Was the transition activity to your child's destination school sufficient?

Yes a couple of staggered visits and taster days.

4. Did you have sufficient engagement from the destination school?

Yes

5. Did you utilise the school uniform voucher provided?

Yes

6. Have your views about closing schools changed as a result of your experience?

No

7. What are the lessons you think that Denbighshire County Council should learn?

Listen to parents and pupils and their reasons and ideas.

Response 2 - Received 11/02/19

Ysgol Rhewl Parent Questionnaire – January 2019

Following the closure of Ysgol Rhewl in the summer of 2018, feedback is sought by Denbighshire County Council from the school's parents. The findings of this questionnaire will be reported to Denbighshire County Council Councillors.

We request that the questionnaire is completed and returned by the **21st of February 2019** to enable your anonymised views to be included within the report.

1. What do you think has been the effect of the closure of Ysgol Rhewl on:

	Very Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very Positive
a. The quality of education			✓		
b. Social / happiness of your child		✓			
c. Welsh language			✓		
d. Community			✓		
e. Travel time to school		✓			

2. What do you think have been the three biggest effects on the educational lives of your children?

More children in class

Different Teaching Methods

Trying to re-adjust

3. Was the transition activity to your child's destination school sufficient?

No

4. Did you have sufficient engagement from the destination school?

Reasonable

5. Did you utilise the school uniform voucher provided?

Yes, Thanks, that was a small help

6. Have your views about closing schools changed as a result of your experience?

NO, I completely disagree

7. What are the lessons you think that Denbighshire County Council should learn?

You really don't want to know what I think

Appendix 2: Comments received from receiving schools.

Q1. During the summer term, did you receive sufficient opportunities and support to engage with pupils and their families?

- I believe so.
- The pupil was given an opportunity to attend a transition day and parents visited during the year.
- Yes. I was invited to Ysgol Rhewl to meet the pupils and have a discussion with the teachers. During the visit an external member of staff supporting a pupil was present. This opportunity to engage was very useful.
- As far as I am aware, we didn't receive any opportunity to liaise with family apart from the taster day we offered for the child that came to us.

Q2. Did you receive sufficient information from Ysgol Rhewl regarding each individual pupil?

- Not really but no more nor no less than other children when they come to the school.
- No information was received from Ysgol Rhewl.
- The school received a file for every child. These were very useful.
- I did not receive any information at all from Ysgol Rhewl about the child who came to my class.
- Yes – The pupil's files were received by the school.

(Note: Following the responses from the schools stating no information was received, further checks were made with the schools concerned and confirmation received that all files were in fact received).

Q3. Are there any lessons that can be learned by the Education and Children Services in supporting pupils on their transition from one school to another as a result of school closure?

- It might be an idea for the receiving head to go out to the school to visit pupil and parents in current situ before coming over.
- Need to ensure that the schools that are closing get the encouragement and the time to transfer any information.
- I thought the arrangements were sufficient.
- The child that came to me was very hurt by the closure of the school and still feels very strongly about it. I don't think enough support was provided before the school closed. I would have appreciated some past assessment scores and/ or books from Ysgol Rhewl to see where the child was starting from.

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Appendix 3: Comments by the Acting Headteacher of Ysgol Rhewl

Q1. During the summer term, did you receive sufficient support in your role from the Education and Children's Service department?

A1. Personally, due to the reliability, dedication, empathy and professionalism demonstrated throughout this period, it impacted on our confidence and trust that the school will continue to be in safe hands, the respect and honesty in providing answers and keeping us informed made the process easier.

Q2. Was there sufficient support and engagement from Head teachers of schools receiving pupils from Ysgol Rhewl for pupils and their parents?

A1. This was not consistent throughout the cluster, some head teachers made an effort to get to know the pupils, they made them, the family and staff feel valued. Transition between the primary and secondary sectors in other cluster organisations is more structured and actually begins sooner in the academic year.

Another recommendation - For the benefit of pupils, parents, staff, LA) and to demonstrate compassion and respect for anyone going through this experience, better collaboration and pedagogical activities within the cluster needs to be arranged, clarified and adhered to, this reducing issues with stress and anxiety, supporting a positive learning environment - children come first!

Q3. Are there any lessons that can be learned by the Education and Children Services in supporting staff as a result of school closure?

A1. I couldn't have asked or expect any more from the Education and Children Services team. However, questions were raised frequently by parents and staff which were then passed on, but the response was an issue due to A having to ask B, having to ask C for the answer.

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Report to:	Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	9th May 2019
Lead Member/Officer:	Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets/Contracts & Performance Manager, Finance
Report Author:	Contracts & Performance Project Manager, Finance
Title:	Universal Credit

1. What is the report about?

The impact to date of Universal Credit (UC) on Council services and on the County's residents, the effectiveness of mitigation measures so far and plans going forward.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Following a report to Communities Scrutiny Committee in May 2018 the Committee requested this update report on:-

- (i) the impact of the introduction of UC (full service) on Council services and residents 12 months following roll-out to the majority of the county area;
- (ii) the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Council and its partners with a view to mitigating the effects of its introduction on residents and Council services, including the lessons learnt; and
- (iii) the work underway to mitigate the impact on services and residents in readiness for the migration of current benefit recipients on to UC in due course.

3. What are the Recommendations?

To consider the contents of the report, provide observations and to continue to support and endorse the project delivery method employed by officers, namely the Universal Credit Board.

4. Report details

4.1 Background

UC is part of UK Government's programme of welfare reform, a means-tested benefit from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) replacing six main benefits/tax credits. As previously reported such a large change impacts on our residents and multiple Council services.

Current Phase – 'natural migration': only new claimants or existing 'legacy' benefit claimants with change of circumstances, working aged can claim UC. Denbighshire and the rest of the UK are currently in this phase with most of Denbighshire since April 2018 and south Denbighshire since October 2017.

Next Phase – ‘managed migration’: existing ‘legacy’ benefit claimants, working aged will be moved to UC by DWP. DWP have slowed down the nationwide plans for this process. It is now unlikely to start in Denbighshire until 2020 at the earliest and the UK end date has changed from 2022 until 2023. We will work closely with DWP to clarify timelines for Denbighshire and will communicate through the UC Board.

4.2 Impact during the first 12 months on services & residents

Changes to individual personal circumstances trigger a claim to UC so predicting numbers was initially difficult. However the last 12 months has seen a steady stream of Denbighshire residents claiming UC. As at March 2019, 3148 people in Denbighshire were claiming UC (appendix 1). In readiness for UC in Denbighshire we set up the UC Board in July 2017 and through this undertook extensive preparation, engaging services, anticipating impact and implementing mitigation. The Board includes all impacted services and Citizens Advice Denbighshire (CAD) and DWP. It maintains a comprehensive risk register and communications strategy as shared previously. Our pre-emptive approach has helped to mitigate significant impact at an early stage. Details of the impact on the key services and service users are attached (appendix 2).

As well as the rollout of UC itself, there have been multiple legislative changes to absorb. These changes have been twofold:-

- i. DWP changes to UC policy - unpredictable and frequent e.g. a 2 week housing benefit (hb) ‘run-on,’ with key process implications for the Council. (From April 2018 claimants who have been receiving hb immediately prior to claiming UC receive a transitional payment of two weeks hb payment when they claim UC. This is not paid back and is intended to cover rent and ease the wait for the first UC payment).
- ii. Other legislation - initial issues of non-compatibility between UC and some other legislation / council processes have needed to be managed. Subsequent changes in legislation then need to be accommodated. E.g. the criteria for UC recipients to claim free school meals has changed from 1st April 2019 and includes long term protection for those already receiving free school meals.

The robustness of the UC Board has meant that legislative changes have been swiftly communicated to the relevant services, who have adapted accordingly to support residents and/or manage internal processes as needed. Where relevant this has included collaborative cross service working.

4.3 Effectiveness of mitigation measures and lessons learnt

The UC Board with all impacted services represented has been extremely successful. In many other Councils such boards do not exist or are heavily focussed on the Revenues and Benefits service. Our approach is different as we have included frontline services but also support services such as the Communications Team, Democratic Services, Finance and HR. This has allowed a broader understanding of impact and a more encompassing programme of effective mitigation measures.

DWP and CAD sit on the UC Board and close working between our three organisations has proved invaluable. Those claiming UC from DWP may need Council services (e.g. council tax reduction, free school meals or even homeless prevention) and possibly CAD (e.g. budgeting advice, income maximisation, debt management). Working well together means a joined up service delivery for residents. Co-location of council staff and CAD staff in Rhyl Job Centre is a good example. The council staff member in Rhyl

Job Centre has conducted 1038 appointments with Denbighshire residents in the last 12 months bringing a breadth of council services whilst they visit the DWP Job Centre for their UC claim. Case studies of the DCC and CAD co-location are attached (appendix 3 for DCC and appendix 4 for CAD).

We also work with other councils in Wales and Welsh Local Government Association to share ideas and agree common approaches. This has been valuable as despite UC being operational in many areas of the UK prior to Denbighshire we still come across complexities and unforeseen consequences of UC policy that have not yet been resolved by government or DWP.

More specific details on the measures taken by individual services are attached (appendix 2).

4.4 Work underway to mitigate in readiness for migration of current benefit recipients

DWP and Welsh Government estimate that by the time UC is fully rolled out (i.e. end of 2023) approximately one third of all households in the UK / Wales will be claiming UC. Whilst managed migration in the UK is delayed, due to the numbers predicted we are working proactively to prepare. Importantly the 'natural migration' process continues so those numbers continue to rise. Also from 1st February 2019 UC is the benefit available for 'natural migration' for families with more than 2 children (this group were previously excluded from UC).

As our UC Board approach has proved to be successful we propose to continue to use this framework and to continue with the current activities including strong partnership working, co-location, close engagement with Welsh Local Government Association and the other Welsh councils. More specific new streams of work are as follows:-

- Utilising a recent data analysis by external consultants to build a raft of pre-emptive projects targeting support to the most vulnerable e.g. a telephone approach to specific residents eligible to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment
- Collaborating with DWP on the business case for a new post in Rhyl Job Centre to complement the council staff member
- Refresh of our short films on how UC claimants can get help from CAD and digital support in our libraries
- Working with CAD to ensure Denbighshire residents fully utilise the new style UC support DWP and Citizens Advice are commencing from April 2019
- Welsh Government have commissioned a detailed statistical analysis of the impact of UC across Wales. We await the results (expected early 2020) and the specific information on Denbighshire to support our strategic and operational decision making.

There are a raft of service specific initiatives as reflected in the attached (appendix 2).

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

UC is not a Council decision. It is a UK Government welfare benefit being rolled out by the DWP and so has not been designed with our Corporate Priorities in mind.

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

There are no direct outgoing costs for the Council with the rollout of UC. However the differences between UC and 'legacy' benefits generates difficulties for some residents, increasing demand for some council services and putting pressure on others (appendix 2). However due to additional factors such as other welfare reform it is not always possible to isolate costs attributable to UC alone. However we will continue to monitor impact through the UC Board both during this current phase of 'natural migration' and will carefully monitor the impact of 'managed migration.'

DWP has provided minimal funding to councils to provide specific support to UC claimants. Some councils delivered those services themselves, whilst we have used most of the funding to buy in the support from CAD, retaining approximately £15k for digital support from the Library service. However as from April 2019 DWP made a national decision that funding would be diverted from councils and straight to Citizens Advice across the UK. Due to our close partnership working and the fact that our local Citizens Advice, CAD, were already delivering a large part of this service for Denbighshire the impact for our council is restricted to the circa £15K funding previously paid to the Library service.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

It is not appropriate for the Council to prepare a well-being impact assessment on UC as it is not a Council decision or proposal but a UK Government one. UK Government have prepared their own impact assessment - [link to document](#)

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

- A report was submitted to Communities Scrutiny Committee on 17th May 2018 detailing the likely effects of the introduction of UC on Council services and residents and the planning and preparation to date.
- We continue with regular briefings to Head of Finance / Section 151 officer and in turn the Chief Executive Team and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Through the UC Board we communicate with all impacted services and key partners to ensure all parties are fully briefed and engaged. Formal meetings are held regularly and are well attended with active participation.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The Council has been extremely proactive and innovative in its approach to understanding and managing the impact of welfare reforms on residents and the impact on council services. Working closely with services within the council and in partnership with CAD, Civica and DWP, the council has developed a good understanding of the range of impacts and implemented interventions and service changes as a consequence. The funding provided by DWP through the administration grant continues to reduce as, in theory, caseloads dealt with by councils should reduce as housing benefit is replaced by UC. However, workload is not reducing as other processes have been introduced as detailed in Appendix 2 (page 6). These additional processes have not been recognised or funded by DWP and cause a financial pressure for the council.

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

There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report i.e. to support the ongoing work of the UC Board. Operational risks are managed through the UC Board.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 7.2.3 of the Council's Constitution states that Scrutiny Committees will consider any matter which affects the Council's area or its inhabitants.

Contact Officer:

Contracts & Performance Project Manager, Finance

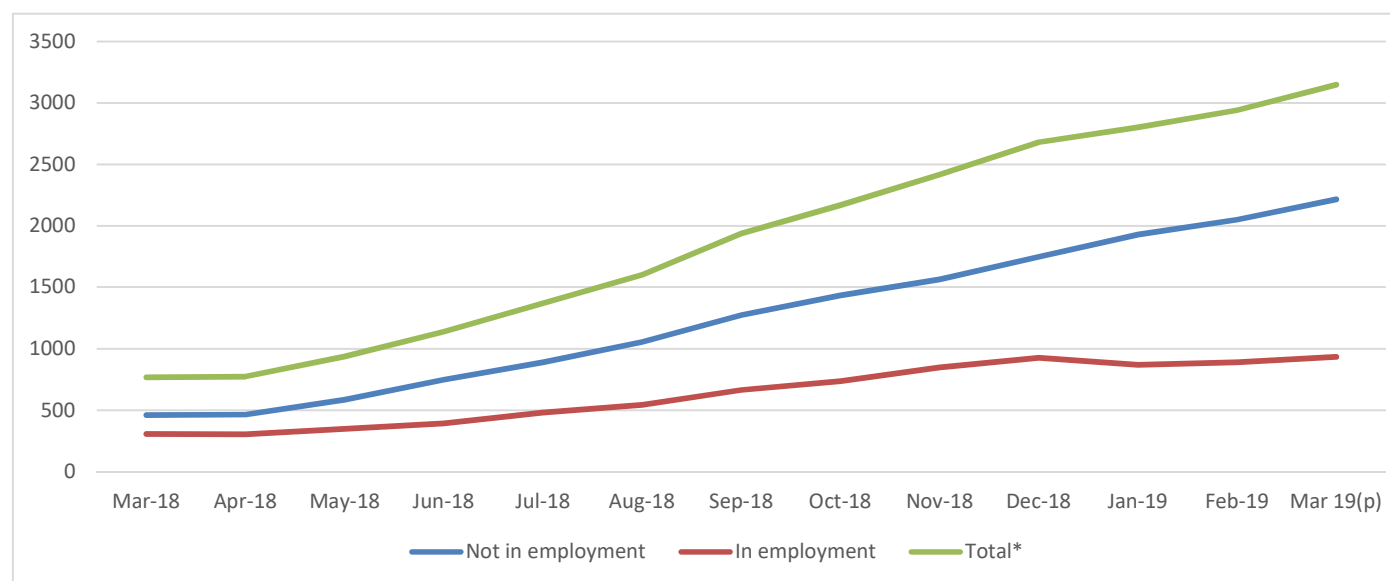
Tel: 01824 712449

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People on Universal Credit :

Denbighshire / Sir Ddinbych

	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar 19(p)
Not in employment	460	465	587	748	889	1056	1274	1434	1565	1749	1928	2050	2216
In employment	306	305	348	392	482	545	664	737	848	927	871	891	934
Total*	768	774	937	1140	1370	1602	1939	2170	2416	2681	2803	2941	3148



Source: Department for Work and Pensions

* Statistical disclosure control has been applied to this table to avoid the release of confidential data. Totals may not sum due to the disclosure control applied

(p) Figures marked "p" are provisional

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Citizens Advice Denbighshire

<p>Expected impact of UC on residents and service</p> <p><u>Impact on customers:</u> We anticipated with the full service roll out an increased demand for advice and digital support due to impact of change and uncertainty, the requirement for digital claim and ongoing support to maintain the UC account. We knew people could be challenged financially in the initial claim assessment period and in cases of natural migration to UC also for some there may be an option to stay on legacy benefits.</p> <p><u>Impact on Service:</u> Expected increased demand predominantly in Rhyl and knew it was important for staff and volunteers to be trained in advice and support for UC and we also knew that clients would need access to digital facilities and support to access digital services. We also anticipated an increased need for our money advice services.</p>
<p>Mitigation put in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained all staff and volunteers on all aspects of UC • Provided digital support to claimants across Denbighshire • Employed a UC adviser • Co-located at Rhyl Job Centre • Established strong relationships within DWP to ease solutions for complex issues • Provided personal budgeting service under contract to DCC • Increased outreach services • Set up and extended online referral system to our service • Worked in partnership with library service on assisted digital services
<p>Actual impact to date (April 2018 – March 2019)</p> <p><i>781 Denbighshire residents advised on Universal Credit – 20% of working age clients</i> <i>484 Personal Budgeting Support sessions (208 predicted by DWP)</i> <i>250 Assisted Digital Support sessions (120 predicted by DWP)</i></p> <p><i>25% of Universal Credit clients present with at least 1 debt issue</i> <i>32% of working age non-UC clients present with at least 1 debt issue</i></p> <p><i>12% of Universal Credit clients have received a food bank voucher from us</i> <i>8% of non-UC working age clients have received a food bank voucher from us</i></p>
<p>Lessons learnt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and planning proved effective. We have been able to provide the service our clients need, when, and how they need it • Referrals from partner agencies including DCC have been effective and appropriate • We have helped many vulnerable clients, and others who needed support but many UC claimants have self managed and not accessed our service • Some issues were more complex than anticipated (all parties are learning including the DWP) • Personal Budgeting Support was useful in the initial assessment phase but had more impact when we developed a two stage approach, to include after payment
<p>Going forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens Advice are now contracted to provide UC Help to Claim service which will enable us to assist clients to claim. • Personal Budgeting Support is no longer funded and we are continuing to deliver whilst seeking new funding. • We continue to be co-located at Rhyl Job Centre as part of the Help to Claim offer and Help to Claim also supports south Denbighshire customers, including at Wrexham Job Centre. • CAD has been selected by the national organisation as the Best practice Lead for all CAs in North Wales and Powys. We have seconded a member of our team to the national organisation which provides us with a direct access route for support and for influencing on behalf of our clients to government level.

Community Support Services

<p>Expected impact of UC on residents and service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations to Homelessness Prevention have continued to rise, including a 13.5% increase between 17/18 and 18/19 and a number of welfare reforms, including UC (but also the ‘bedroom tax’, the cap on family allowance, and the shared room rate for under 35s) have played a part in this. • Currently 31.5 % of households in temporary accommodation are claiming Universal Credit. • Complex Disability team have found that for those citizens in transition from children to adult services the process of applying for UC is longer. • Community Navigators have reported that they have had a few referrals where citizens are waiting for UC and have needed food bank vouchers due to the time it is taking to get started and the change from weekly/ fortnightly to monthly pay.
<p>Mitigation put in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website information • New IT system • All frontline staff have UC awareness sessions. • Established good communication channels with Citizens Advice Denbighshire to refer customers. • Over the last year Supporting People have been funding a Homelessness Prevention Navigator post based at Rhyl Job Centre, offering advice and assistance around UC, with a focus on preventing crisis point, e.g. homelessness. • Identification of early cases for preventative work. • Close working links with Housing Enforcement and landlords to support cases at risk of homelessness. • Utilising DHP to ensure where possible vulnerable tenants are in the best position possible prior to UC roll out.
<p>Actual impact to date (April 2018 – March 2019)</p> <p>Within homelessness we do not collect data in relation to the reasons why people present as homeless, we just record the number of households presenting. As a result the information we have on the reasons why households present as homeless are anecdotal. However during the last 12 months 70% of the households that presented as homeless and were accommodated in emergency / temporary accommodation are single people under the age of 35. We are struggling to find permanent accommodation for this age group due to Welfare Reform, such as the Local Housing Allowance Benefit Cap. Similarly within the wider Community Support Services UC does not feature as a reason for referral, but is anecdotally collected as an issue when supporting our citizens.</p>
<p>Lessons learnt</p> <p>Currently there is minimal impact on those households in our leased portfolio as homeless cases are safeguarded by housing benefit whilst in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>For Syrian Refugee Families we have commissioned the British Red Cross to support families for up to the first 2 years of resettlement in Denbighshire. The British Red Cross will assist families with navigating the welfare benefits system. There is also a drop in centre for families to take letters for interpretation.</p>
<p>Going forward</p> <p>We are working across all council departments to implement solutions to address homelessness within the County which includes addressing issues impacted by Universal Credit and Welfare Reform.</p> <p>Awareness raising with people in temporary accommodation for expected move on into the private rented sector and to ensure claims for UC housing costs are made at the point of tenancy start date to mitigate any loss of housing costs payments through Renting Ready Training.</p>

Education & Children’s Services

Expected impact of UC on residents and service
Anticipated rise in demand from people and families in Denbighshire seeking support from our services as they move to Universal Credit and then the impact this would have on our resources.
Mitigation put in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and awareness sessions for frontline staff • Referral to other agencies as needed including Citizens Advice Denbighshire
Actual impact to date (April 2018 – March 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases in referrals to family and youth support services • Increased use of food banks or fair-share food schemes • Reports of people having to borrow money from friends or take out loans in order to buy food and electricity
Lessons learnt
<p>The transition to universal credit has been difficult for some vulnerable individuals and families due to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a long gap before receiving payment • difficulty understanding the process
Going forward
<p>Increase in demand on our services from families being referred due to homelessness, risk of becoming homeless through rent arrears or as a result of lack of money to pay for food and energy bills.</p> <p>Larger families transferring to Universal Credit from 1st Feb 2019 and whether we will see an increase in numbers.</p> <p>We are attempting to mitigate the above impact by ensuring that staff are aware of the Universal Credit process and where to signpost people for support at the earliest possible sign of difficulty.</p>

Housing

<p>Expected impact of UC on residents and service</p> <p>Impact on our customers: Income projections inevitably see an increase in arrears due to tenants UC payments being in arrears, as this financial year sees the introduction of larger families onto Universal Credit we also expect an increase in demand for support both digital and financial.</p> <p>Impact on our service We have already been managing new UC cases and getting used to DWP UC process to support customers through the process. Additional resources are required to provide customers with advice and support as well as increased payment transactions following direct housing costs and managing rent accounts in larger volumes due to direct payments to customers.</p>
<p>Mitigation put in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Inclusion action plan • Tenant Surgeries/Roadshows • Website information • Getting online events and support • New IT system • Developed a Customer Engagement Contract seen as good practice by HQN • New contact centre to manage increased transaction and workloads • Key to Advice project with Citizens Advice Denbighshire • Trusted partner status with DWP
<p>Actual impact to date (April 2018 – March 2019)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We currently have 311 households in receipt of Universal Credit (we have 3423 current tenancies, approx. 1200 are older peoples accommodation who could claim UC until they reach pension age) • As of 01/04/2019 we have arrears on UC of £161,894.20 over 311 UC claimants, this gives an average arrears of £520.56 per case. • Pre UC most tenants who were in receipt of Housing Benefit (HB) had no arrears as HB was paid weekly in advance. The average arrears per case is equal to 6 weeks rent which is as expected due to the UC waiting time. • Research indicates that the amount of arrears is below the national average. • We have had more new claimants than expected, this is expected to increase in the next financial year
<p>Lessons learnt</p> <p>Mitigation measures implemented by the Housing team have been successful and due to UC we have increased the contact/communication with our tenants. Referrals to support agencies have been important to help support the tenants, because of the increased contact to help support tenants through the initial assessment period it has helped to identify other support needs / debt issues and resulted in tenants gaining further support to improve their circumstances. UC arrears is a “cash flow” change from previous weekly Housing Benefit being paid directly onto their rent accounts to monthly UC paid to the tenant</p>
<p>Going forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop and deliver the Here to Help campaign • A new structure has been developed for Housing Services with 11 Housing Officers having a patch of approx. 300 properties – this will allow the officers to have closer relationships with tenants to provide additional support and advice where required • Social media campaigns including animations and improved support online • Use of our community bus on our estates at events with trained staff that are able to assist with benefit applications and financial assistance / getting online • Potential impact of 53 week rent year 2019/20

Libraries and One Stop Shops

Expected impact of UC on residents and service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipated rise in number of people needing digital assistance to get online to make their UC claim and update their journals – and concerns whether there would be sufficient staffing capacity available in libraries to offer the support needed
Mitigation put in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library staff trained in supporting UC claimants Co-located provision at Jobcentre by partner organisations to support new UC claimants
Actual impact to date (April 2018 – March 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of demand for the assisted digital support has not been as high as anticipated, and has fallen over the year as the set-up in Rhyl Jobcentre was established. Q1 – 20; Q2 – 12; Q3 – 6; Q4 - 1 Claimants are using library computers and wifi to maintain their journals and search for jobs, but not requiring a great deal of staff support
Lessons learnt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The demand for assisted digital was difficult to predict before the rollout. The support co-located in the jobcentre has coped with the demand.
Going forward
No concerns currently

Revenues & Benefits Team

Expected impact of UC on residents and service
<p>Impact on our customers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five week wait for UC award • UC customers receiving monthly benefit payments, in comparison to fortnightly payments prior to UC <p>Impact on our service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of staff undergone intensive training on UC processes for customer and the application of UC • UC has increased benefit department's workload by 35% • Increase of 13% in the number of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) applications • Impact of UC policy on Council Tax Reduction Scheme process (CTRS)
Mitigation put in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCC website information kept up to date • Homelessness Prevention Navigator Role based in the Job Centre • Staff training • Expertise and experience provided by Civica's UC Implementation Manager • Landlord Forum • Atkins Consultants - Free School Meals process • Attendance UC Board Meetings/Tackling Poverty Board Meetings • Working closely with Citizens Advice Denbighshire (CAD) in respect of referrals for budgeting advice and making a claim for UC • Additional staffing resources allocated to support CTRS collection rate
Actual impact to date (April 2018 – March 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1125 UC claims have generated work for our team • Workload increased by 35% - work generated by a UC claim is more time consuming than previous Housing Benefit claims as there are further stages including processing transitional payments, submission of proformas to DWP and removing customer database indicators • DHP processing is also more time consuming as further stages added before making an award • Housing Benefit overpayments more difficult to recover from UC awards than Housing Benefit awards • Issuing of multiple revised Council Tax bills for some CTRS customers
Lessons learnt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Prevention Navigator role has been vital in supporting claimants in all aspects of UC and CTRS • Refernet as a secure link with CAD and has been useful to quickly refer UC customers struggling with budgeting monthly UC payments
Going forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop staff's knowledge of new aspects of UC and its effects on customers and other benefits such as CTRS and Free School Meals • 2019/20 DHP budget has been reduced – this will have an impact on the amount of vulnerable customers within Denbighshire • Social media campaigns including animations and keeping DCC webpages up to date with any UC changes

Co-location of Denbighshire County Council staff member at Rhyl Job Centre – Homelessness Prevention Navigator

Case Study 1

A UC claimant contacted Rhyl Job Centre and spoke to one of the work coaches (DWP staff member). He was homeless, staying temporarily with friends. He had been offered a job in Rhyl but his lack of housing prevented him from being able to commit to it.

The work coach got advice from the Denbighshire County Council's (DCC) co-located staff member about the housing issues and the claimant was quickly referred to DCC's Homeless Drop-In at Russell House. He went there the same day, discussed his options with them. He was eligible for support and they offered him an up-front payment to cover either the deposit or rent in advance for a prospective new property.

He called in to the Job Centre a few days later to say he was able to secure the majority of a deposit and he was just going to view a property in Rhyl. The plan was to secure that property, move in and then be able to start work in his new job. In one go he ceased to be classed as homeless and be able to start work as well. He was delighted with the situation. Three separate departments working together to secure a very positive result for a vulnerable claimant.

Case Study 2

A Denbighshire resident visited Rhyl Job Centre. He had been living off his savings for some time, but these had run out. As a result he had fallen into rent arrears on his home and had been issued an eviction notice by his landlord to leave the property. He was clearly distressed with the situation and he explained that he struggled with mental health problems and had not known where to turn.

He was advised by the Job Centre staff to claim UC as a matter of urgency. In view of his obvious needs (financial and housing) he met with both a DWP Job Centre staff member and the co-located Denbighshire County Council (DCC) staff member at the same time in the Job Centre so he could explain his situation once and receive the combined advice and support he needed in one go.

With support from the DWP staff he successfully made his online UC claim at the Job Centre. Whilst the DCC staff member was able to resolve his housing crisis as follows.

As with all UC claimants he would now have to wait 5 weeks for confirmation of his UC award. However in the meantime he had a court date very shortly regarding the eviction notice. He was eligible to receive support from DCC Homeless Prevention Team (HPT) and so their services were engaged. However to meet strict external regulations HPT would need confirmation of his claim to UC (in particular details around the rent element). But he was not due to receive this for 5 weeks. The claimant gave consent for DCC to request these details on his behalf from Rhyl Job Centre staff. The DCC co-located staff member was able to liaise with the Job Centre staff to receive this information and it was then emailed securely by the DCC staff member to HPT. HPT were able to support the gentleman and subsequently the landlord withdrew the eviction notice and the court date was cancelled.

The communication between the Rhyl Job Centre staff, the DCC co-located staff member and the HPT meant that a vulnerable claimant did not lose his home and his benefit applications were all in hand.

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Vicky's Story

Vicky is a single lady in her 60s attended Rhyl Job Centre Plus (JCP) for help to claim Universal Credit (UC), she was referred by JCP staff to Citizens Advice Denbighshire's (CAD) co located service. Vicky was a carer for her father who passed away recently, she was entitled to the 8 week run on of Carers Allowance but this was ending as was her Income Support, so she needed to claim UC. Vicky lives in 2 bedroom housing association property.

Vicky has arthritis but this currently does not affect her ability to work, she was not going to mention it on UC application however we advised her that it would be better to put it in the claim so that should it get worse and affect her ability to work DWP would be aware of the ongoing condition. Vicky does not have any internet access at home and needs assistance using computers.

We liaised with Denbighshire County Council's co located staff member at Rhyl Job Centre who confirmed Vicky was entitled to 2 week run on of Housing Benefit and that her Council Tax Reduction application is in place.

CAD Advice and Action:

- UC digital claim form completed and advice given on how to action and respond to work journal messages and how to complete the "To do's" section.
- Advised Vicky they need to log into their UC account regularly, at least once a day if possible.
- ID verification appointment confirmed at Rhyl JCP.
- Advised Vicky that UC is paid calendar monthly (in arrears) and that it will take 5 weeks before the first payment is received.
- Advised Vicky that a request for an advanced payment can be made once ID verification has been successful and had a brief discussion around the amount to request.
- Advised Vicky any advance taken will be recovered from their ongoing UC award over a 12 month period
- Advised Vicky on the claimant commitment that will be agreed when they have at their first appointment with their work coach.
- Advised Vicky of the additional personal budgeting support available after their work coach appointment including a full review of their income and expenditure and completion of a financial statement.
- We suggested Vicky could access digital help and support either at the digital suite at our Rhyl office or at the Jobcentre Plus
- We referred Vicky to the Women's Centre for support and help to cope with her bereavement and loneliness
- We talked to Vicky about her current housing situation, she is an under occupant and made an appointment with her landlord to discuss her housing situation and made a claim for a Discretionary Housing Payment.

We also made an appointment for Vicky a few days later at our Rhyl office for assistance with her electricity bill. Client had a significantly large electricity bill

accrued before her father died, he needed the additional warmth. We contacted energy supplier and negotiated phased repayment of bill and arranged for a pre-payment meter to be installed at Vicky's request. We placed Vicky on the Priority Services Register.



Report to:	Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	9 May 2019
Lead Officer:	Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Report Author:	Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Title:	Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

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

2. What is the reason for making this report?

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

3. What are the Recommendations?

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

4. Report details

- 4.1 Section 7 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, as well as the rules of procedure and debate.
- 4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must set, and regularly review, a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.
- 4.4 In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and the Wales Audit Office (WAO) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users. From now on scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens. The WAO will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.

- 4.5 Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:
- budget savings;
 - achievement of the Corporate Plan objectives (with particular emphasis on the their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
 - any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2) and;
 - Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues

4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested subjects. No officer proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.

- 4.7 With a view to making better use of scrutiny's time by focussing committees' resources on detailed examination of subjects, adding value through the decision-making process and securing better outcomes for residents, the SCVCG decided that members, as well as officers, should complete 'scrutiny proposal forms' outlining the reasons why they think a particular subject would benefit from scrutiny's input. A copy of the 'member's proposal form' can be seen at Appendix 2. The reverse side of this form contains a flowchart listing questions which members should consider when proposing an item for scrutiny, and which committees should ask when determining a topic's suitability for inclusion on a scrutiny forward work programme. If, having followed this process, a topic is not deemed suitable for formal examination by a scrutiny committee, alternative channels for sharing the information or examining the matter can be considered e.g. the provision of an 'information report', or if the matter is of a very local nature examination by the relevant Member Area Group (MAG). No items should be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by the Committee or the SCVCG. Assistance with their completion is available from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this purpose a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

Progress on Committee Resolutions

- 4.9 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.

5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 25 April 2019. No items were referred to this Committee for consideration. The Group's next meeting is scheduled for 13 June 2019.

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

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities, improve outcomes for residents whilst also managing austere budget cuts.

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

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

8. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment? The completed Well-being Impact Assessment report can be downloaded from the [website](#) and should be attached as an appendix to the report

A Well-being Impact Assessment has not been undertaken in relation to the purpose or contents of this report. However, Scrutiny through its work in examining service delivery, policies, procedures and proposals will consider their impact or potential impact on the sustainable development principle and the well-being goals stipulated in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

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

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

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

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

11. Power to make the decision

Section 7.11 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny committees and/or the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group will be responsible for setting their own work programmes, taking into account the wishes of Members of the Committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.

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Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

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

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
4 July	Cllr. Tony Thomas	1. Planning Compliance Charter	To consider the draft Planning Compliance Charter between Denbighshire County Council and Town and Community Councils	The development of a Charter that will be useful to town and community councils and other stakeholders to understand how the compliance function works and how they can support compliance work through early prevention/intervention work in their locality. The Charter will help support the delivery of the Environment and Resilient Communities corporate priorities.	Emlyn Jones/Paul Mead/Adam Turner	December 2018
	Cllr. Tony Thomas	2. Caravan and Holiday Park Regulation Procedure	To assess the effectiveness of the county's regulation procedure in ensuring that caravan and holiday park planning and licensing conditions are complied with	Ensuring that all regulatory stipulations are adhered to and that holiday caravan sites contribute towards the economic prosperity of the area and local residents are supported to live in homes that meet their needs	Emlyn Jones/Paul Mead	By SCVCG January 2018 (rescheduled January 2019)
	Cllr. Tony Thomas	3. Seagull Management Update	To report on the progress made in developing and delivering the Seagull Management Action Plan and	An assessment of whether appropriate and proportionate actions are being taken to protect residents, businesses and visitors from the nuisance caused by gulls and whether the measures taken are	Emlyn Jones/Gareth Watson	March 2018 (rescheduled by SCVCG December 2018)

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Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				the associated Public Awareness Campaign	effective and support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan		
	Cllr. Brian Jones	4.	Car Park Asset Management Plan	To detail the progress made to date with the delivery of the asset management plan and associated initiatives	To realise the delivery of the plan, the investment programme in the county's car parks and the associated initiatives with a view to delivering the connected communities and environment priorities within the Council's corporate plan	Emlyn Jones/Mike Jones	March 2018
		5.	<i>Llantysilio Mountain Fire (provisional – may necessitate special meeting)</i>	<i>To consider the findings of the inquiry into the fire and the lessons learnt from the incident</i>	<i>To confirm the inquiry's findings and formulate recommendations based on the findings with a view to improving:</i> <i>(i) multi-agency responses to similar incidents in future; and</i> <i>(ii) land management practices to mitigate against the risk and spread of similar fires in future</i>	<i>Steve Price/Rhian Evans</i>	<i>March 2019</i>
5 September	Cllr. Brian Jones Reps from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water & NRW to be invited	1.	Flood Management Responsibilities in Denbighshire	To present the conclusions of the joint study into whether improvements could be made to the management of the Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter, adjacent drains and sewers, and to outline each	An assessment of whether the Council effectively fulfils its responsibilities in relation to flood management and mitigation and works effectively with partner organisations to reduce the risk of flooding and deliver the Environment and Resilient Communities priorities of the Corporate Plan	Tony Ward/Wayne Hope	March 2018 (rescheduled February 2019)

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				organisation's responsibilities in relation to flood management and flood mitigation			
	Cllr. Brian Jones	2.	Proposed New Waste and Recycling Service Design	To consider detailed information on the proposed new services, including service design, depot reconfiguration requirements, indicative costings and funding available and proposed communication strategy	Assurances that the proposal are progressing in accordance with the Council and the national vision in relation to waste management, reconfiguration costs are manageable and will realise indicative savings and ease budget pressure and that residents are buying into the new waste concept which will deliver the corporate priority relating to an attractive and protected environment that supports well-being and economic prosperity	Tony Ward/Tara Dumas/Peter Clayton	October 2018 (rescheduled March 2018)
	Leader	3.	Tourism Signage Strategy for Denbighshire	To outline the progress made by the Working Group in developing a tourism signage strategy for the county, consideration of potential funding sources, and the anticipated timescale for the project's delivery	The development of a tourism signage strategy that complements trunk road signage and technological innovations in the field of tourism, takes into account the aims of 'The Wales Way' project, attracts visitors and increases the value of tourism spend in the county in line with the corporate priority relating to the Environment, and in-keeping with the outcomes of Denbighshire's Tourism Strategy	Mike Jones/Peter McDermott	May 2018 (rescheduled by SCVCG December 2018)

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Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
24 Oct	Cllr. Huw Hilditch Roberts	1. <i>Impact of the Ruthin Primary Education Area Review</i> [Education]	<i>To consider the findings of the of the impact assessment (based on the WBFG Act principles and goals) undertaken following the conclusion, implementation of the decisions relating to the review</i>	<i>Identification of any negative or unintended/unexpected outcomes from the school reorganisation decisions that will assist planning for similar projects in future to ensure the well-being of all stakeholders</i>	<i>Karen Evans/Geraint Davies/James Curran</i>	<i>October 2017</i>
12 Dec						
May/June 2020	Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	1. Welsh Government's Free Childcare Offer in Denbighshire	To assess the take-up and impact of the WG's free childcare offer in the county since its introduction in April 2019	To evaluate whether the introduction of the free childcare offer has supported the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities relating to young people and resilient communities, supported the local economy and will enhance better outcomes for children and families	Karen Evans/James Wood	September 2018

Future Issues

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

Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

For future years

Information/Consultation Reports

Information / Consultation	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author(s)	Date Entered
Information [Education] May 2019	Ysgol Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd	To: (i) outline the reasons given by the WG's Cabinet Secretary in relation to her decision with respect of the future of Ysgol Llanbedr D C; (ii) how the Welsh Government dealt with the appeal; and (iii) the decision's implications for the future management and financial arrangements for Ysgol Llanbedr D C and Ysgol Trefnant, their staff and pupils	Karen Evans/Geraint Davies/James Curran	December 2018

Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

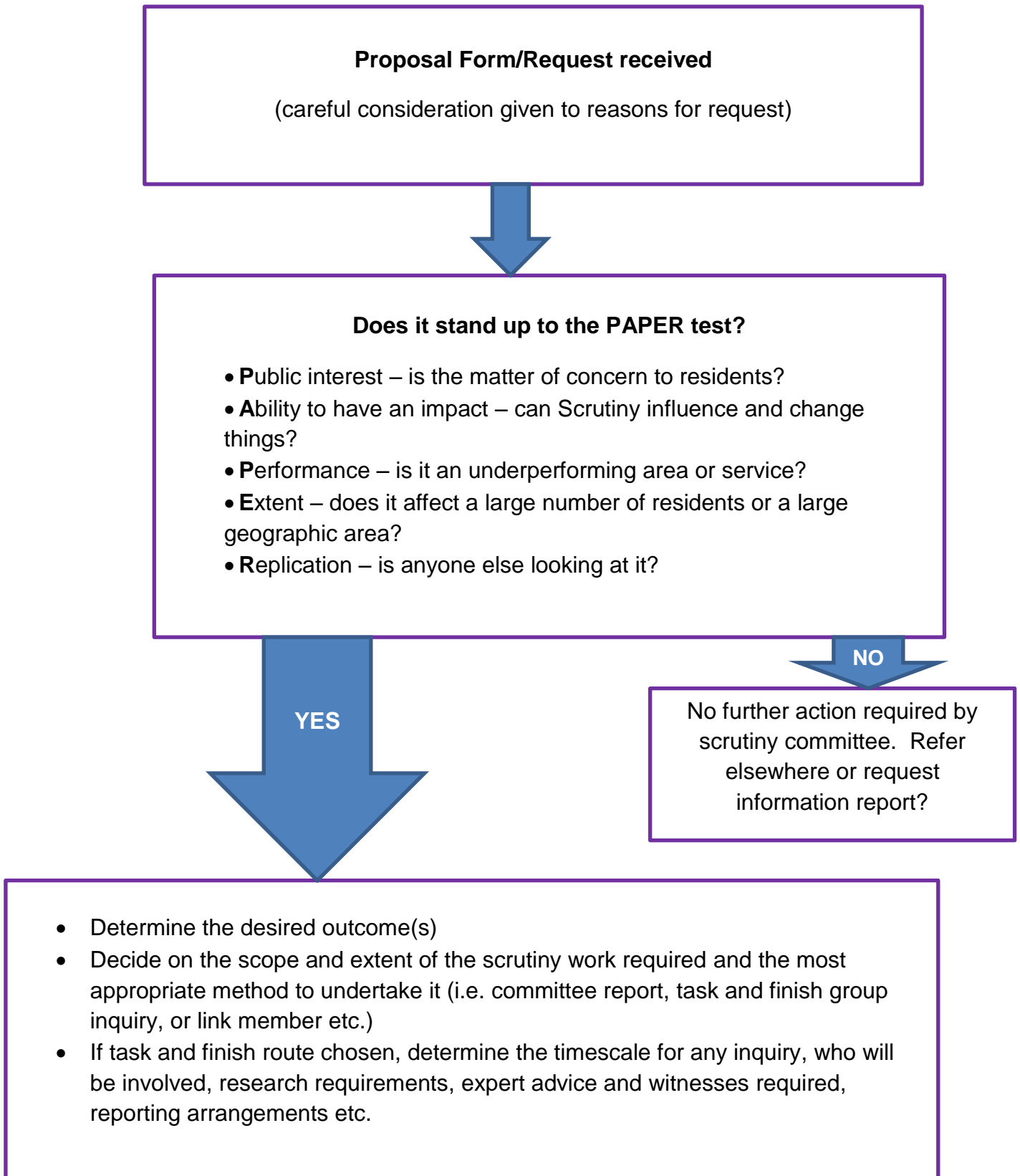
Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
4 July	20 June	5 September	22 September	24 October	10 October

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Member Proposal Form for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme	
NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION	
TOPIC	
What needs to be scrutinised (and why)?	
Is the matter one of concern to residents/local businesses?	YES/NO
Can Scrutiny influence and change things? (if 'yes' please state how you think scrutiny can influence or change things)	YES/NO
Does the matter relate to an underperforming service or area?	YES/NO
Does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area of the County (if 'yes' please give an indication of the size of the affected group or area)	YES/NO
Is the matter linked to the Council's Corporate priorities (if 'yes' please state which priority/priorities)	YES/NO
To your knowledge is anyone else looking at this matter? (If 'yes', please say who is looking at it)	YES/NO
If the topic is accepted for scrutiny who would you want to invite to attend e.g. Lead Member, officers, external experts, service-users?	
Name of Councillor/Co-opted Member	
Date	

Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
28 May 2019	1	North Wales Growth Bid Governance Agreement 2	To approve the governance arrangements in relation to the implementation of the growth deal.	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Graham Boase / Gary Williams
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
25 Jun 2019	1	World Heritage Site Management Plan	To bring to Cabinet's attention the new Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site Management Plan and for Cabinet to endorse the Plan	Yes	Councillor Bobby Feeley / Tony Ward / Huw Rees
	2	Quarter 4 Performance Report on the Corporate Plan	To provide members with analysis about performance and progress against our corporate priorities	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Nicola Kneale / Iolo McGregor
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
30 July 2019	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
24 Sep 2019	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
22 Oct 2019	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
19 Nov 2019	1	Quarter 2 Performance Report on the Corporate Plan	To provide members with analysis about performance and progress against our corporate priorities	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Nicola Kneale / Iolo McGregor
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
17 Dec 2019	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

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>	12 April	<i>May</i>	13 May	<i>June</i>	11 June

Updated 18/04/19 - KEJ

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Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
14 March 2019	5. School Meal Debt Policy	<p>RESOLVED: <i>having examined the draft revised School Meal Debt Policy, subject to the above observations;</i></p> <p><i>(i) that the draft policy be amended to include the sending of a reminder letter initially;</i></p> <p><i>(ii) followed, if necessary, by an amended version of the letter included at Annex A, which should be worded in a more sympathetic and supportive manner and be issued on a day of the week that ensured it was received on a working/school day;</i></p> <p><i>(iii) that enquiries were made to establish whether ParentPay could be adapted to include a family as well as an individual pupil pay facility; and</i></p> <p><i>(iv) once amended as per the Committee's recommendations that the Policy be approved via a joint Delegated Decision by both Lead Members and circulated to all councillors for information</i></p>	Both Lead Members and officers advised of the Committee's recommendations. A copy of the new revised policy will be circulated to all councillors for information once approved via the Delegated Decision process

	<p>6. Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision – Update following the Pre-Planning Consultation Process</p>	<p>RESOLVED - that the Committee, having considered the analysis of the pre-planning consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the proposed transit and residential Gypsy and Traveller sites on Green-gates Farm (East) site in St. Asaph, recommends to Cabinet –</p> <p>(i) that the residential and transit Gypsy & Traveller sites are not developed close to each other, wherever they are located; and</p> <p>(ii) that the location of the residential and transit Gypsy and Traveller sites are determined through the ongoing Local Development Plan process</p>	<p>Cabinet at its meeting on 26 March 2019 considered the Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision report. Cabinet noted this Committee’s recommendations and:</p> <p>RESOLVED -</p> <p>(i) in response to concerns raised during the pre-planning consultation regarding the proximity of the sites to each other, lack of meaningful consultation with the Travelling Community and in recognition of the priority need for the residential family, not to progress the Gypsy and Traveller transit site at Greengates Farm (East) via a formal planning application, and that the location of this proposed development site is determined through the formal site allocation process as part of the adoption of a new Local Development Plan;</p> <p>(ii) following consideration of the options for the Gypsy and Traveller residential site agreed to progress the development of the Gypsy and Traveller residential site at Greengates Farm (East) through the formal planning application process and that the formal</p>
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			<p><i>planning application should contain as background supporting information all statutory information together with business and residential impact assessments and suitable measures for mitigation where deemed necessary;</i></p> <p><i>(iii) that whatever options are selected for identifying the location of the residential and transit Gypsy and traveller sites, the sites are not developed in close proximity to each other;</i></p> <p><i>(iv) not recommend the allocation of a transit site at Greengates Farm East as part of the Local Development Plan process</i></p>
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