

To: Members of the Performance  
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 23 January 2019

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 31 JANUARY 2019** in **CONFERENCE ROOM 1A, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN.**

**Please note that a briefing session will be held for all members and co-opted members at 9.15am, immediately prior to the main meeting. All members are asked to make every effort to attend this session.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams  
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

## **AGENDA**

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

#### **1 APOLOGIES**

#### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (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 OF THE LAST MEETING** (Pages 7 - 18)

To receive the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 29 November 2018 (copy attached).

10.00 – 10.05 a.m.

**5 VERIFIED EXTERNAL EXAMINATION RESULTS AND TEACHER ASSESSMENTS** (Pages 19 - 34)

To receive information regarding the performance of Denbighshire schools in the 2018 external examinations (copy attached).

10.05 – 10.50 a.m.

**6 LIBRARY STANDARDS** (Pages 35 - 52)

To consider the Council's performance at the start of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards 2017-20 and the progress made in developing libraries as community hubs (copy attached).

10.50 – 11.30 a.m.

**BREAK - 11.30 - 11.45 a.m.**

**7 WAO NATIONAL REPORT ON WASTE MANAGEMENT IN WALES** (Pages 53 - 134)

To consider the WAO report on 'Waste Management in Wales: Municipal Recycling', to scrutinise the findings and the response of the council's Waste and Recycling Service to address issues raised in the report (copy attached).

11.45 – 12.20 p.m.

**8 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 135 - 154)

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.

12.20 – 12.35 p.m.

**9 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

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

12.35 – 12.45 p.m.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **Councillors**

Huw Jones (Chair)

Hugh Irving (Vice-Chair)

Ellie Chard

Geraint Lloyd-Williams

Ann Davies

Bob Murray

Rachel Flynn

Arwel Roberts

Martyn Holland

David Williams

### **Voting Co-opted Members for Education (Agenda Item No. 5 only)**

Kathleen Jones

Neil Roberts

David Lloyd

### **COPIES TO:**

All Councillors for information

Press and Libraries

Town and Community Councils

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

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### Code of Conduct for Members

### DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, ( <i>name</i> )	<input type="text"/>
a *member/co-opted member of <i>(*please delete as appropriate)</i>	<b>Denbighshire County Council</b>
<b>CONFIRM</b> that I have declared a <b>*personal / personal and prejudicial</b> 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:- <i>(*please delete as appropriate)</i>	
Date of Disclosure:	<input type="text"/>
Committee ( <i>please specify</i> ):	<input type="text"/>
Agenda Item No.	<input type="text"/>
Subject Matter:	<input type="text"/>
Nature of Interest: <i>(See the note below)*</i>	<input type="text"/>
Signed	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>

\*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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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

## PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 29 November 2018 at 10.00 am.

### PRESENT

Councillors Ellie Chard, Ann Davies, Martyn Holland, Hugh Irving (Vice-Chair), Huw Jones (Chair), Bob Murray, Arwel Roberts and David Williams.

Co-opted members Kathleen Jones Neil Roberts for agenda item 5.

Councillors Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Julian Thompson-Hill and Richard Mainon as Lead Members for items 5, 6 and 7/8 respectively.

Councillor Graham Timms present as an observer.

### ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (JG), Head of Education & Children Services (KIE), Senior School Improvement Officer – Secondary (JM), GwE's Secondary Lead (PM-J), Strategic Planning Team Manager (NK), Head of Customers Communications and Marketing (LG), Service Improvement Manager (FA), Statutory & Corporate Complaints Officer (KR), Principal Manager - Support Services (AL), Scrutiny Coordinator (RhE) and Democratic Services Officer (KAE).

## 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Rachel Flynn and Geraint Lloyd-Williams and co-opted member David Lloyd.

The Chair welcomed Neil Roberts, the newly appointed Church in Wales education co-opted member, to his first meeting in his new role.

## 2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Personal declarations of interest were received for agenda item 5, Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments from Councillors:

- Huw Jones, governor at Ysgol Carrog and Ysgol Caer Drewyn;
- Ellie Chard, governor at Ysgol Tir Morfa;
- Martyn Holland, governor at Ysgol Bro Famau;
- Hugh Irving, governor at Prestatyn High School;
- Arwel Roberts, governor at Ysgol y Castell & Ysgol Dewi Sant;
- David Williams as a parent of a child in a Denbighshire school;
- Huw Hilditch-Roberts as a governor at Ysgol Brynhyfryd and Parent of a child in Denbighshire school;
- Graham Timms, governor at Ysgol Dinas Bran

Together with Co-opted member Kathleen Jones, Governor at Ysgol y Parc.

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

There were no urgent items.

### **4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 27 September 2018 were submitted.

#### Matters Arising:

Councillor Martyn Holland expressed his appreciation for the inclusion of his comment summary that had been omitted from the minutes of the previous Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Corporate Risk Register item 5 (page 8) - The Scrutiny Coordinator confirmed that the Performance Scrutiny Committee's observations were presented to Cabinet Briefing on 15 October 2018.

***RESOLVED** that, subject to the above, the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27 September 2018 be received and approved as a correct record.*

### **5 PROVISIONAL EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS AND TEACHER ASSESSMENTS**

The Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People introduced the Principal Education Manager and GwE Secondary Lead's joint report (previously circulated). The report provided the Committee with information on the verified Teacher Assessment results from Foundation Phase (FP) to Key Stage 3 (KS3) and the provisional Key Stage 4 (KS4) examination results for Denbighshire's pupils during the 2017/18 Academic Year.

During his introduction the Lead Member highlighted the fact that the attainment threshold for attaining grade 'C' in the English GCSE examination in the summer of 2018 had been increased by 20 points compared to the previous year. Consequently a total of 107 pupils in Denbighshire who, based on the 2017 scoring threshold, had been predicted to attain a 'C' grade in their English examination in the summer of 2018 had actually only been awarded a 'D' grade – across the GwE region a total of 700 pupils had been affected.

The Lead Member advised that all local education authorities in North Wales and GwE had raised their concerns about the disproportionate increase in the English GSCE threshold compared to other subjects and the detrimental effect it was having on pupils with the Welsh Government (WG). Education officials were currently seeking legal advice on the matter.



The Council's Head of Education and Children's Services (HoE&CS) advised members that the report was presented in a different format to previous years to comply with WG requirements. As National comparative attainment data for education key stages was no longer published there was no expectation on local education authorities to benchmark themselves against other authorities - although the regional education consortia could compile regional comparative data sets if they wished.

The HoE&CS advised that outcomes as the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2) had remained solid, a position which had been held for a number of years and which Estyn had acknowledged in its recent report following its inspection of the Council's education service.

Whilst the dip in performance at KS4 was a cause for concern it was important to bear in mind the reasons why this had happened and to have regard to the findings and conclusions of the Estyn Inspection of the Council's Education Service which had been extremely positive. Estyn was expected to make favourable references to Denbighshire's education services in its Director's Annual Report, due to be published in December 2018.

Appendix 1 to the report contained the draft joint report with GwE on educational performance in Denbighshire. The format and structure for this report had been agreed across the region to ensure that the same type of information was reported to all local authorities and in the same format.

The Committee was advised that:

- whilst Denbighshire pupils' performance at the FP had decreased slightly during the assessment period under consideration, the dip in performance had been less than that recorded both regionally and nationally. This dip in performance was mainly attributed to more challenging outcome descriptors being used when assessing outcomes in language and mathematics;
- KS2 results had continued to improve as expected as in previous years. Looking ahead the Council and GwE had identified a need to tackle the impact of deprivation on educational attainment, as well as how to support high achievers as part of their primary education focus for the future;
- performance remained strong at KS3 and remained broadly in line with national performance. Denbighshire pupils' performance against the Core Subjects Indicator (CSI) had been good despite a slight decrease in mathematical performance. This was attributed to the fact that there had been a slight increase in performance in English and a significant increase in pupils' performance in Welsh. Officers acknowledged that schools needed to change the way they challenged and used KS3 data in order to secure continual improvement. In addition, more work was required in relation to improving the performance of pupils in receipt of free school meals (FSM) against the CSI;
- due to the changes introduced to the KS4 examinations process during 2016-17 the performance data remained subject to a significant amount of volatility, hence the reason why there had been a dip nationally in performance in the summer 2018 examinations. This dip had been further compounded by the significant change in the attainment threshold for

English and mathematics for the summer 2018 examination, and the limitation of only one Science subject to be included in the Capped 9 score. Whilst Denbighshire's decrease in performance against the Capped 9 score of minus 10.4 seemed at face value to be significant, given the context of the changes introduced to the external examination system during recent years the decrease in performance was understandable. Denbighshire's Education Service was very proactive in both challenging and developing new indicators and would therefore challenge the effectiveness of the new set of indicators;

- Denbighshire's schools were focussed on supporting each individual pupil to achieve and to realise their full potential. The Authority and its schools viewed all pupils as equals who were entitled to receive appropriate support in order to ensure they succeeded to the best of their ability. A quality acknowledged by Estyn; and
- to attain a Grade 'C' in the English GCSE examination in the Summer of 2017 a student was required to score 200 points, for the November 2017 examination the threshold had increased to 206. However, by the summer of 2018 it transpired that the threshold had increased to 220, without any prior notification to education authorities or schools. The WJEC, the Examinations Board, had adopted a similar approach to the mathematics GCSE examination. All Directors of Education in North Wales, GwE and head teachers agreed that this was unfair and inconsistent with previous practice, but despite concerns being raised with both the WJEC and Qualifications Wales no satisfactory answer had been received. Consequently, the Lead Member had raised these concerns with the WG's Cabinet Minister for Education seeking her to hold an inquiry. Such significant changes in threshold boundaries made it extremely difficult for teachers to be able to support pupils through the examination process. As all local authority schools in Wales were obliged to enter their pupils for WJEC examinations - and could not enter them for examinations administered by other examination boards - pupils could be disadvantaged when competing for further and/or higher education places against pupils from England and/or independent schools. Whilst there was no indication that the WJEC or Qualifications Wales were going to reconsider the 2018 gradings it was important, having regard to the changes yet to be implemented to the examinations system, that such significant threshold changes were not introduced in future without prior notification.

GwE's Secondary Lead requested that his personal gratitude to Denbighshire Head of Education and Children's Services and the Department's staff for standing up for the county's schools and speaking up for the pupils be recorded. In his view it was encouraging that they ensured that the county and the region's voices were being heard on a national basis.

Responding to members' questions the Lead Member, Head of Education and Children's Service, Principal Education Manager and GwE's Secondary Lead:

- assured members that the Service could 'track' each individual pupil's progress and attainment throughout their education period. The data held on each pupil included information on any challenges which may affect their educational performance; be that medical, physical, mental or home

environment pressures. That level of detail helped the Council ensure that appropriate and timely intervention and support could be offered to the pupil, and if necessary the family, to help each child realise their full potential. Members were advised to contact officers if they wished to see the type of data used by the Service to 'track' each pupil;

- advised that one of Denbighshire's strengths was that it could 'track' the performance of pupils who were educated other than at schools (EOTAS). It included these pupils in its performance data, not all authorities included EOTAS data in their returns. As the Council was aware of EOTAS pupils it could monitor their progress, provide support if required and comply with its safeguarding duties and reduce the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Some local authorities did not include their EOTAS pupils in their returns, therefore if they did end their education without a qualification this was not reflected in their data returns. However, home schooled pupils were not included in the results data, as there was no requirement to include them, but Denbighshire was aware of who they were;
- confirmed that the Foundation Phase Assessment Framework Areas of Learning (AoL) in relation to language, literacy, communication and mathematics was proving to be useful for the Authority, as it assisted the Education Service to identify learning barriers at an earlier stage and enabled it to provide appropriate intervention early on in a pupil's education journey. The Education Service had worked with the Health Service on a piece of work focussing on deprived areas, that had highlighted that speech and language development problems were more prevalent in areas of high deprivation;
- agreed that the absence of comparable data for benchmarking purposes was disappointing. Nevertheless, it was hoped that some comparative information would be available by the time the verified results were due to be scrutinised;
- confirmed that there was a risk that the KS4 data for 2019 could also be distorted, similar to the situation in 2018, due to the Science qualification being reviewed;
- advised that the term 'Welsh first language' applied to those pupils who received their education via the Welsh medium education system in the county, be they from Welsh speaking homes or otherwise. Denbighshire was currently performing well in relation to Welsh language skills in both the Welsh medium sector and in Welsh second language sector. With the introduction of the new curriculum Welsh as a second language would cease and all pupils would be assessed on Welsh first language skills;
- emphasised that the Free School Meals indicator was a crude performance indicator used to gauge the level of deprivation and the support required at a school. It varied between schools. Local analysis of this indicator was key to ensure that each child was provided with the correct level of support to meet their specific needs;
- advised that there were approximately 44 pupils across the county's schools whose behaviour was having an adverse impact on other pupils. The Authority was working with the Police, colleges and other stakeholders to support these pupils and address the issues which caused them to behave badly. This was an extremely complex area of work, which required a medium and long-term approach as well as the involvement of a number of

different agencies as these pupils generally were not engaging with the wider community;

- confirmed that the composition and role of the Schools Standards Monitoring Group (SSMG) was currently under review;
- explained that whilst the local authority tracked each pupil's progress regularly in order to adequately support them to attain their projected grades, it had no prior knowledge that the WJEC was intending to increase the threshold for a 'C' grade to 80 for mathematics and 220 for English. That may potentially have affected some pupils' post 16 options, particularly in relation to apprenticeships.

School sixth forms and colleges were aware of the problem caused by the increase in threshold and had consequently relaxed their entry criteria to enable pupils to re-sit the examinations with a view to gaining the required grades, bearing in mind that the increase in the points required to gain a 'C' grade would also entail an increase in 'B' and 'A' grade thresholds;

- confirmed that the Council did have responsibilities with respect of gypsy and traveller families and children. Once the Authority had been alerted that a gypsy or traveller family had moved into the area the Education Safeguarding Officer would visit the family to offer support and guidance. The Authority did have residential gypsy and traveller children being educated in the county's schools. Whilst it often proved challenging to persuade travelling families to enrol their children in a local school and make every effort to ensure they attended, the specialist officer was very experienced and did encourage families to engage with the education system; and
- agreed that some comparative data would be provided with the verified results report in early 2019, but members were very welcome to visit the Service on an individual basis to go through data and see how they used the data available to challenge schools and to arrange appropriate support for pupils.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee

**Resolved: - subject to the above observations –**

- (i) to acknowledge the performance of schools against previous performance, and support the areas identified for improvement;***
- (ii) that a letter be sent on the Committee's behalf to Qualifications Wales registering members' concerns and disappointment in relation to the significant increase in the 'C' grade threshold for the summer 2018 GCSE English examination in comparison to the 2017 threshold, and its consequential adverse effect on students; and***
- (iii) that the report scheduled for presentation to the Committee in January 2019 on the Verified External Examination Results include actual numbers as well as percentage figures, and where possible regional comparative data, along with data on absenteeism and exclusions rates at each of the County's school.***

## 6 CORPORATE PLAN QUARTER 2 2017/ 2022

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets introduced the Strategic Planning Team Manager's report and appendices (previously circulated) which presented the Committee with an update on the Council's performance on delivering its 2017-2022 Corporate Plan as at the end of the second quarter of 2018-19. He drew members' attention to the Executive Summary report on progress to date - Appendix 1, Appendix 2 which contained the full quarterly performance report, and Appendices 3 and 4 which contained a summary of the projects underway with a view to realising the overall Plan and their current statuses, advising that both Cabinet and officers were currently satisfied that progress to date was as projected.

The Strategic Planning Team Manager highlighted a number of points and decisions taken recently in relation to each corporate priority in the Plan:

- **Housing priority:** the new Affordable Housing Register, Tai Teg, had recently been re-launched in partnership with Grŵp Cynffin. The largest user group for this register was expected to be 25 to 34 year old employed people
- **Connected Communities:** there had been an improvement in 4G coverage in the county in recent months, it was now in line with the national average for Wales. A project on Digital Access Points had been presented to the Digital Futures Board during the summer. Due to the project's potential inability to deliver long term change and realise value for money a decision had been taken not to proceed with the project
- **Resilient Communities:** this priority remained as a 'priority for improvement' status due to the fact that work was underway to bring a number of different services and agencies together to work on developing a Supporting Carers Project and a business case for an 'Acting to reduce Domestic Abuse in Denbighshire' project. Work was also underway on a project relating to the county being a 'Dementia Friendly' county
- **Environment:** work was continuing with a view to ensuring that the Council's housing stock would all achieve an energy rating of 'C' by the end of the Corporate Plan
- **Young People:** the Denbighshire Employment Bursary was in the process of being launched.

Responding to members' questions the Lead Member and the Strategic Planning Team Manager:

- reassured the Committee that despite the programme dashboard indicating an 'at risk' status for the new area school for Ysgol Carreg Emlyn the project was not at risk and building work was well underway. The risk status was thus due to the initial delay encountered in identifying a preferred site;
- advised that the locations for extra care housing projects were determined by the need for that type of accommodation in an area coupled with the economic viability of operating that type of facility. Extra Care accommodation would require to comprise of a sufficient number of units to ensure that its operating costs were met;
- confirmed that services and support to Carers featured prominently in the Corporate Plan. The Council's Carers Strategy had recently been examined

by Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and an Information Report on the support available to Young Carers was due to be circulated to members of that Committee in the near future. The Communities and Environment Corporate Priority Project Board had recently considered a business case in support of the Carers Strategy;

- informed the Committee that the 2,200 tree planning programme in Rhyl and Upper Denbigh was funded externally and linked to the well-being agenda, hence the reason that the planting programme was limited to the county's most deprived council wards. The Council's Countryside Services was actively working with schools, city, town and community councils in relation to other tree planting projects and opportunities;
- advised that the Council's Customers, Communication and Marketing Service was working with the Tai Teg Scheme with a view to promoting it and drawing its existence to residents' attention;
- advised that the decision on what constituted an 'affordable property' was determined based on a graded national formula;
- confirmed that a business case had recently been approved to facilitate the appointment of an Empty Homes Officer; and
- confirmed that a Communications Strategy for the Programme Boards projects was a standing item on both Boards' business agenda

Members welcomed the inclusion of the project around Denbighshire Working Toward Being Dementia Friendly with the Alzheimer's Society within the Resilient Communities corporate priority and the proposal to include activities to support parents as part of the Young People Corporate priority.

The Committee registered their concerns in relation to the increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents being reported, but acknowledged that this was partly as a result of a change in the way incidents were recorded and awareness raising campaigns.

Committee members requested that community bio-diversity events, such as tree planting activities, were publicised to a wider audience in order to improve participation and that more collaborative working took place between the County Council, city, town and community councils and local businesses with respect of tourism work and initiatives.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Strategic Planning Team Manager and Scrutiny Co-ordinator undertook to obtain:

- figures on the number of people helped to access housing via different government schemes and information on what was deemed as satisfactory performance in relation to helping people to buy their home;
- information on the support available to countryside and biodiversity initiatives across the county from the team based at Loggerheads;
- information on the length of the maintenance agreements associated with the trees planted under the PLANT tree planting scheme; and
- details on when a report on a Tourism Signage Strategy for the county would be presented to Communities Scrutiny Committee

It was:

**Resolved: - subject to the above observations and the provision of the requested information to acknowledge the Council's performance, at the end of Quarter 2 2018-19, in delivering its Corporate Plan and improving outcomes for the county's citizens**

## **7 YOUR VOICE COMPLAINTS QUARTER 2**

The Lead Member for Developing Community Infrastructure introduced the Statutory and Corporate Complaints Officer's report and appendices (previously circulated) which detailed the Council's performance in dealing with customer feedback during the second quarter of the 2018-19 reporting year. The report also provided specific examples of how Council services had used the information gleaned from complaints and feedback to improve services for the future.

Recent quarterly reports on the complaints process had indicated consistently excellent performance in dealing with and resolving complaints. The only complaint which had missed the target date during quarter 2 was a Stage 2 complaint relating to the Planning and Public Protection Service, on which the target date had been missed due to human error. On the basis of the Council's consistent good performance in dealing with complaints the Committee:

**Resolved: -**

- (i) to acknowledge the consistent excellent performance in responding and resolving complaints submitted under its 'Your Voice' customer feedback policy and statutory complaints procedure; and***
- (ii) that in future the report be submitted to the Committee on a quarterly basis as an 'Information Report' to enable it to continue to monitor policy compliance and call-in any Service who regularly under-performed or failed to comply with the 'Your Voice' policy and procedure***

## **8 CUSTOMER EFFORT DASHBOARD**

**Customer Effort Dashboard – Q2 Update Report:** the Lead Member for Developing Community Infrastructure introduced the Service Improvement Manager's report and appendices (previously circulated) which provided the Committee with an overview of the customer effort and customer satisfaction results derived following their contact with the Council. The appendices included the annual performance report on Services' effectiveness in dealing with enquiries (which included actual figures as well as percentages), examples of customer verbatim and proposals for future service improvements, along with an overview of the long-term trend in relation to public satisfaction with the way the Council dealt with their enquiries.

Members were advised by the Service Improvement Manager (SIM) that statistics which illustrated the least effort the public had to put in to pursuing their enquiry equated to a better performance on a Service's behalf in dealing and resolving an

enquiry. The SIM also advised that work was currently underway, as part of the delivery of the 'Connected Communities' corporate priority of the Corporate Plan, to upgrade the Council's website to enable and encourage more residents to transact their business with the Council electronically. A business case relating to this, which would include work to upgrade the Council's website, was scheduled to be submitted to the Communities and Environment Programme Board in January 2019.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee:

**Resolved: that following consideration of all the information and data provided -**

- (i) to acknowledge the continuous increasing trend in public satisfaction with the Council's performance in dealing with their enquiries; and***
- (ii) that in future the Customer Effort Dashboard report be submitted to members on a six-monthly basis as an 'Information Report' to enable them to continue to monitor public satisfaction with Services' performance in dealing with enquiries and facilitate the Committee to call-in any Service that regularly under-performed in this aspect of delivering their services***

## **9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator presented to the Committee the forward programme. Members were informed that the next meeting had a potentially heavy workload and asked whether members would like to reschedule specific items.

Library Service Standards – Due to the delay in Welsh Government assessing this year's reports on public library standards this item had been deferred to the next meeting in January 2019.

That meant that there were now potentially five items (including the weighty subject of Verified External Examinations and Teachers Assessments) scheduled for January's meeting which raised concerns over feasibility. The Committee agreed to defer the items on the Effectiveness of Wellbeing Impact Assessments and the Draft Fleet Management Strategy to a later meeting leaving January's 2019 agenda to include:

1. Verified External Examinations and Teachers Assessments.
2. National Report on Waste Management in Wales and
3. Library Service Standards 2017/18.

At October's Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group meeting the Group had requested that Performance Scrutiny Committee should consider a report on Housing Services at its March 2019 meeting.

The Scrutiny Coordinator drew members' attention to a copy of the "Member's proposal form" that had been included in Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Co-ordinator asked the Committee if they had any items to submit for scrutiny to complete proposal form and submit to herself by the middle of the following week, in order



that they could be considered at the next Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-chairs Group meeting.

Members were reminded that progress with the Committee's resolutions could be found in appendix 4.

***RESOLVED that subject to the above, the Forward Work Programme be approved.***

## **10 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

There was no feedback to be reported.

Meeting closed at 13:00

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>31 January 2019</b>
<b>Lead Member/Officer:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People/ Head of Education and Children's Services</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Principal Education Manager and GwE Secondary Lead</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Verified External Examination Results 2018</b>

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

The verified KS4 and post 16 examination performance of Denbighshire secondary schools.

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

To provide information regarding the performance of Denbighshire schools in the 2018 external examinations.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That members review and comment on the performance of schools against previous performance and agree areas for improvement.

**4. Key Stage 4 Comparative data**

This report is different to previous years to take account of the Welsh Government (WG) introducing significant changes to how performance measures are reported. Following Welsh Government consultation on future publication of teacher assessments, there is no comparative nor benchmarking information available.

Significant changes to the pattern and numbers of pupils sitting exams in the Summer 2018 has had an impact on results as demonstrated in the proportion of grades across all subjects in the A+ to C range in Wales decreasing by 1.2pp to 61.6%. GCSEs are being reformed and 15 updated subjects were sat this summer for the first time. The new GCSE suite of qualifications in Science was examined for the first time in 2018, and coincides with the changes to the performance indications at KS4, to include only GCSE results for Science, as two measures in the capped 9 indicator.

There has been substantial change to grade boundaries since the summer of 2017 and November 2017 compared to the summer of 2018, particularly at C grade in English and mathematics. This has made it difficult for schools to ensure accurate projections and target setting. Since September, schools and officers have sought clarity regarding the reasons for this increase. In October, Qualifications Wales published a report on grade boundaries in English specifically. Despite Qualifications Wales' findings the head teachers of our secondary schools along with officers are in

agreement that Denbighshire's schools' data were greatly influenced by decisions regarding registration.

Analysis of Denbighshire's results based on the Welsh Government's main indicators Initial Analysis. In 2018, there was a decrease in the percentage of each main indicator in comparison with 2017, particularly in Science and the Capped 9 Score.

Performance Measures	2017	2018	Wales 18
TL2+	50.0	47.5	55.1
TL2	63.6	59.8	66.9
TL1	90.2	87	93.6
ENGLISH	59.2	55.8	62.6
WELSH	79.3	77.6	74.3
MATHEMATICS	53.5	50.8	59.4
NUMERACY	55.6	54	58
MATHEMATICS (Best of the 2)	58.4	57.0	63.5
SCIENCE	66.8	54.3	63
5A*/A	14.4	12.3	18
CAPPED 9 SCORE	333.9	323.5	350.1
ATTENDANCE	93.7	93.5	93.9

Verified results in Welsh has remained consistently high. 22% of year 11 Denbighshire Pupils entered GCSE Welsh as a first language, in comparison with 17.3% nationally. L2 English performance has decreased 3.4% but Denbighshire performance has been significantly hit by a significant spike in 2018 Summer English grade boundaries. (Appendix 1)

Although 2018 saw a similar and significant increase in mathematics and numeracy grade boundaries, in Denbighshire there is a smaller decrease in Mathematics. As a result, Numeracy and the percentage of learners that achieved one of the two has affected the expected progress in the TL2+ indicator. As a result performance at L2+ is 3.7% below. Because of the changes in the Science qualification, comparison with 2017 performance is not possible.

While the gap in performance between boys and girls has increased in nearly all indicators, and in most part due to a dip in boys' performance, it is also actually the case that the performance of girls in L2+, English, maths, numeracy and best of both actually increased. Despite the volatility in grade boundaries girls performed better in 2018 in comparison with 2017.

Performance of free school meal (FSM) pupils on the L2+ indicator increased significantly in 2018, and as a result performance in 2018 is broadly in line with Wales average, 27.5% Denbighshire, 29.4% Wales. In many indicators, the difference between non FSM and FSM performance has decreased.

### Exclusions

In 2016-17 there were 0.5 permanent exclusions per 1,000 pupils in maintained schools and pupil referral units in Denbighshire. This compares favourably with the Welsh rate of 0.4. In Denbighshire there were 1.6 fixed term exclusions of over five days per 1000 pupils in maintained schools and pupil referral units in Denbighshire. This is less than the national figure of 1.9. Fixed term exclusions of five days or less are considerably below the national rate (104.5 per 100 pupils) in our special schools at 81.8. Our mainstream schools exclude at a rate of 102.8 per 1000 pupils, compared with a rate of 32.4 nationally. (Appendix 3)

## Attendance

Primary attendance has improved over the last five years by 0.8% from 84.3% in 2012-3 to 95.1% in 2017, this is above the Welsh average of 94.9%. Over the last three years there has been little difference between the genders and the FSM/non-FSM difference has narrowed during this time. Secondary attendance has declined by 0.2% in the last year, however there has been a trend of improvement by 1.2% since 2013 from 92.4% to 93.5%, in 2018 this places the LA 17<sup>th</sup> in Wales and Welsh average of 93.9%. The gender gap reduced by 0.2% in 2017 from 0.5% in 2016. The FSM/non-FSM gap remains static at 5.7% in 2018. (Appendix 4)

## Strengths and successes

- Inclusive schools, it is also noted that there is strong collaboration to develop an extensive and balanced curriculum and provision for all learners.
- Welsh (first language) performance is consistently high.
- Primary school attendance
- Significant improvements in specific schools with regard to some indicators.
- An improvement in FSM performance

## Areas for improvement

- Improve performance in English, maths and science at key stage 4
- In specific schools, continue to improve the quality of departmental expertise and leadership in the core subjects.
- Secondary school attendance.
- Fixed term exclusions of five days or less
- Reduce in school variance particularly across core subjects

## Key Stage 5

Performance Measures	2017	2018	+ / - 2017/2018	Wales 2018
6th Form Level 3 - % 17 year olds achieving	97.5	98.2	+0.7	97.6
6th Form 3 A*-A % 17 year olds achieving	9.9	10.4	+0.5	13.4
6th Form 3 A*-C % 17 year olds achieving	51.0	53.6	+2.6	58.1

## Strengths and successes

- Improved performance in all three of the main post 16 national KPI, with L3 above national average. Appendix 2

## Areas for Improvement

- Continue to improve outcomes with more effective use of ALPS as a target setting and tracking tool.

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

This report contributes to the corporate priority of Young People: A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so. See that every child achieving the expected standard at the end of primary school (Level 4, Key Stage 2) will achieve 5 GCSEs A\*-C (Level 2 Key Stage 4), including English or Welsh (1<sup>st</sup> language) and Maths, by the end of secondary school.

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

*N/A*

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

*A prosperous Denbighshire  
A resilient Denbighshire  
A healthier Denbighshire  
A more equal Denbighshire  
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities  
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language  
A globally responsible Denbighshire*

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

*N/A*

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

*N/A*

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

- The Local Authority and GwE will continue to challenge Headteachers and managers in schools to ensure that schools are taking appropriate action to improve standards.
- To reduce any risks to school support and challenge in Denbighshire schools, Education Managers within the Authority monitor and assess the quality of the regional education service (GwE).
- Ensuring improvement in external examination results.
- Ensure continued improvement against the reduction in 14-19 Learning Pathways Grant and ESF TRAC funding.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

Scrutiny's powers with respect to reviewing performance and policy objectives is outlined in Section 7.4.2(b) of the Council's Constitution.

**Contact Officer:**  
Principal Education Manager  
Tel: 01824 708027

## Appendix 1

### Denbighshire 2018 for Level 2 inc.English/Welsh & Maths

	2018			School's Target
	No. Pupils	Passes	%	
Rhyl High School	134	47	35.1	43.6
Prestatyn High School	246	114	46.3	58.6
Ysgol Glan Clwyd	146	85	58.2	69.8
Denbigh High School	61	29	47.5	56.5
Ysgol Dinas Bran	138	82	59.4	65.5
Ysgol Brynhyfryd	163	120	73.6	80.4
Blessed Edward Jones	56	20	35.7	49.2
St Brigid's School	50	34	68.0	76
Special schools	31	0.0	0.0	0
EOTAS/PRU	90	0	0.0	0
<b>DCC</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>9.0</b>
Wales			<b>55.0</b>	

### Stockholder Targets

	2013			2014			2015		
	No. Pupils	Passes	%	No. Pupils	Passes	%	No. Pupils	Passes	%
Rhyl High School	130	68	52.3	153	83	54.2	154	87	56.5
Prestatyn High School	275	138	50.2	287	161	56.1	290	180	62.1
Ysgol Uwchradd Glan Clw	168	127	75.6	152	111	73.0	173	133	76.9
Denbigh High School	138	74	53.6	128	84	65.6	111	73	65.8
Ysgol Dinas Bran	152	94	61.8	162	104	64.2	158	104	65.8
Ysgol Brynhyfryd	200	150	75.0	205	156	76.1	201	158	78.6
Blessed Edward Jones	78	41	52.6	134	73	54.5	113	62	54.9
St Brigid's School	57	48	84.2	59	52	88.1	57	53	93.0
Special/PRU	105	0	0.0	24	0	0.0	29	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,303</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>1,304</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>66.1</b>

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## Appendix 2

### Key Stage 5 (A Level & Level 3) Exam Results 2018

#### Thresholds & Grades

Name	Year 13 pupils	No. entered 2+	Main Indicator		2017 L3 %	A-Level Grade												Vocational Awards					Welsh Baccalaureate		
			L3 (2 A*-E)			A*	A	B	C	D	E	U	X	% A*	% A*-A	% A*-C	% A*-E	Distinction *	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Other	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
			No.	%		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	%	%	%	%	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	Number participating	Number Passed
Prestatyn High School	124	119	117	98.3	96.0	12	20	58	80	48	29	5	0	4.8	12.7	67.5	98.0	0	55	16	7	0	13	13	100.0%
Ysgol Glan Clwyd	62	54	54	100.0	96.0	9	32	50	63	46	7	2	0	4.3	19.6	73.7	99.0	0	5	1	4	0	59	59	100.0%
Denbigh High School	30	30	30	100.0	100.0	2	10	21	21	11	3	2	0	2.9	17.1	77.1	97.1	8	1	1	0	0	5	5	100.0%
Ysgol Dinas Bran	54	37	36	97.3	96.0	3	22	26	36	15	4	0	0	2.8	23.6	82.1	100.0	0	0	0	1	0	14	8	57.1%
Ysgol Brynhyfryd	74	67	67	100.0	100.0	21	61	71	44	27	10	0	0	9.0	35.0	84.2	100.0	1	0	2	0	0	172	172	100.0%
St Brigid's School	30	30	30	100.0	100.0	8	18	21	24	8	2	2	0	9.6	31.3	85.5	97.6	0	2	0	0	0	5	5	100.0%
LA Total	374	337	334	99.1%	98.0	55	163	247	268	155	55	11	-	5.8	22.9	76.8	98.8	9	63	20	12	-	268	262	97.8%
Wales	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.7	26.3	76.3									97.7%

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## Exclusions from 1 September 2016 to 30 June 2017

### Denbighshire Totals

Permanent Exclusions	11
Fixed Exclusions	1400
Days Lost	2184.0

### Middle

Permanent Exclusions	0
Fixed Exclusions	17
Days Lost	29.5

School	Permanent Exclusions	Fixed Exclusions	Days Lost
St Brigid's School	0	17	29.5

<b>Permanent Exclusions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Fixed Exclusions</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>Days Lost</b>	<b>288.0</b>

<i>School</i>	<i>Permanent Exclusions</i>	<i>Fixed Exclusions</i>	<i>Days Lost</i>
Christ Church CP School	1	49	93.5
Ysgol Llywelyn	1	13	48.0
Ysgol Emmanuel	0	38	45.0
Ysgol Mair	0	13	28.5
Ysgol Bryn Collen	0	10	23.0
Ysgol Penmorfa	1	4	16.0
Ysgol Frongoch	0	5	7.0
Ysgol Melyd	0	5	7.0
Bodnant Community School	0	5	4.5
Ysgol Bryn Hedydd	0	4	4.5
Ysgol Pendref	0	3	2.5
Ysgol y Castell	0	2	2.5
Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	0	2	2.0
Ysgol Bodfari	0	1	1.5
Ysgol Bro Elwern	0	1	1.5
Ysgol y Llys	0	1	1.0

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**Pupil Referral Unit**

<b>Permanent Exclusions</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Fixed Exclusions</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Days Lost</b>	<b>28.5</b>

<i>School</i>	<i>Permanent Exclusions</i>	<i>Fixed Exclusions</i>	<i>Days Lost</i>
PRU	0	8	28.5

**Secondary**

<b>Permanent Exclusions</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Fixed Exclusions</b>	<b>1202</b>
<b>Days Lost</b>	<b>1818.5</b>

<i>School</i>	<i>Permanent Exclusions</i>	<i>Fixed Exclusions</i>	<i>Days Lost</i>
Prestatyn High School	2	604	761.0
Rhyl High School	0	206	353.5
Blessed Edward Jones RC High School	4	112	265.5
Ysgol Dinas Bran	1	132	220.0
Denbigh High School	1	83	132.5
Ysgol Glan Clwyd	0	49	63.5
Ysgol Brynhyfryd	0	16	22.5

*Special*

<b>Permanent Exclusions</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Fixed Exclusions</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Days Lost</b>	<b>19.5</b>

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<i>School</i>	<i>Permanent Exclusions</i>	<i>Fixed Exclusions</i>	<i>Days Lost</i>
Ysgol Tir Morfa	0	17	19.5

## Appendix 4

### All school attendance 2017-18

#### Secondary Schools

Blessed Edward Jones	88.2%
Denbigh High	91.3%
Prestatyn High	93.5%
Rhyl High	92.9%
St Brigid's Secondary	94.5%
Ysgol Brynhyfryd	94.5%
Ysgol Dinas Bran	94.1%
Ysgol Glan Clwyd	95.1%
<b>Denbighshire</b>	<b>93.5%</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>93.9%</b>

#### Primary Schools

Ysgol Hiraddug	93.9%
Ysgol y Castell	95.0%
Christ Church CP School	93.9%
Ysgol Llywelyn	92.9%
Ysgol y Faenol	94.1%
Ysgol Penmorfa	93.4%
Ysgol Emmanuel	93.1%
Ysgol Dewi Sant	93.4%
Ysgol Melyd	93.8%
Ysgol Bodfari	94.9%
Ysgol Bryn Hedydd	95.4%
Ysgol Esgob Morgan	95.0%
Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog	94.7%
Ysgol Frongoch	94.8%
Ysgol Henllan	96.0%
Ysgol Twm o'r Nant	93.1%
Ysgol Bryn Clwyd	94.6%
Ysgol y Parc	96.0%
Ysgol Gellifor	95.8%
Ysgol Pentrecelyn	93.2%
Ysgol Rhewl	87.6%
Ysgol Betws Gwerful Goch	96.4%
Ysgol Carrog	95.8%
Ysgol Caer Drewyn	95.0%
Ysgol Bro Elwern	95.7%
Ysgol y Llys	94.8%
Ysgol Bryn Collen	94.8%
Rhos Street School	95.2%
Ysgol Pen Barras	97.1%
Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch	96.8%
Ysgol Bro Famau	93.1%
Ysgol Gymraeg y Gwernant	96.5%
Ysgol Clawdd Offa	92.6%
Bodnant Community School	94.6%

Ysgol Pendref	93.3%
Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy	93.8%
Ysgol Carreg Emlyn	95.4%
Ysgol Tremeirchion	96.0%
St. Asaph V.P. Infants School	93.5%
Ysgol Llanbedr DC	95.0%
Ysgol Llanfair	89.9%
Ysgol Borthyn	93.2%
Ysgol Pant Pastynog	95.2%
Ysgol Dyffryn Ial	96.3%
Ysgol Mair	93.2%
Ysgol Trefnant	95.6%
St Brigid's	94.0%
<b>Denbighshire</b>	<b>95.1%</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>94.9%</b>







<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> January 2019</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Developing Community Infrastructure/ Head of Communications, Customers and Marketing</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Principal Librarian</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Library Service Standards and Performance</b>

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

The report highlights the Library Service's performance against National Standards.

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

To detail the Council's performance at the start of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards 2017-20 and the progress made in developing libraries as community hubs.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

That the Committee considers and comments on the performance against the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards and considers requesting a progress report in November 2019.

## **4. Report details**

### **4.1 Welsh Public Library Standards**

Library authorities in Wales have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to deliver a 'comprehensive and efficient' service to its residents. The Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards enables MALD (Museums Archives and Libraries Division of Welsh Government) to measure and assess how authorities are fulfilling their statutory duties.

4.2 Library Services submit an Annual Report each July, noting performance for the previous financial year, following which MALD responds with a formal assessment in the autumn. The most recent Annual Assessment Report covers 2017-18 and performance against the first year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework 2017-20, and consists of 12 Core Entitlements and 16 Quality Indicators. The report is attached as Appendix A.

4.3 Denbighshire has met 11 of the 12 Core Entitlements and partially met 1.

4.4 There are 16 Quality Indicators (QI) of which 10 have constituent targets. Of these, Denbighshire is achieving 8 in full, 1 in part and is failing to achieve 1 (details in paragraph 2.2 of the assessment report).

- 4.5 We partially met QI13 on staffing levels and qualifications but did not achieve this fully as the staff per capita level is below the target (we reported 2.48 FTE per 10,000 population when the target is 3.6) and the number of staff holding a recognised library qualification is below target (we reported 0.4 FTE when the target is 0.65). Frontline and managerial staff working in our libraries and one stop shops deliver a wide range of additional customer services which are not included within the requirements of the Welsh Public Library Standards. We report 50% of the total staffing levels and expenditure on staffing under the Library Standards.
- 4.6 We did not meet QI9 on up-to-date reading materials: we acquired 146 new items (the target is 243), spending £1203 (target £2180), per 1000 population.
- 4.7 In the narrative analysis of Denbighshire's performance, the assessment report commends us on a notable expansion in the number of activities and events on offer, with attendance levels rising as a result. Reflecting the service's strategic goal of encouraging partner services to deliver their services in libraries, there was a 95% increase in the number of partner sessions resulting in 41% more attendances. The number of active borrowers has also increased 10%.
- 4.8 MALD do not publish a comparative data table across Wales, but each authority is ranked on its performance against the Quality Indicators (section 2.4 of the assessment report). In 2017-18 of the 22 Welsh authorities, Denbighshire was 2<sup>nd</sup> for the provision of informal training for users per capita, 4<sup>th</sup> for the number of active borrowers and number of Welsh books borrowed per capita, and 6<sup>th</sup> for the number of physical visits and virtual visits to libraries.
- 4.9 The Wales Data Unit is introducing a new Public Accountability Measure relating to libraries in 2018-19, based on the percentage of Welsh Public Library Standards targeted Quality Indicators achieved. This we believe to be a more meaningful measure to those used in past years in relation to libraries.
- 4.10 **Update on developments / Community Hubs**  
St Asaph Library re-opened in April 2018 after its refurbishment with an improved entrance, a new internal layout with additional computers for public use, community kitchen facilities, and tourism information point, offering a flexible resource for wider community use. Denbigh Library also reopened in June 2018 after its refurbishment, funded by a £120,000 Welsh Government MALD grant, to provide an enhanced, attractive and flexible community facility; with additional investment by DCC to ensure the sustainability of the building and to improve DDA accessibility. Rhyl Library's roof was replaced in Spring 2018. Corporate Wi-Fi and printing is available at all libraries and Council staff are increasingly using libraries to meet clients and to hot-desk.
- 4.11 Delivery of community services within libraries continues to increase, due to the efforts of managers to establish and develop partnerships, the flexibility of the facilities and spaces in modernised libraries, and the impact of the revised charging policy introduced in January 2018. The partnerships with both St Asaph City Council and Rhuddlan Town Council continue to develop with funding contributions agreed and arrangements now in place for out-of-hours access to the buildings facilitated by

trained key-holders. Library managers produce quarterly update reports on the activity and developments in each library (an example is attached as Appendix B)

- 4.12 The take-up of the Assisted Digital service by Universal Credit claimants has not had a negative impact on capacity, with relatively low demand due to the provision of co-located services within Rhyl Jobcentre. Claimants are making use of library digital access facilities to maintain their UC work journals and search for jobs. Working Denbighshire mentors meet and support their clients in the client's local library, and plans are being developed to expand the range of adult learning opportunities on offer.
- 4.13 Libraries contribute to the Council's Dementia Action Plan in several ways including the Books on Prescription Reading Well: Dementia scheme launched in October 2018 to provide clinically approved books to support people living with dementia and their carers; staff trained as Dementia Friends, co-operation with local Dementia Friendly Communities initiatives, and hosting Dementia Friends training sessions. Libraries are also contributing to the Council's Support for Carers Plan, working in partnership with NEWCIS, by developing collections of books for carers and memory bags, and reading groups for people living with dementia and their carers. New partners delivering their services in libraries include the Integrated Autism Service, Cymraeg i Blant, and Homestart.
- 4.14 3,239 children participated in the 2018 Summer Reading Challenge – a reach of 29.5% of the 4-12 year old population, the highest reach in Wales (Welsh average was 11.5%).
- 4.15 **Regional Collaboration**  
Work continues on a regional approach across North Wales for delivering public libraries' health and wellbeing offer, based on the recommendations of a MALD funded feasibility study produced in March 2018.
- 4.16 Denbighshire's customers continue to benefit from a national collaborative approach to the procurement of library books and digital services. New all-Wales contracts for the procurement of adult and children's book stock for 2017-20 were awarded in April 2017 enabling Denbighshire to ensure the best value from its materials budget. A new contract for the supply of e-books and e-audiobooks was awarded in March 2018, giving Denbighshire's customers access to the pooled resources of a shared all-Wales service.
- 4.17 Further improvements planned in this current financial year include a new Library Strategy for Denbighshire, a programme of staff development and training, and a volunteering strategy.

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

The Library Service is a statutory responsibility of the Authority, and its service delivery contributes to a number of corporate priorities such as fostering community resilience, service modernisation, digital inclusion, literacy, lifelong learning and community engagement.

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

The transformation of libraries into community hubs will enable a range of other council services and partners to reach out to local communities through the existing network of premises and facilities. There are no financial proposals involved with this report.

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

A Well-Being Impact Assessment has not been undertaken, but the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework of Library Standards is set up to demonstrate that libraries have a clear contribution to make to the seven goals of Well-being of Future Generations Act.

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

Performance Scrutiny in March 2018 considered the Welsh Government's Assessment of the Library Service's performance for 2016-17. There have been no further consultations regarding this particular report.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable

**11. Power to make the Decision**

Section 7.4.2(b) of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny may "review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas."

**Contact Officer:**  
Principal Librarian  
Tel: 01824 708207

# Welsh Public Library Standards 2017-2020: Denbighshire

## Annual Assessment Report 2017-18

This report has been prepared based on information provided in Denbighshire's annual return, case studies and narrative report submitted to the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of the Welsh Government.

### 1 Executive summary

Denbighshire met 11 of the 12 core entitlements in full, and is partially meeting 1.

Of the 10 quality indicators which have targets, Denbighshire achieved 8 in full, 1 in part and failed to achieve 1.

Denbighshire library service has broadly maintained its performance in this first year of the sixth framework, with improvements in some areas and reductions in others. There has been a notable increase in the numbers of events and activities on offer, with rising attendances here and in the take-up of training opportunities. The fall in usage figures elsewhere can be accounted for by temporary branch closures as the service pursues its refurbishment programme. Budget pressures have impacted on the materials fund in particular, but service staffing appears to have stabilised, and there is a welcome emphasis in the return on workforce development, with plans to develop a service strategy and a renewed focus on professional skills.

- All static service points provide a full range of support for individual development, and for health and well-being. Denbighshire submitted four case studies demonstrating the positive impact of the service.
- Attendance at pre-arranged user training sessions has continued to improve, and numbers helped by informal training are among the highest in Wales.
- The service has increased the number and range of activities / events on offer, with rising attendance levels, and performance above the median level per capita.
- Physical visits and books issues have declined in 2017-18, reflecting planned temporary branch closures as Denbighshire carries out its refurbishment programme.
- Investment in Welsh language resources remains high, with the service recording the fourth highest level of Welsh language issues per capita. Budget pressures have impacted on investment in materials more generally.
- Staff levels have stabilised, with overall numbers increasing in 2017-18, and only a slight fall in qualified staffing. While the targets here are not met, there is a renewed emphasis on workforce development and ensuring staff have appropriate skills.
- Total revenue expenditure has decreased slightly, but expenditure per capita remains above the median level.

### 2 Performance against the standards

The standards framework comprises of core entitlements, quality indicators with targets, quality indicators with benchmarks and impact measures. Section 2 summarises achievements against these areas. A narrative assessment of the authority's performance is provided in Section 3.

## 2.1 Core entitlements

Denbighshire is meeting 11 of the 12 core entitlements in full, and is partially meeting CE 12, where there is no service strategy available for public access online. The service website does include a vision statement for the service, and it is noted that detailed business planning forms part of wider divisional plans, however there does not appear to be a means by which the strategic direction and objectives for the service are communicated outside the authority. The service is evidently seen as a focal point for the delivery of a wide range of council and community services, with partnership working central to service delivery. A three-year marketing strategy has been developed for delivery from 2018-19, and a workforce development strategy is planned with the aim of professionalising the workforce at all levels.

## 2.2 Quality indicators with targets

There are 16 quality indicators (QIs), of which ten have constituent targets. Of these, Denbighshire is achieving 8 in full, 1 in part and is failing to achieve 1 of the indicators.

Quality Indicator	Met?	
QI 3 Support for individual development:		Met in full
a) ICT support	✓	
b) Information literacy and skills training	✓	
c) E-government support	✓	
d) Reader development	✓	
QI 4 (a) Support for health and well-being		Met in full
i) Book Prescription Wales scheme	✓	
ii) Better with Books scheme	✓	
iii) Designated health & well-being collection	✓	
iv) Information about healthy lifestyles and behaviours	✓	
v) Signposting to health & well-being services	✓	
QI 6 all static service points offer events/activities for users with special requirements	✓	Met in full
QI 7 Location of service points	✓	Met in full
QI 9 Up-to-date and appropriate reading material		Not met
Acquisitions per capita	x	
or Materials spend per capita	x	
QI 10 Welsh Language Resources		Met in full
% of material budget spent on Welsh	✓	
or Spend on Welsh per capita	x	
QI 11 Online access:		Met in full
a) i) Public access to Internet	✓	
ii) Wi-Fi provision	✓	
QI 12 Supply of requests		Met in full
a) % of requests satisfied within 7 days	✓	
b) % of requests satisfied within 15 days	✓	
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications:		Partially met
i) Staff per capita	x	



ii) Qualified staff per capita	x	
iii) Head of service qualification/training	✓	
iv) CPD percentage	✓	
QI 16 Opening hours per capita	✓	Met in full

There has been no change in Denbighshire's performance compared to the last year of the fifth framework for those quality indicators where direct comparisons are possible.

## 2.3 Impact measures

The framework includes three indicators aimed at assessing the impact of library use on people's lives. These indicators do not have targets, and authorities are only required to carry out user surveys for QI 1 once over the three-year period of the framework. The summary figures (lowest, median and highest) are therefore based on those authorities indicating they completed their user survey during this first year of the framework. Rankings reflect the numbers of respondents, where 1 is the highest scoring authority.

Denbighshire did not conduct a user survey during 2017-18. The service was also unable to report figures for user evaluation of its training offer; the collection of relevant data has been requested for 2018-19.

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest
QI 1 Making a difference				
b) % of young people who think that the library helps them learn and find things out:	n/a	73%	94%	97%
e) % of adults who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	n/a	38%	90%	95%
QI 5 b) % of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their goals:	n/a	75%	98%	100%

Authorities are also asked to provide up to four case studies describing the impact which the library service has had on an individual or on a group of individuals during the year. Denbighshire provided four such case studies:

- Employability Support – impact of the library's role in supporting the Working Denbighshire programme, providing the space, resources and staff support for mentors to meet clients and develop their skills and confidence. For one individual this has improved his self-esteem, facilitated completion of IT courses, and strengthened his motivation to work; from being dependent on benefits he is now highly employable.
- Safe Haven – impact of the library as a safe place where people can engage with resources and facilities that support their life needs, and meet with advisors. For one bereaved mother it has been both a place of refuge and valued support.
- Enriching Reading – a reading group at one library participated in a project to create an online digital literary atlas connecting fiction set in Wales with local geography. This enriched their reading repertoire and insight and added to the group's social role.
- Autism Support – the library's role working with a regional school that supports pupils with autism; promoting a positive experience of being out in the community, developing their sense of responsibility, and providing successful work experience opportunities.

## 2.4 Quality indicators and benchmarks

The remaining indicators do not have targets, but allow services to monitor and benchmark their performance over time, in comparison with other authorities. The following table summarises Denbighshire's position for 2017-18. Ranks are included out of 22, where 1 is the highest, and 22 the lowest scoring authority, unless stated otherwise. Indicators where fewer than 22 authorities supplied data are those where relevant data was not available to some authorities. Where possible, figures from the last year of the fifth framework have also been included for comparison; however, in some cases a change in definition or the introduction of additional measures makes comparisons impractical. Indicators 'per capita' are calculated per 1,000 population unless otherwise noted.

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest	2016/17	
<b>QI 1 Making a difference</b>						
a) % of adults who think that using the library has helped them develop new skills:	n/a	24%	83%	94%	58%	
c) health and well-being	n/a	33%	65%	95%	58%	
d) enjoyable, safe and inclusive	n/a	90%	98%	100%	93%	
<b>QI 2 Customer satisfaction</b>						
a) 'very good' or 'good' choice of books	n/a	88%	91%	98%	90%	
b) 'very good' or 'good' customer care	n/a	93%	99%	100%	98%	
c) 'very good' or 'good' IT facilities	n/a	74%	86%	94%		
d) 'very good' or 'good' overall;	n/a	93%	97%	99%	98%	
e) users aged 16 & under rating out of ten	n/a	8.5	9.1	9.2	8.7	
<b>QI 5 User training</b>						
a) attendances per capita	23	15/22	10	32	238	12
c) informal training per capita	385	2/22	15	199	473	n/a
<b>QI 6 attendances at events per capita</b>	335	6/22	82	228	684	298
<b>QI 8 Library use</b>						
a) visits per capita	4,321	6/22	2,501	4,047	7,014	4,805
b) virtual visits per capita	1,255	6/22	243	866	2,211	1,201
c) active borrowers per capita	202	4/22	100	154	229	183
<b>QI 10 Welsh issues per capita*</b>	304	4/22	4	68	663	
<b>QI 11 Online access</b>						
b) Computers per capita^	10	10/22	5	9	14	10
c) % of available time used by the public	25%	13/22	14%	27%	67%	n/a
<b>QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications</b>						
(v) a) total volunteers	28	13/21	3	31	196	0
b) total volunteer hours	529	17/21	40	1,346	11,939	0
<b>QI 14 Operational expenditure</b>						
a) total expenditure per capita	£14,073	8/21	£7,047	£11,915	£17,771	£14,244
b) % on staff,	60%	13/21	44%	63%	75%	56%
% on information resources	9%	18/21	4%	13%	25%	10%
% on equipment and buildings	7%	6/21	0%	4%	20%	7%
% on other operational costs;	24%	6/21	0%	18%	37%	26%
c) capital expenditure per capita	£2,699	3/20	£0	£338	£17,432	£2,280

QI 15 Net cost per visit	£1.92	9/21	£1.24	£1.82	£2.41	£2.51
QI 16 Opening hours <sup>#</sup>						
(iii) a) % hours unplanned closure of static service points	0.00%	1/21	0.00%	0.02%	1.28%	0.00%
b) % mobile stops / home deliveries missed	0.00%	1/20	0.00%	0.35%	11.24%	n/a

\* per Welsh speaking resident population ^per 10,000 resident population

# Rankings here have been reversed, so that 1 is the lowest scoring (best performing) authority.

### 3 Analysis of performance

The core entitlements and quality indicators can be divided into four key areas. This section of the report outlines performance under these areas, and compares this performance (where applicable) with the final year of the fifth framework (2016-17).

#### 3.1 Meeting customer needs (QI 1-5)

Denbighshire has yet to conduct its user surveys, which are due to be carried out at least once during the course of the framework. All static libraries provide the full range of support for individual development and health and well-being, and all staff have received dementia friends training. Attendance at pre-arranged user training sessions has continued to improve (although still below the median level per capita), and the service was able to report on the numbers helped by informal training, with performance here among the highest in Wales.

#### 3.2 Access and use (QI 6-8)

Denbighshire continues to meet the target for easy access to service points, and provides events / activities for users with special requirements at all static libraries. There has also been a notable expansion in the number of activities and events on offer, with attendance levels rising as a result, and performance well above the median level per capita. Physical visits and books issues have however fallen, although average performance per capita in both areas also still remains above the median for Wales. It is noted that the reduced performance here probably reflects the planned closure (over a total of 7 months) of two service points during refurbishment. The service records the fourth highest level of Welsh language issues per capita in Wales, reflecting well on its investment in this area. Numbers of active borrowers have increased, with only a small drop in library membership. A decline in AV issues is noted, reflecting both an increase in digital downloads, and financial constraints on refreshment of the DVD stock.

#### 3.3 Facilities and services (QI 9-12)

Budget pressures have impacted on investment in the book fund in 2017-18, with the number of acquisitions falling, and neither target under QI 9 met. Investment in Welsh language resources, at 11% of the overall materials budget, more than meets the requirements for QI 10 however, with performance here reflected in the high number of issues for Welsh language material. PC provision has fallen slightly on 2016-17, with usage levels below the median for Wales. It is noted that this reflects the numbers of customers using their own devices and Wi-Fi, although demand for printing facilities is increasing, and the service will be exploring Wi-Fi printing options in the coming year. Performance in relation to supply of requests is regarded as met; the service was unable to supply data for requests satisfied within the authority, rather than those met through arrangements to share stock across the six North Wales authorities. Indicators of

performance from the first part of 2018-19 have therefore been accepted to ensure consistency with other North Wales authorities and past reporting.

### **3.4 Expertise and capacity (QI 13-16)**

Overall staffing levels have increased following completion of a service restructure, but are still below the target level. Numbers of qualified staff have fallen slightly, with the target here also not met. It is noted that one professionally designated role is filled by someone with cognate experience, who intends to pursue a post-graduate qualification in the near future. Qualified leadership is in place, and the service is meeting the requirements in relation to time allocated for professional development. The service is now working with volunteers, following a hiatus in 2016-17, with some 28 individuals each contributing an average of over 18 hours. All volunteers are provided with appropriate training and supervision, and are in added-value roles that do not replace paid staff.

Total revenue expenditure has decreased slightly in 2017-18, but expenditure per capita remains above the median level. Aggregate annual opening hours have increased, with no disruption to the static or mobile service.

## **4 Strategic context**

As part of the return authorities are asked to report on how the library service is contributing to wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals. Denbighshire provided a clear narrative outlining its contribution to a range of relevant strategic priorities including: early years and literacy; housing; social care; mental health; skills and employability; Welsh language support; and community resilience.

## **5 Future direction**

Reporting on the authority's future direction and plans for the library service over the following year, the service's contribution to delivering Denbighshire's Corporate Plan 2018-2022, and its Customer Communication and Marketing Service Business Plan are noted. Specific activities and developments include the refurbishment of Denbigh Library, the creation of 'Library Lounges', piloting new Wi-Fi services, and extensions to the health and well-being offer. Implementation of the communications and marketing strategy will also encompass new branding, website development and social media training. The planned development of a Volunteering Strategy and Workforce Development Strategy will support the contribution of volunteers, and help ensure that the professional staffing needs of the service are met and are sustainable. There is also a continuing focus on exploring the options for collaborative working within the North Wales services.

## **6 Conclusion**

Denbighshire library service has broadly maintained its performance in this first year of the sixth framework, with improvements in some areas and reductions in others. There has been a notable increase in the numbers of events and activities on offer, with rising attendances here and in the take-up of training opportunities. The fall in usage figures elsewhere can be accounted for by temporary branch closures as the service pursues its refurbishment programme. Budget pressures have impacted on the materials fund in particular, but service staffing appears to have stabilised, and there is a welcome emphasis in the return on workforce development, with plans to develop a service strategy and a renewed focus on professional skills.

## Llyfrgell a Siop Un Alwad Rhuddlan

Mae'r cyfnod yma yn cynnwys un o'r adegau mwyaf prysur yng nghalendr Llyfrgelloedd Sir Ddinbych, fel yn Llyfrgelloedd ar draws y wlad gyda lansiad Sialens Ddarllen yr Haf. Lansiwyd y cynllun yng Ngorffennaf pan ymwelodd staff y llyfrgell gyda nifer o ysgolion a grwpiau i hybu'r sialens sy'n annog plant i barhau gyda'u darllen dros gyfnod yr haf drwy ddod mewn i'r llyfrgelloedd i fwynhau dewis deunydd darllen amrywiol. Parhaodd y sialens tan ddiwedd Mis Medi gyda'r plant yn ymweld a'r llyfrgell tair gwaith ar ôl ymaelodi gan ddarllen beth bynnag chwe llyfr yr un. Mae'r cynllun ardderchog yma wedi ei hen sefydlu, mae'r budd i'r darllenwyr ifanc yn amlwg ac yn cael ei gydnabod yn genedlaethol gan athrawon a rhieni. Cafodd y llyfrgellydd groeso cynnes tra'n hybu'r sialens yn Ysgol y Castell, Meithrinfa y Castell a Chylch Meithrin Rhuddlan.

Thema y sialens eleni oedd 'Y dyfeiswyr direidi' i ddathlu penblwydd comic y Beano yn wyth deg. Trefnodd staff y Llyfrgell helpa drysor i gyd fynd â'r thema dros yr haf ac fe wobrwyyd 61 o ddarllenwyr gyda medalau yn Llyfrgell Rhuddlan am gwblhau'r sialens – da iawn nhw!



## Perfformiad y Llyfrgell a Siop Un Alwad - Ch2

Cyfnod	Ymwelwyr	Benthyciadau	*Ymholiadau Sydyn	**Ymholiadau Llawn	Sesiynau Cyfrifiadur
<b>Gorff 18</b>	1001	1534	127	24	202
<b>Awst 18</b>	1802	1782	95	28	211
<b>Medi 18</b>	1547	1321	98	32	167

\*Ymholiadau Sydyn – Ymholiadau cwsmer wedi eu datrys yn y Siop Un Alwad

\*\*Ymholiadau Llawn – Ymholiadau cwsmer wedi eu cyfeirio I adrannau eraill C.S.Dd.

## Ystadegau Gweithio Gyda Phartneriaid - Ch2

Partnership / Agent	Sesiynau	Plant	Oedolion
Dechrau Da (Gor 18) Bookstart (Jul 18)	3	40	38
Cyngor ar Bopeth / CAD, OPUS & Work in Denbighshire (1:1)	22	-	32
Cymraeg i Blant (Med/Sep 18)	3	38	38
Pwyntiau Siarad / Talking Points	14	-	16
Grŵp Darllen / Reading Group	3	-	14
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai – Gwersi cyfrifiaduron / Computer classes (Jul 18)	2	-	4

### Dechrau Da / Cymraeg i Blant

Cynhelir y sesiynau yma bob yn ail hanner tymor rhwng Llyfrgelloedd Rhuddlan a Llanelwy. Maent yn sesiynau hynod boblogaidd ac mae'r trefniant yn sicrhau darpariaeth wythnosol yn ystod tymor ysgol yn y ddwy lyfrgell.

Bu Dechrau Da yn y Llyfrgell ar b'nawn Llun tan ddiwedd tymor yr haf ac fe fydd Cymraeg i Blant yn dilyn yn ystod y tymor newydd yn Mis Medi ar foreuau Mercher.

Ymunodd nifer o deuluoedd ardal Rhuddlan gyda 200 o blant a'u teuluoedd ar draws y Sir mewn gweithgaredd Dechrau Da llawn hwyl yn Rhyl yn ystod Gorffennaf.

### Blodeuo Rhuddlan 2018


Gwahoddwyd y gwasanaeth Llyfrgell gan Grŵp Blodeuo Rhuddlan i drefnu arddangosfa yn y ganolfan Gymuned yn ystod y diwrnod beirniadu yn Mis Gorffennaf. Croesawyd y beirniad cenedlaethol i'r llyfrgell fel rhan o'r asesiad cymunedol. Cafwyd cyfle i ddangos ein cynnig fel gwasanaeth i'r gymuned gan

gynnwys Sialens Ddarllen yr Haf ar gyfer y plant a'r casgliadau Darllen yn Well a Dementia, roedd yn bleser cael bod yn rhan o'r digwyddiad arbennig yma.

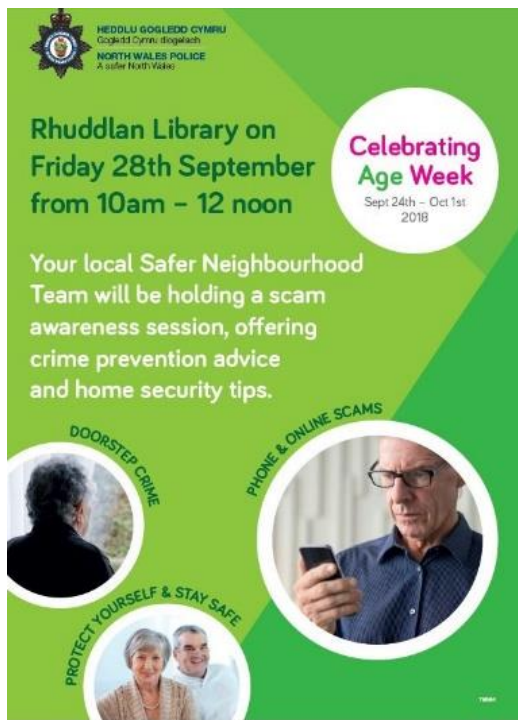
Llongyfarchiadau enfawr i Grŵp Blodeuo Rhuddlan ar ennill y wobr aur deirgwaith yn olynol yn y gystadleuaeth Blodeuo Cymru. Cynhaliwyd noson wobrwyo i gydnabod a diolch i bawb am eu cyfraniadau, yn y Llyfrgell yn Medi gyda dros hanner cant yn bresennol. Pob lwc iddynt yn y gystadleuaeth Blodeuo Prydain, cyhoeddir y canlyniadau yn Belfast yn yr Hydref.



### Digwyddiadau Llyfrgell

- BorrowBox – Benthycwch eLyfrau ac eLyfrauallafar ar-lein gyda'r ap BorrowBox gan ddefnyddio eich cerdyn a PIN Llyfrgell. Holwch am fwy o fanylion.
- 
- Croeso cynnes i Colin Dyer fel rhan parhaol o'r staff yn Llyfrgell Rhuddlan ers Gorffennaf, bydd yn gweithio bob yn ail Llun a Iau. Mae Colin yn adnabyddus yn Rhuddlan fel cyn aelod o'r heddlu yn yr ardal yn ogystal â bod yn aelod gwerthfawr o'r tîm gwasanaeth cwsmer Llyfrgell a Siop Un Alwad yn Rhuddlan.
  - Penodwyd Debbie Owen yn Reolwr Gwasanaethau Cwsmer Llyfrgelloedd Rhyll a Phrestatyn yn Awst.
  - Cafwyd Ymgynghoriad Gwastraff gan Gyngor Sir Ddinbych yn ddiweddar yn y Llyfrgell er mwyn egluro'r newidiadau i'r casgliadau gwastraff yn y Sir.
  - Cynhaliwyd holiadur dementia gan Gyngor Tref Rhuddlan yn yr ardal yn ddiweddar gyda'r ffurflenni yn cael eu casglu yn y Llyfrgell.
  - Cyngor ar Bopeth Sir Ddinbych – cynhelir sesiynau wythnosol yn cynnig cyngor am ddim yn y Llyfrgell ar brynhawn Iau rhwng 1.30 a 3.00 y.p.

- Mae diddordeb wedi cynyddu yn y sesiynau 'Ymlacio trwy liwio' yn ddiweddar sydd ar bawn Gwener. Bydd sesiynau gemau bwrdd i bob oed yn cael eu cynnig eto yn fuan.
- Mae Grŵp Llandrillo Menai yn ail-gychwyn y dosbarth 'cyfrifiaduron a sgiliau digidol' yn llyfrgell Rhuddlan ar fore Llun o fis Medi ymlaen.
- Pwyntiau Siarad – cynhelir sesiynau bob p'nawn lau rhwng 2.00 a 4.30 y.p. i gynnig cyngor a chefnogaethar iechyd a llês yn ardal Rhuddlan.



- Cynhaliodd y Plismyn Cymunedol Rebecca ac Aled sesiwn galw-mewn yn y llyfrgell yn ystod Wythnos Dathlu Oed ddiwedd Medi. Cafwyd bore diddorol a llawn gwybodaeth ar atal sgamiau a diogelu rhag troseddau, diolch iddynt am eu hamser ac i'r rhai a fynychodd.





## Rhuddlan Library and One Stop Shop

This quarter, following the annual pattern nationwide, was an extremely busy period for Denbighshire Libraries with the launch of the Summer Reading Challenge. The scheme launched in July when the schools and various groups were visited by library staff to promote the scheme which encouraged children to continue with their reading by visiting our libraries to enjoy choosing and sharing books in any format over the summer period. The challenge continued until the end of September where participants will have visited their library at least three times following registration and read at least six or more books. This excellent project is now well established and the benefits to young readers are recognised nationally by schools and parents. The librarian had a very warm welcome promoting the challenge at Ysgol y Castell, Castle Day Nursery and Cylch Meithrin Rhuddlan.

This year's theme was 'Mischief Makers' celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the much-loved comic, Beano. Library staff organised a 'Mischief Makers treasure hunt' at the library over the summer and 61 young readers were awarded medals at Rhuddlan Library.



**Library & One Stop Shop Performance – Q2**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Visitors</b>	<b>Issues (Items borrowed)</b>	<b>*Simple Enquiries</b>	<b>**Full Enquiries</b>	<b>Icam PC Sessions</b>
<b>Jul 18</b>	1001	1534	127	24	202
<b>Aug 18</b>	1802	1782	95	28	211
<b>Sep 18</b>	1547	1321	98	32	167

\*Simple Enquiries – Customer enquiries resolved at the One Stop Shop

\*\*Full Enquiries – Customer enquiries referred to other D.C.C. departments.

**Working With Partnerships Data – Q2**

<b>Partnership / Agent</b>	<b>Sessions</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Adults</b>
Dechrau Da (Medi 18) Bookstart (Sep 18)	3	40	38
Cyngor ar Bopeth / CAD & OPUS (1:1)	22	-	32
Cymraeg i Blant (Gor/Jul 18)	3	38	38
Pwyntiau Siarad / Talking Points	14	-	16
Grŵp Darllen / Reading Group	3	-	14
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai – Gwersi cyfrifiaduron / Computer classes (Med/Sep 18)	2	-	4

**Bookstart / Cymraeg i Blant**

The Bookstart and Cymraeg i Blant sessions are held for a period of half a term at a time alternating between Rhuddlan and St Asaph Libraries. The sessions are extremely popular and this ensures a weekly term-time provision at both libraries. 'Cymraeg i Blant' attended the library on Wednesday mornings up to the end of the summer term then Bookstart started Monday afternoon sessions during the new term in September.

During July the Rhuddlan Bookstart families joined families across Denbighshire for an event at the Marine Lake, Rhyl where 200 children and their families enjoyed a fun activity day.

## Rhuddlan in Bloom 2018

Rhuddlan Library were invited by the Rhuddlan in Bloom group to organise a display at the community centre during the judging event in July. The National adjudicators were welcomed into the library as part of the Rhuddlan community assessment, when we had an opportunity to showcase our offer to our customers including the popular Summer Reading Challenge for the children and the new Reading Well /Dementia scheme, we were proud to be part of this exciting day,

Huge congratulations to the Rhuddlan in Bloom team on gaining their third successive gold award in the Wales in Bloom competition. The presentation evening to acknowledge the efforts of all involved was held at the library in September where over fifty people attended. We wish them the best of luck in the Britain in Bloom event which will be announced in Belfast in October.



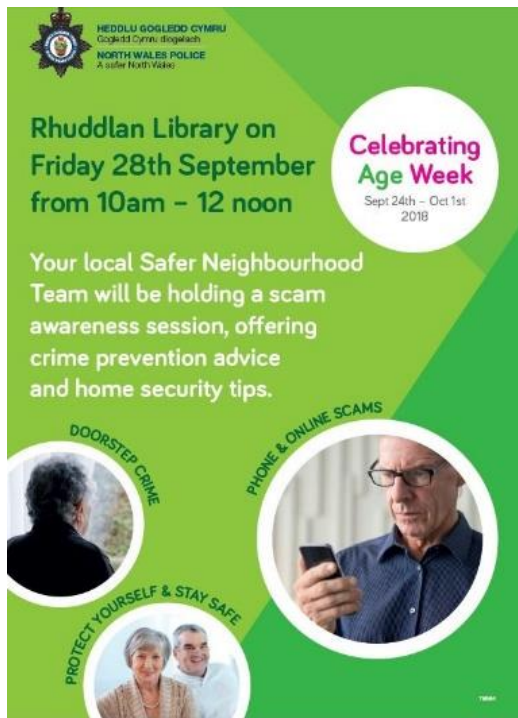
## Library update/events

- BorrowBox – Borrow eBooks and eAudiobooks online using the BorrowBox app, all you need is your library card and PIN numbers. Call in for more information.



- We welcome Colin Dyer as a permanent member of the staff at Rhuddlan Library since July, working alternate Mondays and Thursdays. Colin is well-known in the Rhuddlan community as an excellent Library and One Stop Shop customer services assistant and previously a member of the police force in the local area.
- Debbie Owen has been appointed Library and Customer Services Manager at Rhyl and Prestatyn Libraries and One Stop Shops.
- Denbighshire County Council held a waste consultation in the library recently to explain the forthcoming changes to collections.
- Rhuddlan Town Council conducted a dementia awareness questionnaire during August with the forms deposited at the library.

- Citizens Advice Denbighshire – drop-in sessions every Thursday afternoons for free confidential advice between 1.30 and 3.00 p.m.
- There has been an interest in the adult ‘Colour yourself calm’ sessions on Friday afternoons recently. Games in libraries (board games) is another scheme which will be re-introduced soon at Rhuddlan library.
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai have restarted their classes - ‘Introduction to computers and digital skills’ at the library on Monday mornings from September
- Talking Points – Sessions held every Thursday afternoons between 2.00 and 4.30 p.m. offering support for health and wellbeing in the local area.



- Rhuddlan area PCSOs Rebecca and Aled held a crime and scam awareness drop-in session at the library during Celebrating Age Week at the end of September which was an informative and interesting meeting. Thanks to the PCSOs for their contribution and time and to the public who attended the community event.

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> January 2019</b>
<b>Lead Member/Officer:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Lead Member for Highways, Planning &amp; Sustainable Travel/Head of Highways &amp; Environment</b>
<b>Report Authors:</b>	<b>Waste and Recycling Manager/Head of Highways &amp; Environment</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Wales Audit Office (WAO) Report on Waste Management in Wales: Municipal Recycling</b>

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

- 1.1. This report is about a WAO Report on Waste Management in Wales: Municipal Recycling, published on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The report is attached at Appendix 1.

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

- 2.1. To inform Members about the WAO report and to enable to committee to scrutinise the findings and the response of the councils' Waste and Recycling Service to address issues raised in the report.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

- 3.1. That the Committee considers the findings of the WAO report and supports the response of the Council's Waste and Recycling Service to address issues raised in the report.

## **4. Report details**

- 4.1. The WAO report concludes that:
  - Greater collaboration between Welsh Government and councils is at the heart of improvements, but costs and performance vary across Wales.
  - The Welsh Government and councils in Wales are collaborating more, which is helping to make recycling methods in Wales more consistent and is encouraging more people to take part. That's the conclusion of a report, by the Auditor General for Wales, which notes that the Welsh Government believes it has largely overcome a legacy of tensions and mistrust about its recommended approach to household recycling.
  - The report found that weight-based statutory targets has led to a much-improved recycling rate over time – to as high as 63.8% across Wales in 2016-17. But, the recycling rate decreased to 62.7% in 2017-18 due in part to better quality reporting. The latest recycling figures, published in October 2018, show that 20 of the 22 councils in Wales met or exceeded the statutory recycling target of 58% for 2017-18.
  - Reported recycling rates in 2017-18 varied from 56.0% in Blaenau Gwent to 72.25% in the Isle of Anglesey. However, comparing councils' recycling performance based on the impact on carbon reduction can show different results. Weight-based targets have encouraged councils to recycle wastes that have a relatively small carbon impact per tonne collected.

- The Welsh Government's recommended approach to municipal recycling is set out in its 'Collections Blueprint'. The number of councils conforming to this Blueprint increased from three in 2011-12 to 11 in 2016-17. The Welsh Government is expecting more councils to adopt this approach over the next few years, but some councils are still reluctant to change their kerbside collection method for recyclables.
- Benchmarking has found that the cost of certain waste management services show surprising variation across Wales. However, there are a wide range of factors that influence these costs. The Welsh Government believes that, if applied optimally, its Collections Blueprint offers the most cost-effective overall means of collecting waste from households.

4.2. The WAO Report makes four recommendations (printed in full, below). The view/response of the Waste & Recycling Team is summarised below each recommendation:

**WAO Recommendation 1:**

*Benchmarking work has found that the cost of certain waste management services show surprising variation (paragraphs 1.31-1.39). The Welsh Government should work with councils to understand better the basis of the variation in spending on waste management services that are fundamentally the same and ensure that waste management costs are accounted for in a consistent way.*

**DCC Response to Recommendation 1:**

Denbighshire Council would welcome the opportunity to support Welsh Government to better understand the variations in costs between LAs. Overall effectiveness of a service is a combined measure of performance and cost. Higher performing authorities are likely to cost more. The extreme demographic and geographic differences between authorities in Wales leads to greater cost variance. In order to gain a truer picture of how Authorities are performing, it would be beneficial to benchmark against similar English and Scottish Authorities.

Figure 5 (page 39 of Appendix II) shows that Denbighshire had the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest cost in Wales for the cost per household for dry recycling collection for councils in 2016-17. However, as this position has worsened significantly since 2016-17 due to the increased gate fee we are paying to dispose of dry recyclate collected via our current co-mingled recycling service. This is one of the main reasons why the service has proposed to switch to a Kerbside Sort recycling service (as approved by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018). Figure 6 (page 41 of Appendix II) shows that Denbighshire were placed 13<sup>th</sup> in terms of the cost per household for councils' household waste services overall in 2016-17. Again, this position will have worsened since then due to the increased cost of our current recycling service. The proposed new collection model for household recycling and residual waste will significantly reduce the cost of our waste management service.

**WAO Recommendation 2:**

*The Welsh Government believes that, if applied optimally, its Collections Blueprint offers the most cost-effective overall means of collecting recyclable resources but is planning further analysis (paragraphs 1.40-1.51). When undertaking its further analysis to understand better the reasons for differences in councils' reported costs,*

*and the impact on costs where councils have adopted the Collections Blueprint, we recommend that the Welsh Government:*

- explores how the cost of collecting dry recyclables may affect the overall cost of providing kerbside waste management services to households; and*
- compares the actual costs with the costs modelled previously as part of the Welsh Government-commissioned review of the Collections Blueprint for councils that now operate the Collections Blueprint.*

### **DCC Response to Recommendation 2:**

This recommendation is directed at Welsh Government, rather than councils. However, the Council has made a decision to switch the Collections Blueprint compliant model (supported by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018), and the service are clear that this is the most cost effective model for Denbighshire.

### **WAO Recommendation 3:**

*The Welsh Government has undertaken to consider alternatives to the current weight-based recycling targets which can better demonstrate the delivery of its ecological footprint and carbon reduction goals (paragraphs 2.38-2.45). We recommend that the Welsh Government replace or complement the current target to recycle, compost and reuse wastes with performance measures to refocus recycling on the waste resources that have the largest impact on carbon reduction, and/or are scarce. We recognise that the Welsh Government may need to consider the affordability of data collection for any alternative means of measurement.*

### **DCC Response to Recommendation 3:**

Again, this recommendation is directed at Welsh Government, rather than councils. However, paragraph 2.23 on page 51 of Appendix II states that “Denbighshire County Council was the only Welsh council in the UK top ten when ranked in terms of carbon benefit. The Council ranked third highest, and achieved this with an overall carbon benefit of 270 kg CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per tonne. The Council was also fourth-ranked in terms of recycling rate.” This is very positive conclusion in relation to the service provided by Denbighshire. The proposed new waste & recycling collections model (approved by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018) provides opportunities to further reduce the carbon impact of our collection service and also to improve our recycling performance.

Denbighshire Council believes that it is important to retain a measure that is universally reported across Europe and the World, and that is easily recognised and understood by the public. Whilst there are limitations to weight based measures, it should therefore be retained alongside other measures that encourage waste management practice with the greatest carbon benefits. The current Eunomia review of the Recycling target definition is welcomed as it will help align our existing measure to align us globally.

### **WAO Recommendation 4:**

*In refreshing Towards Zero Waste, the Welsh Government needs to show that wider sustainability benefits sought through municipal recycling offer value and cannot be more readily attained in other ways and at lower cost including, but not necessarily limited to, other waste management interventions (paragraphs 2.52-2.53). The Welsh*

*Government should demonstrate in the revised waste strategy that not only is it possible to recycle a greater proportion of municipal waste, but how doing so maximises its contribution to achieving its sustainable development objectives.*

#### **DCC Response to Recommendation 4:**

This recommendation is directed at Welsh Government, rather than councils. However, Denbighshire's waste service support this recommendation. The cost of recycling (both collection and in some cases, reprocessing) increases as recycling rates rise. In some cases there may be greater environmental benefits by improving performance in other areas and services (such as transport) at a lower cost. The relative cost of reducing carbon impact in different ways should be fully understood before setting specific carbon reduction targets within defined services.

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

Although not explicitly identified as a project within the current Corporate Plan, the councils' Waste & Recycling Service has an impact on the Corporate Priority to ensure that the environment is "attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity".

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

No impact on other council services beyond Highways & Environment.

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

A Well-being Impact Assessment has not been undertaken by the council because this paper is about a report by the WAO.

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

The WAO Report has been considered by Officers within Highways & Environment and by the Lead Member for Highways, Planning & Sustainable Travel. This report to Scrutiny forms the proposed wider consultation with Elected Members.

#### **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

Not required.

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

This report is largely for information, and no decision is required. Therefore, there are no specific risks attached to this paper.

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

Section 7.4.2(b) of the Council's Constitution outlines the Committee's role in reviewing and scrutinising the Council services' performance.

**Contact Officer:** Head of Highways and Environmental Services Tel: 01824 706397



Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru  
Auditor General for Wales

# Waste Management in Wales: Municipal Recycling



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU





This report has been prepared for presentation to the National Assembly under the Government of Wales Act 2006.

The Wales Audit Office study team comprised Sian Davies, Jeremy Morgan and Andy Phillips under the direction of Matthew Mortlock.

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**Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.**

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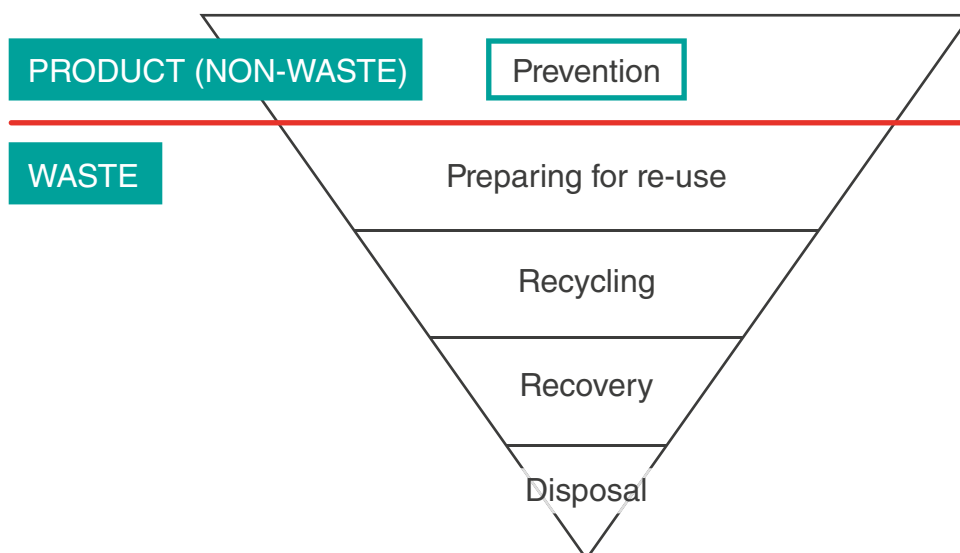
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# Summary report

## Summary

- 1 Waste management is an important and complex issue that covers a range of different but related approaches. The European Union Waste Hierarchy (Figure 1) shows that preventing the production of waste, or preparing waste for re-use, has much greater environmental benefit than recycling, which in turn has greater environmental benefits than other forms of recovery such as energy from waste. At the base of the hierarchy, with few environmental benefits is disposal by means that recovers no energy.

Figure 1 – The European Union Waste Hierarchy



Source: Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (Waste Framework Directive)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The first Waste Framework Directive [75/442/EEC] was amended in 1991 through Directive [91/692/EEC] and again in 2008 through the Waste Directive [2008/98/EC]. Separate to these Directives, the 'Landfill Directive' [1999/31/EC] regulates waste management of landfills in the European Union.

- 2 This report, which focuses on municipal recycling, forms one of a set of three related pieces of work on waste management in Wales that will be published by the Auditor General for Wales. The other two pieces of work have considered issues relating to support for waste prevention and the procurement of residual and food waste treatment capacity.
- 3 In 2016-17, councils recycled 1.01 million tonnes of waste, disposed of 0.15 million tonnes of waste to landfill and sent 0.39 million tonnes to energy from waste facilities<sup>2</sup>. Councils spent £242.5 million on their waste services in 2016-17, net of income<sup>3</sup>.
- 4 Recycling is important because it is one way to reduce the use of valuable raw resources and it has less adverse environmental impact than disposing of waste and making new replacement products. Recycling also provides the public with a visible and easy way to make a worthwhile environmental contribution.
- 5 The size of Wales' ecological footprint and levels of greenhouse gas emissions are now indicators under the **Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Climate Change Strategy for Wales**<sup>4</sup> also sets a target to reduce carbon emissions from the waste sector. In addition, the **Environment (Wales) Act 2016** includes targets to further limit greenhouse gas emissions and introduces five-yearly carbon budgets across Welsh Government departments. However, municipal waste makes up only about 5% of Wales' ecological footprint. Municipal waste recycling, even at the highest level possible, can only reduce Wales' ecological footprint by just over 1% when also taking into account the footprint of recycling activity itself. Although the overall contribution that waste management can make to reduce the ecological footprint is beneficial, it is very small in comparison with the potential for reduction from the energy, business, agriculture and transport sectors<sup>5</sup>.

2 Welsh Government, **StatsWales website**, accessed October 2018. The website shows 1.59 million tonnes of municipal waste was collected/generated in total in 2016-17. That figure decreased to 1.55 million tonnes in 2017-18, within which the amount recycled decreased to 0.97 million tonnes.

3 Welsh Local Government Association, **Waste Finance Data Report 2016-17**, March 2018.

4 Welsh Government, **Climate Change Strategy for Wales**, October 2010. The target is to reduce emissions from the waste sector to between 0.64 and 0.95 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e (meaning the equivalent climate damaging impact of all emissions but expressed as mega-tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions) by 2020.

5 The Welsh Government does not have full devolved responsibility in these areas, and waste management (including municipal waste) makes up 24% of the plans that the Welsh Government has to reduce emissions within the areas of devolved responsibility. Welsh Government, **Climate Change Strategy for Wales – delivery plan for emission reduction**, October 2010.

- 6 The Welsh Government supports a ‘circular economy’<sup>6</sup>, based on a principle that better resource efficiency could contribute to significant financial and other benefits. The Welsh Government considers that the circular economy aligns with the well-being goals set out under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** and with its **Towards Zero Waste** strategy (Figure 2). The Welsh Government plans to review **Towards Zero Waste** in 2018. In advance of that review, it has commissioned an evaluation of the statutory waste plan for Wales<sup>7</sup>, including economic benefits, against the **Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**.
- 7 **Towards Zero Waste** seeks to reduce the generation of waste and set targets to improve progressively the rate of municipal waste that is prepared for reuse or recycling or for composting (known as the ‘recycling target’). The strategy charts a path towards an ambition of zero residual waste production by 2050. Residual waste is the waste that remains after recycling or composting material has been removed from the waste stream.
- 8 Through the **Waste (Wales) Measure 2010**, the Welsh Government made the recycling targets statutory for 2012-13 and beyond, giving itself the option to levy financial penalties against councils that fail to achieve them. The statutory recycling target is weight-based and has increased gradually over time. The target has been 58% since the start of 2015-16, but steps up to 64% in 2019-20, and to 70% in 2024-25.
- 9 The Welsh Government is considering increasing the recycling target to 80% in 2034-35, subject to consultation. European Union legislation already required member states to recycle 50% of household wastes by 2020<sup>8</sup>. Recent amendments to that legislation introduced progressive targets to recycle 55% of municipal waste by 2025, 60% by 2030 and 65% by 2035. As reflected in the main body of this report and our recommendations, simply applying ever increasing weight-based targets may not be the best way to measure recycling performance.

6 In a circular economy resources are kept in use for as long as possible, maximum value is extracted from them whilst in use, then at the end of their life materials are recovered and regenerated.

7 A suite of documents comprise the statutory waste management plan for Wales. They includes a number of sector plans and the Waste Prevention Programme.

8 Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (Waste Framework Directive) contains this target.



Figure 2 – the goals and outcomes sought from Towards Zero Waste

Goal	Outcome
A Sustainable Environment	A Sustainable Environment, where the impact of waste in Wales is reduced to within our environmental limits by 2050. This means we will take action on reducing the ecological footprint of waste in Wales to ‘one Wales: one planet’ levels through waste prevention and recycling, so that we contribute to using only our fair share of the earth’s resources.
A Prosperous Society	A Prosperous Society, with a sustainable, resource efficient economy. More ‘green jobs’ across a range of skill levels will be provided within the waste and resource management industry in Wales, and increased profit for businesses will be achieved through resource efficient practices, which are ‘future proofed’ against increasing competition for resources.
A Fair and Just Society	A Fair and Just Society, in which all citizens can achieve their full human potential and contribute to the wellbeing of Wales through actions on waste prevention, reuse and recycling.

Source: Welsh Government, **Towards Zero Waste, One Wales One Planet**, June 2010.

- 10 All councils collect recyclable resources at the kerbside. Since 2015, and as confirmed in a judicial review of the Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012, councils are required to collect paper, metal, plastic and glass separately. The Welsh Government sees this change as helping councils to collect cleaner and better sorted recyclables, meaning that more of the value of the recyclable resources can be retained when reprocessed.
- 11 However, councils can potentially claim a derogation (meaning an exemption) from the legislation for the separate kerbside collection of recyclables. A derogation may be possible if councils can demonstrate that they still meet the criteria required to produce high quality recyclables and that it is not technically, environmentally or economically practicable to change their collection methods to collect the relevant recyclables separately.
- 12 This report considers whether the Welsh Government is making good progress to promote municipal waste recycling and the efficient and effective collection of municipal waste. [Appendix 1](#) outlines our audit methods.
- 13 As part of this work we have considered the extent of action taken by the Welsh Government in response to recommendations in our February 2012 report on **Public Participation in Waste Recycling**<sup>9</sup>. We have also considered the action taken in response to recommendations made by the National Assembly's Environment and Sustainability Committee in its December 2014 report **Inquiry into recycling in Wales**<sup>10</sup>. [Appendix 2](#) shows that:
  - of the eight recommendations we made in **Public Participation in Waste Recycling**, two recommendations have been implemented, five have been implemented in part, with one not implemented; and
  - of the seven recommendations made by the Environment and Sustainability Committee in its report on **Recycling in Wales**, five recommendations have been implemented and two have not been implemented.

<sup>9</sup> Our 2012 report detailed the various methods that councils used to collect their wastes and noted that the focus of municipal waste management was changing from the collection and disposal of household wastes to recycling. We concluded that the Welsh Government and councils were working to increase participation in recycling but that more work was needed to implement the national strategy and to persuade people to use these services.

<sup>10</sup> The Environment and Sustainability Committee's report and recommendations covered similar themes to those in our 2012 report.

- 14 **Overall, we have concluded that more collaboration between the Welsh Government and councils has helped make recycling methods more consistent and encouraged participation, although waste management service costs show surprising variation. Weight-based statutory targets have driven a much improved recycling rate over time – to as high as 63.8% across Wales in 2016-17 – but could better reflect wider sustainability considerations. The recycling rate decreased to 62.7% in 2017-18 due in part to better quality reporting.**
- 15 The Welsh Government believes it has largely overcome a legacy of tensions and mistrust about its recommended approach to municipal recycling – the ‘Collections Blueprint’<sup>11</sup> – although some concerns remain. Since 2012, the ‘Collaborative Change Programme’ has promoted closer working between the Welsh Government and councils, although take-up of the support on offer has varied.
- 16 The number of councils adopting collection methods that the Welsh Government considers conform to its Collections Blueprint increased from three in 2011-12 to 11 in 2016-17. The Welsh Government is expecting more councils to adopt the Collections Blueprint over the next few years, but some councils are still reluctant to change their kerbside collection method for recyclables. The Welsh Government’s view is that the approach recommended by the Collections Blueprint should ensure compliance with the separate collections legislation. However, the UK government is promoting a choice of three different methods for councils in England.

11 The Collections Blueprint sets out the Welsh Government’s recommended service profile for the collection of waste from households. The Blueprint relies on the collection of recyclable resources that are presented part-segregated by residents. Those resources are then further sorted by operatives as they are collected. The Collections Blueprint provides councils with one way of complying with the legislation on kerbside collection. Welsh Government. **Municipal Sector Plan Part 1 Collections Blueprint**, March 2011.

- 17 The Welsh Government has also made progress to encourage public participation in recycling through sharing good practice. The Welsh Government has not, as yet, encouraged any additional financial incentives or penalties to encourage participation. However, it intends to reconsider the need for incentives as part of the planned refresh of the national strategy in 2018. The Welsh Government is also keen to focus more recycling effort on materials that are valuable and scarce. The Welsh Government also intends that a new behaviour change campaign will, among other things, support councils to use existing powers to sanction those who put recyclable materials in residual waste containers or contaminate containers intended for recyclable materials. Compositional analysis of residual waste shows that much recyclable material remains in waste that is destined for disposal.
- 18 Collection systems continue to evolve but benchmarking has found that the cost of certain waste management services, including the collection of various recyclables, show surprising variation. However, there are a wide range of factors that influence these costs.
- 19 The Welsh Government believes that if applied optimally, its Collections Blueprint offers the most cost-effective overall means of collecting waste from households. The Welsh Government is planning further analysis to understand better the differences in councils' reported waste collection costs and the impact where councils have adopted the Collections Blueprint. These costs have fluctuated over time and as councils have changed collection methods. In 2016-17, the median cost per household for collection of dry recyclables for councils using the Collections Blueprint compared favourably with that reported for twin-stream collections. The median cost was broadly similar to that reported for councils using the co-mingled method. The method used to collect dry recyclables might also affect costs in other service areas.
- 20 Weight-based targets for councils have driven a much-improved recycling rate, increasing from 48.5% in 2011-12 to 63.8% in 2016-17, and helped a little by a change in the way recycling is measured. Recycling in Wales exceeds the rate recorded in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland and compares favourably with countries in the European Union and estimated recycling rates elsewhere in the world. The recycling rate decreased to 62.7% in 2017-18 due in part to better quality reporting in respect of wood recycling, with 17 of the 22 councils reporting a decrease.

- 21 The recycling rate of individual councils still varies widely, although not to the same extent as other parts of the UK and 20 of the 22 Welsh councils achieved the 58% target for 2017-18 ([Appendix 3](#)). The Welsh Government continues to apply the same recycling target to all councils. Not all of the rural councils have had higher individual recycling rates than urban and valleys councils. However, until 2017-18 the combined recycling rate across rural areas had been consistently higher than for valleys areas and urban areas.
- 22 Reflecting the wider concerns about climate-changing emissions, there has been an increasing focus on carbon impacts as a means of measuring the sustainability of recycling alongside simple weight-based measurement. Recycling rubble, garden waste and wood makes a relatively small contribution to saving carbon emissions per tonne collected but, being dense and relatively easy to collect, they are mainstays of municipal waste recycling.
- 23 The Welsh Government recognises that its weight-based recycling targets have limitations, and has committed itself to review its approach. In addition to reflecting carbon impacts, a different approach could also encourage councils to recover, more efficiently, valuable and scarce materials.
- 24 The management of many recyclable resources can give rise to green jobs, economic activity and other sustainability benefits. Recent research in Wales has already highlighted these wider impacts. Nevertheless, the planned review of **Towards Zero Waste** provides an opportunity for the Welsh Government to reflect on the role of the private sector and the overall value for money of the considerable public investment in support of recycling.

## Recommendations

25 As noted in [paragraph 13](#) and in [Appendix 2](#), the Welsh Government has not yet implemented in full all of the recommendations from our 2012 report or those in the Environment and Sustainability Committee's 2014 report. We consider that these recommendations remain relevant. In addition, we make the following recommendations.

### Recommendations

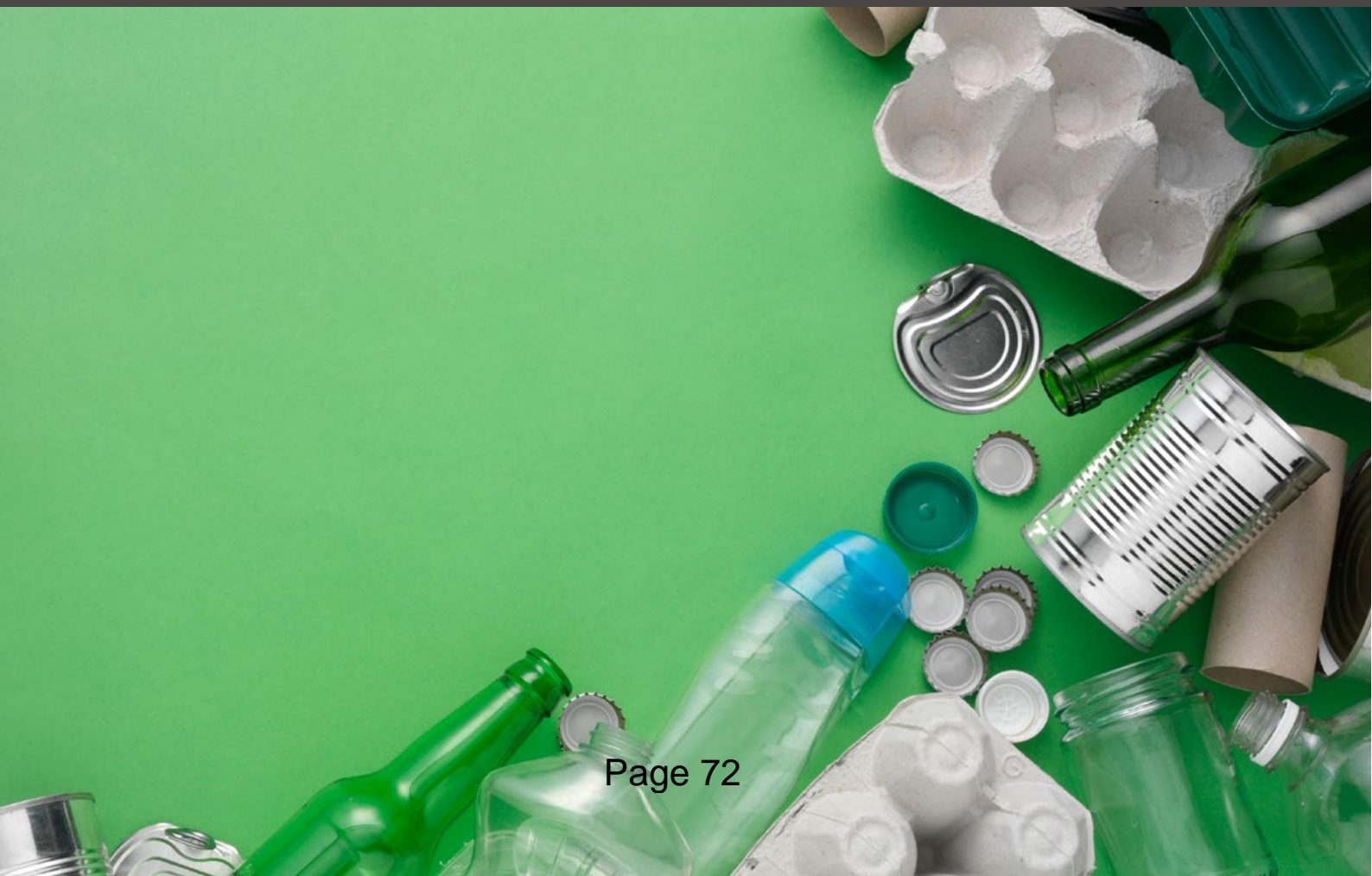
- R1 Benchmarking work has found that the cost of certain waste management services show surprising variation ([paragraphs 1.31-1.39](#)). **The Welsh Government should work with councils to understand better the basis of the variation in spending on waste management services that are fundamentally the same and ensure that waste management costs are accounted for in a consistent way.**
- R2 The Welsh Government believes that, if applied optimally, its Collections Blueprint offers the most cost-effective overall means of collecting recyclable resources but is planning further analysis ([paragraphs 1.40-1.51](#)). **When undertaking its further analysis to understand better the reasons for differences in councils' reported costs, and the impact on costs where councils have adopted the Collections Blueprint, we recommend that the Welsh Government:**
- **explores how the cost of collecting dry recyclables may affect the overall cost of providing kerbside waste management services to households; and**
  - **compares the actual costs with the costs modelled previously as part of the Welsh Government-commissioned review of the Collections Blueprint for councils that now operate the Collections Blueprint.**

## Recommendations

- R3 The Welsh Government has undertaken to consider alternatives to the current weight-based recycling targets which can better demonstrate the delivery of its ecological footprint and carbon reduction goals (paragraphs 2.38-2.45). **We recommend that the Welsh Government replace or complement the current target to recycle, compost and reuse wastes with performance measures to refocus recycling on the waste resources that have the largest impact on carbon reduction, and/or are scarce. We recognise that the Welsh Government may need to consider the affordability of data collection for any alternative means of measurement.**
- R4 In refreshing Towards Zero Waste, the Welsh Government needs to show that wider sustainability benefits sought through municipal recycling offer value and cannot be more readily attained in other ways and at lower cost including, but not necessarily limited to, other waste management interventions (paragraphs 2.52-2.53). **The Welsh Government should demonstrate in the revised waste strategy that not only is it possible to recycle a greater proportion of municipal waste, but how doing so maximises its contribution to achieving its sustainable development objectives.**

## Part 1

More collaboration has helped make recycling methods more consistent and encouraged participation, although waste management service costs show surprising variation





- 1.1 This part of the report considers how the Welsh Government has worked with councils to improve relationships, implement the national waste strategy and to promote greater consistency in recycling methods. It also considers the extent of variation in the cost of waste management services, including different recycling methods.

## The Welsh Government believes it has largely overcome a legacy of tensions and mistrust about its recommended approach to municipal recycling, although some concerns remain

In 2012, we reported that there were tensions and mistrust between the Welsh Government and councils about the Welsh Government's 'Collections Blueprint'

- 1.2 The Welsh Government's Collections Blueprint<sup>12</sup> sets out how, in the Welsh Government's opinion and if adopted by councils across Wales, high rates of high-quality recycling, significant cost savings and improved sustainable development outcomes would result. The Collections Blueprint relies on the collection of recyclable resources that are presented part-segregated by residents. Those resources are then further sorted by operatives as they are collected (Box 1).

12 Welsh Government, **Municipal Sector Plan Part 4, Collections Blueprint**, March 2011.

### Box 1 – the Welsh Government’s Collections Blueprint

The Collections Blueprint covers all aspects of a council’s waste collection service and not just the collection of dry recyclable resources. It highlights the interdependence of the various collection systems, such as kerbside dry recycling, but also the collection of food, garden, bulky, trade and residual wastes.

The Collections Blueprint relies on the collection of recyclable resources that are presented part-segregated by residents. Those resources are then further sorted by operatives as they are collected. The Welsh Government says that the Collections Blueprint should include a kerbside sort system of weekly collection of dry recyclables mixed together in a box, alongside other changes to waste collection systems, and they believe that this collection method leads to cleaner and therefore higher quality recyclables that will have a higher value. The Welsh Government has highlighted that three Welsh councils that had taken up the Blueprint – Conwy, Merthyr Tydfil and Newport – won ‘quality recognition’ awards from the UK Resource Association<sup>13</sup> in 2017. It also believes that the collection of high quality recyclables is attracting businesses in the recycling industry to locate in Wales.

If taken up by more councils, the Collections Blueprint could begin to bring some consistency to waste collection methods across Wales. The Welsh Government has been keen to improve consistency because feedback from residents and from politicians is that the wide range of different collection methods operated by councils is confusing and possibly deters some residents from engaging more fully in recycling. Greater consistency could also bring opportunity for efficiencies through national branding and campaigns and collaborative procurement of receptacles, equipment, vehicles and services.

<sup>13</sup> The Resource Association is a new professional advocacy body for the reprocessing and recycling industries.

1.3 At the time of our 2012 report, there were tensions between the Welsh Government and councils over the choice of collection system for recyclables. For many councils, the systems that they had invested in previously were proving successful and helping them meet recycling targets and deliver the national strategy. There were also doubts about the evidence base for the Collections Blueprint and a concern that the Welsh Government was prescribing how local services should be delivered. These issues were still evident at the time of the Environment and Sustainability Committee's inquiry into recycling in 2014. Some councils considered that the funding on which their waste services were dependent would be more secure if they changed to the Collections Blueprint, particularly given the Welsh Government's re-prioritisation of its grant funding for waste services and infrastructure. The clarification of legislation on separate collections was also a factor in some councils changing their approach.

**Since 2012, the Collaborative Change Programme has promoted closer working between the Welsh Government and councils, although take-up of the support on offer has varied**

1.4 In our 2012 report, we set out our view that closer and more consensual working between the Welsh Government and councils was the best way to make positive progress. Many of the recommendations that we, and subsequently the Environment and Sustainability Committee, made required the Welsh Government to work collaboratively with local government. In particular, we recommended collaborative working to design and implement an independent performance assessment of the methods used for the kerbside collection of recyclable wastes for each council. We also recommended that if a collection system did not meet the standards of this assessment, the Welsh Government and the council should agree a measured plan to achieve the performance assessment standards.

- 1.5 The Welsh Government decided that instead of agreeing with each council an assessment of its collection method, it would offer such an assessment alongside other support through its Collaborative Change Programme. Councils could then decide if they would take up this offer, and the support that they wanted from the Programme. The Programme is operated on the Welsh Government's behalf by the Waste and Resources Action Programme. To promote greater openness and collaboration between those delivering and receiving support, the Collaborative Change Programme is advised by a steering group<sup>14</sup>. The Welsh Government's recent and planned funding for the Collaborative Change Programme is £2.3 million for 2016-17, £2.5 million in 2017-18 and £2.7 million in 2018-19.
- 1.6 To date, all 22 Welsh councils have had some degree of technical support from the Collaborative Change Programme. This support ranges from very specific assistance with small areas of waste services such as participation monitoring, to the Programme's full 'business planning' package of support which models the performance of the various collection methods. Taking up the full business planning package of support on offer would deliver an outcome equivalent to that intended by our previous recommendations.
- 1.7 Despite the funding provided, Welsh Government officials have recognised that resources for the Collaborative Change Programme are limited. Councils need to undertake additional work to participate in the full business planning package and with fewer resources, some have found this increasingly difficult. Although many councils have clearly benefitted from the Programme, some criticised it as not meeting their needs and focusing too much on rolling out the Collections Blueprint. Some councils decided instead to commission their own reviews.
- 1.8 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council were the first two councils to complete the business-planning package of support. The councils saw mixed results after changing collection methods (**Boxes 2 and 3**).

<sup>14</sup> The steering group for the Collaborative Change Programme includes the Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association, Waste and Resources Action Programme, and in the past year, the Chair of the County Surveyor's Society Waste Sub-Group.

## Box 2 – waste services at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has struggled to consistently meet the Welsh Government's statutory national target for recycling. In 2014-15, the Council received £2 million of support under the Welsh Government's Collaborative Change Programme. In addition, the Council also allocated £3 million of funding. This support recommended a range of changes to put in place the Collections Blueprint.

However, the Council did not develop this support into a long-term, well-thought-through business plan for the improvement of its waste services. The Council implemented some changes, but it did not manage this effectively and did not undertake pilots or introduce the changes in phases. Members were also concerned that there was disquiet among some residents, and that they had not received timely and relevant performance monitoring reports. Under pressure, the Council reversed some of its changes, including reintroducing back lane collections and in some localities stopping using some new collection receptacles for recyclables.

Overlapping with the initial period of transition, the Council's recycling performance for 2015-16 declined to 48.7% – from 50.3% in 2014-15 – and compared with the statutory target of 58%. In 2016-17, the Council's recycling rate increased to 56.8%, but still short of the statutory target of 58% ([Appendix 3](#)). However, the Council has noted that it was ranked 11th in Wales in 2016-17 for kerbside dry recycling having seen improvements since moving from a co-mingled service<sup>1</sup>.

### Note:

- 1 The dry recycling rate includes all dry recycling, not just materials collected at the kerbside and some councils differ in how they classify dry – non-composted – materials as recycled or as having been prepared for re-use. Taking all dry recycling and dry re-use together, the Council was ranked 14th in Wales in 2016-17.

Source: Wales Audit Office, **Review of Waste Services – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**, June 2017.

### Box 3 – waste services at Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

In January 2015, the Council replaced every household's residual waste bin with a smaller 140-litre model so that residents would be persuaded to make better use of the recycling service. In June 2015, the method of collecting recycling was also changed from a co-mingled service to the Welsh Government's recommended Collections Blueprint that includes a kerbside sort system where residents separate paper, glass and cardboard, plastic and aluminium and food waste into separate containers. The Council made these changes with the help of £2 million from the Welsh Government's Collaborative Change Programme. This funding also enabled the Council to purchase new single-pass collection vehicles, containers, a depot and new equipment.

The Council recycled, reused or composted 61.6% of its municipal waste in 2015-16, 11 percentage points more than in the previous year. In 2016-17, the Council's recycling rate had risen to 65.2% ([Appendix 3](#)).

Where it has been able to compare, the Council has identified around a £227,000 reduction in net expenditure between 2014-15 and 2016-17 from changes that it attributes to its participation in the Collaborative Change Programme, although this is due to around £383,000 of income generation not reflected in the 2014-15 figures. The Council has noted that it is also now providing food bags free of charge, at a cost of £37,453 in 2016-17. However, it has also noted that lower fleet costs in 2016-17 were assisted by the purchase of vehicles funded through the Collaborative Change Programme grant.

Source: Resource Magazine, 24 August 2016 and Wales Audit Office

The number of councils adopting what the Welsh Government classifies as its Collections Blueprint method increased from three in 2011-12 to 11 in 2016-17, and with more councils expected to follow but some still reluctant to change

- 1.9 In 2011-12, only three councils had adopted the Collections Blueprint. This number increased to 11 in 2016-17, due in part to four councils moving from other kerbside sorting methods that were not fully in line with the Blueprint (Figure 3). In addition, there are now four councils operating collection systems that only require residents to separate key elements of the waste they put for collection, and six councils have a co-mingled collection system (Appendix 3). For some councils, tensions with some residents remain as they try to change their waste collection arrangements to follow more closely the method of collection that the Welsh Government recommends.
- 1.10 Pembrokeshire and the Vale of Glamorgan councils have now announced their intentions to procure the assets and develop the infrastructure necessary to adopt the Blueprint within the next couple of years. The Welsh Government is expecting more councils to follow following preparation of their business plans.
- 1.11 Overall, the Welsh Government considers that much of the adversarial debate over collection methods has been consigned to the past, with priorities now shifting to the development of new infrastructure and markets for materials. As evidence of an improving relationship, the Welsh Government has also highlighted the way in which it has been working with councils to consider the transfer of some funding for recycling into the Revenue Support Grant (paragraph 2.51). The Welsh Government has also been working with councils to implement a new behaviour change campaign (paragraph 1.26).
- 1.12 The Welsh Government has produced statutory guidance<sup>15</sup> on the separate collection of waste paper, metal, plastic and glass. The Waste and Resources Action Programme has indicated to us that several councils appear to have decided that they need not change their methods to comply with derogations given in the legislation on separate collections. The Welsh Government's view is that the approach recommended by the Collections Blueprint should ensure compliance with the separate collections legislation.

<sup>15</sup> Welsh Government, **Statutory guidance on the separate collection of waste paper, metal, plastic and glass**, December 2014.

Figure 3 – comparison of the methods that councils used to collect recyclable resources, 2011-12 and 2016-17

Collection method <sup>1</sup>	Number of councils using method in 2011-12	Number of councils using method in 2016-17
Collections Blueprint <sup>2</sup>	3	11
Kerbside sorted (but not fully Collections Blueprint in other areas of service) <sup>3</sup>	5	1
Twin-stream	5	3
Multi-stream	2	1
Co-mingled	7	6

Notes:

- 1 Data is for the system predominantly used by each council during the year.
- 2 In practice, not all councils categorised as 'blueprint' operated all aspects set out in the Welsh Government's service configuration for the Collections Blueprint. For example, on collection crew level, charging for garden waste collection, free provision of food caddy liners or promotion of home composting.
- 3 The Council still shown as kerbside sorted but not fully Collections Blueprint is Torfaen County Borough Council. The Council began to move towards the Collections Blueprint in 2015-16 but has yet to change its recycling collection vehicles to those preferred in the Blueprint. The Welsh Government considers that the Council should not yet be regarded as having adopted the Blueprint for the purpose of comparison.

Source: Welsh Local Government Association.



- 1.13 In 2016, a survey by the Environment Agency<sup>16</sup> found that most English waste collection authorities had undertaken, or had scheduled, an assessment of the need to separately collect recyclables. The Environment Agency concluded that ‘co-mingled collections... are the main collection method in England and are likely to remain so’.
- 1.14 The UK government is now seeking more consistency in kerbside recycling collections methods in England through a voluntary framework<sup>17</sup>. A choice of three methods is being promoted, as long as councils can demonstrate compliance with the separate collections legislation. Each method requires the separate collection of food. The promoted methods are multi-stream (approximating to the Welsh Government’s Collections Blueprint), twin-stream and co-mingled.
- 1.15 Natural Resources Wales is responsible for regulating the separate collections legislation across councils, private sector waste collection contractors and producers of commercial waste in Wales. However, Natural Resources Wales has not yet used its powers to require any council to submit an independent assessment of their methods for collecting recyclables<sup>18</sup>, nor has it challenged any private contractors. For councils, Natural Resources Wales considers that existing initiatives, such as recycling targets and the Collaborative Change Programme, are sufficient to secure the quality and quantity of recyclable resources. Natural Resources Wales has decided to focus its limited resources on risks in respect of waste crime and on compliance with environmental permits<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Environment Agency, **Waste collection authority separate collection arrangements: survey results, Version 1**, January 2016.

<sup>17</sup> Waste and Resources Action Programme, **A Framework for Greater Consistency in Household Recycling in England**, September 2016.

<sup>18</sup> This is the assessment of the compliance of methods for collecting recyclables under the ‘TEEP’ assessment provisions of the Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

<sup>19</sup> Separate collections is one of a number of waste regimes for which Natural Resources Wales is the regulating authority but where it may not necessarily proactively require information from operators. The responsibility to comply lies with the operator and Natural Resources Wales will intervene where it has evidence that indicates a problem.

1.16 The Scottish Government, with the backing of the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities and Zero Waste Scotland, has developed a different approach to maximise the capture, and to promote the consistent collection, of high quality recyclable resources (Box 4). Unlike the Welsh Government's Collections Blueprint, the recycling charter does not prescribe from the outset specific details regarding vehicles and equipment. Nor does it set out the specific method by which kerbside collection is to be undertaken. Instead, the charter sets common performance aims and says that 'over time, we will establish common collection systems, as appropriate, for paper, card, glass, plastics, metals, food and other commonly recycled materials deemed feasible'. The charter also promises that 'we will eradicate discrepancies on what can and cannot be recycled in different localities'.

#### **Box 4 – the Scottish Household Recycling Charter**

In Scotland, collaborative working by the Scottish Government, the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities and Zero Waste Scotland has resulted in the Scottish Household Recycling Charter which was launched in November 2015. Councils are invited to sign up for this voluntary charter which has been set up to promote more consistent recycling across the country. The charter recommends the adoption of recycling methods where glass and paper are collected in separate streams, and metals and plastics are co-collected in a third stream. Food waste may be collected separately, or co-mingled with garden waste depending on the onward treatment method, while residual waste is collected separately.

Councils signing up to the charter can apply for funding from the Scottish Government to help carry out service changes to align with the charter. By May 2017, 25 of the 32 Scottish councils had the approval of their elected members to sign the charter.

## The Welsh Government has made progress to encourage public participation in recycling through sharing good practice and has not, as yet, encouraged any additional financial incentives or penalties

- 1.17 We noted in our 2012 report that increasing public participation, so that more effective use is made of existing services and infrastructure rather than developing more facilities, was a route to increased recycling and higher efficiency. In our view, this conclusion remains pertinent, as pressures on capital funding increase and councils rationalise their waste recycling facilities.
- 1.18 In signposting councils towards good practice on encouraging public participation, the Welsh Government relies heavily upon published information from the Waste and Resources Action Programme<sup>20</sup>. This guidance is widely used. However, despite the potential benefits, there is often an additional cost for councils if they apply the guidance correctly. In looking to cut the cost of monitoring public participation in recycling, some councils simply measure domestic refuse bin 'set-out' rate rather than participation<sup>21</sup> or do not measure participation over a sufficiently long period for the results to be valid in support of their wider decision making.
- 1.19 The Welsh Government has not established specific performance indicators for participation as we recommended previously, and use of the method of measuring participation in the guidance is voluntary. We agree with the Welsh Government that a single council-wide measure of participation would only be of limited use. Guidance<sup>22</sup> is right to suggest that understanding the level of activity within council wards, districts or collection rounds allows more targeted interventions. However, establishing greater consistency of approach would provide a better basis for comparison between council areas and to support improvement.

20 This information includes guidance on household food waste collections, household waste prevention, improving the quality of dry recyclables and on partnership working.

21 'Set-out rate' is the proportion of households that put out recycling or food waste on one collection opportunity. 'Participation rate', as defined in Waste and Resources Action Programme guidance, is an observed measure of the proportion of households that take part in recycling at least once in the defined period. Participation rate is calculated over three collection opportunities because many households do not put out their container each time, normally because it is not full or they forget.

22 The Waste and Resources Action Programme has produced a range of guidance for councils on increasing participation, including for deprived areas, transient populations, immigrant communities and different types of accommodation, for example, on developing performance indicators for recycling participation in flats.

- 1.20 In 2016, the Welsh Government decided to allocate the resources for the Waste Awareness Wales function, previously delivered by the Welsh Local Government Association, to the Waste and Resources Action Programme. The Waste and Resources Action Programme now has the role to deliver communication and behaviour change projects on behalf of the Welsh Government. The Welsh Local Government Association's Waste Awareness Wales good practice portal previously provided a site for councils to exchange good practice and their experiences. The Waste and Resources Action Programme has set up a widely accessible hub for the exchange of good practice together with a website containing useful waste management guidance notes for councils.
- 1.21 On behalf of the Welsh Government, the Waste and Resources Action Programme has also supported councils in the sale of some recycled resources to re-processors. This is a useful initiative that can support councils to realise the value of recyclable resources in a difficult and often fluctuating market. In July 2017, the Waste and Resources Action Programme reported that it had supported nine Welsh councils with material marketing with a net benefit of £1.4 million<sup>23</sup>. The Waste and Resources Action Programme acknowledged that most of this benefit was from two councils that previously had no income from their recyclables. They also recognised that support for brokerage of recyclables is an area needing further development at a national level.
- 1.22 The Waste and Resources Action Programme has also developed national campaigns for recycling and waste reduction (**Box 5**). However, the Welsh Government has not yet acted on the National Assembly Environment and Sustainability Committee's recommendation to commission research on the relationship between waste reduction, income and ability of councils to meet the recycling targets in 2019-20 and 2024-25. Although the Welsh Government initially accepted this recommendation, it noted that there would be costs associated and officials have now questioned the general feasibility of the research that the Committee was suggesting. The Welsh Government has pointed to the progress that has already been made in respect of the 64% target for 2019-20 and the positive trajectory towards the 70% target for 2024-25 (**Appendix 3**). It has funded research on the costs and benefits of setting a new statutory target of 80% (**paragraph 9**) but we consider that the scope of that research may still fall short of meeting the Committee's intentions.

<sup>23</sup> As reported to the Welsh Government's Ministerial Programme Board.

## Box 5 – Love Food; Hate Waste campaign and Recycle for Wales

**Love Food Hate Waste** is a campaign delivered across the UK by the Waste and Resources Action Programme. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the need to reduce food waste by doing some easy practical everyday things in the home. Preventing food waste saves money and benefits the environment.

**Recycle for Wales** is the national recycling campaign for Wales. Supported and funded by the Welsh Government, and adopted locally by councils and other partners, the campaign aims to encourage consumers to recycle more things more often from all around the home. Recycle for Wales' website provides links to recycling information at all councils.

- 1.23 We also recommended previously that the Welsh Government create contingency plans in readiness to apply financial incentives or penalties on the public if they do not reduce the waste they produce, reuse, recycle or compost their wastes sufficiently in response to persuasion and education. The Welsh Government considers that it has not needed to take this action because of the good progress councils have made to date to increase recycling. So far, the Welsh Government has preferred instead to rely on influencing public participation through awareness campaigns and the services offered to households.
- 1.24 We recognised that incentives or penalties should only be introduced in the event that other measures have failed to deliver the necessary improvement in recycling performance. In 2017, the Welsh Government consulted on new powers<sup>24</sup> to use fixed penalty notices, and extended producer responsibility, to increase recycling. In particular, councils need to meet the 70% recycling target by 2024-25, and the Welsh Government is considering increasing this target to 80% in 2034-35, with an aspiration in **Towards Zero Waste** that in 2049-50, the recycling target will be 100%.

<sup>24</sup> Welsh Government (consultation document), **Taking Forward Wales' Sustainable Management of Natural Resources**, June 2017

- 1.25 The Welsh Government is reconsidering the need for incentives as part of the planned refresh of the national strategy in 2018. However, the Welsh Government will not be legislating for any additional enforcement provisions on the public in the medium-term. It considers that existing legislation is sufficient to achieve its objectives.
- 1.26 The Welsh Government is working with councils to develop a new behaviour change campaign. The campaign has three key parts: national and local level communications; ensuring councils all provide services that can take advantage of increased recycling, especially at the kerbside; and supporting councils to use existing powers in section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to sanction those who put recyclable materials in residual waste containers or contaminate containers intended for recyclable materials. The use of these powers for this purpose has not yet been tested in the courts.
- 1.27 Compositional analysis from 2015 has shown that 48.9% of kerbside collected residual waste was widely recyclable and 59.4% was biodegradable. Food waste was the biggest contributor, but this analysis by the Waste and Resources Action Programme also highlighted the amount of other potentially recyclable wastes in the residual waste stream (Figure 4). It noted that there were particular opportunities for improved capture rates for textiles, non-ferrous metals and dense plastic.

Figure 4 – the composition of kerbside collected residual waste for the main recyclable resources (2015 analysis)

Type of recyclable material	% of kerbside residual waste
Food waste	24.8
Dense plastic	7.5
Textiles	5.6
Recyclable paper	4.3
Recyclable card	3.5
Garden waste	2.7
Glass	2.6
Ferrous metal	1.9
Non-ferrous metal	1.3
Waste electrical and electronic equipment	1.3

Note: not all of the total material of these types will actually have been recyclable.

Source: Waste and Resources Action Programme, **National Municipal Waste Compositional Analysis in Wales**, June 2016.

- 1.28 The Welsh Government is keen to focus more recycling effort on textiles, non-ferrous metals and plastic. This is because these materials, in addition to waste electrical and electronic equipment, are valuable and in some cases scarce. They also have a significant effect on the carbon footprint of waste. In addition to capturing more of these recyclables, the use of incentives for high recycling communities and possibly fixed financial penalties for households where recyclables are not adequately separated for collection, might be a way of improving the quality and therefore value of recyclable resources. However, quality will also depend on the collection method. Preventing contamination by non-recyclable wastes or from recyclable materials placed in the wrong collection stream helps to give cleaner and better separated recyclable resources and the highest possible income for councils.
- 1.29 The Welsh Government and councils are currently prioritising food waste recycling because residual waste still contains much food waste. In addition, food waste left in residual waste can cause amenity problems for householders, particularly as councils seek to reduce further the frequency of residual waste collections.
- 1.30 In accordance with a recommendation of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, the Welsh Government has commissioned a report<sup>25</sup> on the amount of waste collected for recycling but subsequently rejected due to contamination together with the destination of recyclable resources from all collection methods. The Waste and Resources Action Programme has also developed a website that shows the public the destination of recyclable resources ([myrecyclingwales.org.uk](http://myrecyclingwales.org.uk)). This information may help to dispel some perceptions that recyclable wastes are discarded rather than used as a resource.

25 Eonomia, [Recycling Destinations Data Review](#), March 2016.



## Collection systems continue to evolve but benchmarking has found that the cost of certain waste management services show surprising variation

- 1.31 Our 2012 report noted that councils' recycling performance typically improved in steps as they rolled out new initiatives. Any comparison of performance and costs was difficult because improvements happened at different times due to local needs and many other factors. In some cases where councils have adopted the Collections Blueprint since 2012 – notably in Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent (**Boxes 2 and 3**) – service changes have been introduced in a short time period.
- 1.32 Improvements to, and changes in, collection systems have continued since 2012 amid increased financial pressures. Nevertheless, the majority of councils are now at a similar point in the development of their kerbside waste collection services to allow for some meaningful comparison of costs and performance. With the success of diverting wastes to recycling there is less residual waste for councils to collect, and all councils have moved to fortnightly or three-weekly collections. Conwy County Borough Council has moved to a four-weekly collection following a pilot. Councils' costs for residual waste collection, as reported by the Welsh Local Government Association, have reduced from £99.1 million in 2012-13 to £84.7 million in 2016-17.
- 1.33 Torfaen and Cardiff are examples where the local councils have issued smaller capacity residual waste bins. Trials across the UK have demonstrated that these 'skinny bins' can prompt residents to separate more of their household wastes for recycling, with recycling rates increasing by perhaps four percentage points. Reducing the frequency of collection and size of residual waste bins saves money once systems normalise and capital replacement costs are covered, potentially allowing more funds to be used for recycling. The Welsh Government's Collections Blueprint suggests both of these changes for councils, giving specific suggestions for bin sizes, collection frequency and a range of other service changes. Both initiatives also appear to heighten awareness of waste issues and can promote waste prevention, although such changes can also irritate some residents and lead to a perception of a reduced service.

- 1.34 In addition, councils provide household waste recycling centres and arrangements to collect trade wastes, only differing in whether they also provide some specific collection services like healthcare collections and nappy recycling. Household waste recycling centres provide councils with cost-efficient waste collection and a ready means of diverting waste from landfill disposal into recycling. They also provide residents with an alternative to kerbside recycling, particularly with more restrictions on the type and quantity of waste that can be collected at the kerbside. Waste collected at household waste recycling centres accounts for around one third of Wales' recycling rate.
- 1.35 In the past few years, councils have also reduced the number of these sites, closing sites that were unable to divert at least 70% of waste received into recycling or reuse. A potential problem that results from the accessibility of household waste recycling centres is that residents cross county boundaries to use the nearest site, which distorts the amount of waste apparently arising within a council area and can affect their recycling performance. Some councils are asking for proof of residence before allowing use of their sites. Misuse of these sites by traders seeking free disposal of their wastes is also a problem. Approaches vary but, increasingly, councils are seeking opportunities to raise income through customer charges such as charging traders to deposit rubble.
- 1.36 The Welsh Government's Collections Blueprint specifies that cost information on councils using the Collections Blueprint will be published each year to 'allow the public to gauge if they are getting value for money'. The Welsh Local Government Association summarises waste service cost data in an annual Waste Finance Data Report. However, these reports do not offer a view on value for money and are not in a format that helps the public to assess value for money.
- 1.37 Over recent years, we have facilitated benchmarking work on behalf of the County Surveyor's Society that has looked at different aspects of councils' waste management services. That benchmarking, alongside other figures reported by the Welsh Local Government Association, has highlighted some surprising variation in costs. For example:

- **Food waste:**

- the cost per household ranged from £13.02 to £39.87 in 2013-14 and with a median cost of £23.51. By 2014-15, the median cost had reduced to £22.09 per household but wide variation remained.
- councils were typically collecting between 1kg and 2kg of food waste per household per week in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

- **Garden waste:**

- in 2015-16, reported costs for kerbside collection ranged from £3 to £42 per household.

- **Household waste recycling centres:**

- in 2015-16, councils' costs for household waste recycling centres ranged from £8 to £53 per household and £34 to £243 per tonne of waste received.
- the proportion of the total waste arising in a council area that was handled through these centres ranged from 14% to 43% in 2015-16.
- diversion to recycling of the waste collected at these centres ranged from 57% to 87% per council in 2015-16.

1.38 The reasons for variations in costs have not always been clear. A wide range of factors including service efficiency, demographics and income generation<sup>26</sup> will also influence net service costs and benchmarking has not sought to adjust for these factors. There may also be other factors, such as commitments to long-term waste management contracts and access to waste treatment infrastructure, that impact on the costs reported.

1.39 **Paragraphs 1.43-1.51** consider councils' reported costs in more detail for 2016-17. We focus in that section on kerbside dry recycling and the overall cost of household waste services. The Welsh Local Government Association's annual waste finance reports provide further analysis on the breakdown in councils' costs.

<sup>26</sup> The Auditor General's November 2016 report on **Charging for services and generating income by local authorities** included an analysis of council's approach to charging and income from waste services. We also held a seminar in 2016 featuring the experiences of Wirral, Denbighshire and Monmouthshire councils in charging for garden waste collection. A common trend was a significant dip in recycling performance when charges were introduced, but some recovery in the following years.

## The Welsh Government believes that, if applied optimally, its Collections Blueprint offers the most cost-effective overall means of collecting waste from households

A previous Welsh Government commissioned review concluded that the Collections Blueprint can provide a lower cost solution than other collection systems, but leads to a similar recycling rate

- 1.40 The Welsh Government has implemented the Environment and Sustainability Committee's recommendation for an independent review<sup>27</sup> of the Collections Blueprint (Appendix 2). The Committee had noted that 'the Welsh Government is convinced that its Collections Blueprint offers the best pathway to delivering higher recycling rates, better quality recyclables and greater efficiency'. However, it also noted that 'this conviction was not shared by many local authorities', adding that 'at present, no single method of collecting recyclable resources from householders offers a clear lead in performance, cost or efficiency'. To support the review, the Welsh Government established a Technical Advisory Group, consisting of representatives from the Welsh Government, councils and the Welsh Local Government Association. Methods used for the review were also overseen by an external peer reviewer.
- 1.41 The peer reviewer noted the limitations of the evidence available, and particularly that there were very few literature sources to draw from that considered the relative performance of the Collections Blueprint. However, the review presented some evidence to show that the Collections Blueprint could provide lower overall service costs and a similar recycling performance when compared with other collection methods. The review drew on reported cost data for the collection of dry recyclables up until 2013-14 when only five councils operated to the Collections Blueprint. The cost data for the collection of other recyclables was based on modelling and the work also sought to take account of other factors that could influence local costs to compare on a like-for-like basis. The peer reviewer commented that 'dry recycling costs alone have been used to evaluate overall value for money'.

27 Eunomia, **Review of the Welsh Government Collections Blueprint**, March 2016.

1.42 While there are different opinions, some council waste managers have been critical of the review, highlighting the limited amount of empirical evidence used and that the modelling is highly sensitive to the assumptions applied. We have not sought to form our own view on the evidence base for the review's findings, but such concerns remain a factor in persuading some councils of the merits of the Collections Blueprint approach. The Welsh Local Government Association has also highlighted that the review did not take account of the potential negative impact on public participation in recycling from changing collecting methods, if only in the short-term. In the experience of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council since the review was carried out (**Box 2**), this impact could also have been mitigated by better change management arrangements.

**The Welsh Government is planning further analysis to understand better the differences in councils' reported waste collection costs and the impact where councils have adopted the Collections Blueprint**

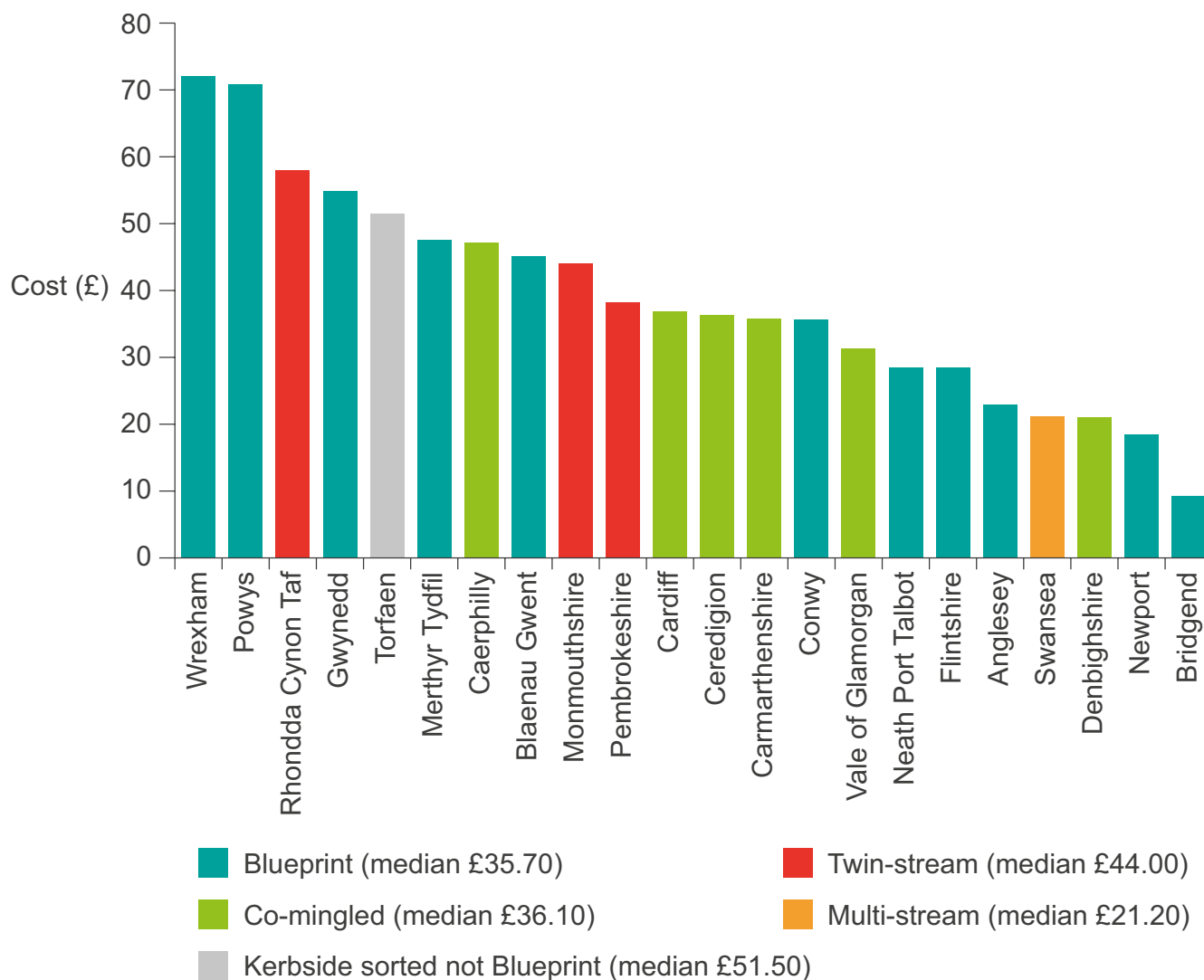
1.43 The Welsh Government is working with the Waste and Resources Action Programme through the Collaborative Change Programme to monitor the impacts of recent service changes. Through this work, the Welsh Government has indicated to us that it now intends to report an analysis of the financial, and other, changes that councils have seen since the adoption of the Collections Blueprint. It will consider operational factors influencing costs and income from selling materials. The Welsh Government intends that this work will inform a revision of the Collections Blueprint. We highlighted the need for such analysis during our discussions with Welsh Government officials in the preparation of this report.

1.44 We compared councils' actual reported costs for the kerbside collection of dry recyclables in 2016-17, focusing on the median cost for each of five collection methods used. The data includes the costs of collection, transfer and treatment and income from the sale of recyclables. The limited sample size for some categories of collection system means that the findings of this analysis are indicative only. The Welsh Local Government Association's annual waste finance reports provide further analysis of these costs and we have not sought to take account of the factors that the Welsh Government intends to consider in the work it is undertaking.

- 1.45 **Figure 5** shows that the median cost per household for the Collections Blueprint councils compared favourably with that reported for twin-stream collections. The median cost was broadly similar to that reported for councils using the co-mingled method. The range for the Collections Blueprint councils saw Wrexham report costs nearly eight times higher than Bridgend. For councils using co-mingled collections the range of costs was just over two-fold, and less again for the three councils using a twin-stream collection method.
- 1.46 The reasons for the range in costs for councils using the Collections Blueprint merit further consideration. For example, there is no obvious relationship between the reported costs and whether councils are classified as rural, valleys or urban. However, it is clear that some councils that already reported relatively low costs before moving onto the Collections Blueprint, continued to do so afterwards. Similarly, as some higher cost councils have adopted the Blueprint more recently, they have maintained relatively high reported costs thereafter. This is part of the reason why the median cost of collection for Collections Blueprint councils increased in cash terms from £12.85 per household in 2010-11 (two councils) to £42.66 in 2015-16 (11 councils), before then dropping back to the £35.70 reported for 2016-17<sup>28</sup>.
- 1.47 While we looked back at the trend in median costs over recent years, the changes in councils' collection methods complicate the picture. These changes have not generally occurred in single stages of implementation at the turn of a financial year, meaning that the annual costs can, in practice, cover more than one method and there may also be additional one-off costs associated with transition.

28 Bridgend County Borough Council and Newport City Council were the first councils to begin to operate the Collections Blueprint from 2010-11. They were joined in 2011-12 by Conwy County Borough Council, and by Powys County Council and Isle of Anglesey County Council in 2012-13 and 2013-14 respectively. Six more councils have since changed methods and were classified by the Welsh Government as Collections Blueprint in 2015-16 and 2016-17 (Figure 3).

Figure 5 – cost per household for dry recycling kerbside collection for councils in 2016-17, and the median cost per collection method<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>



Notes:

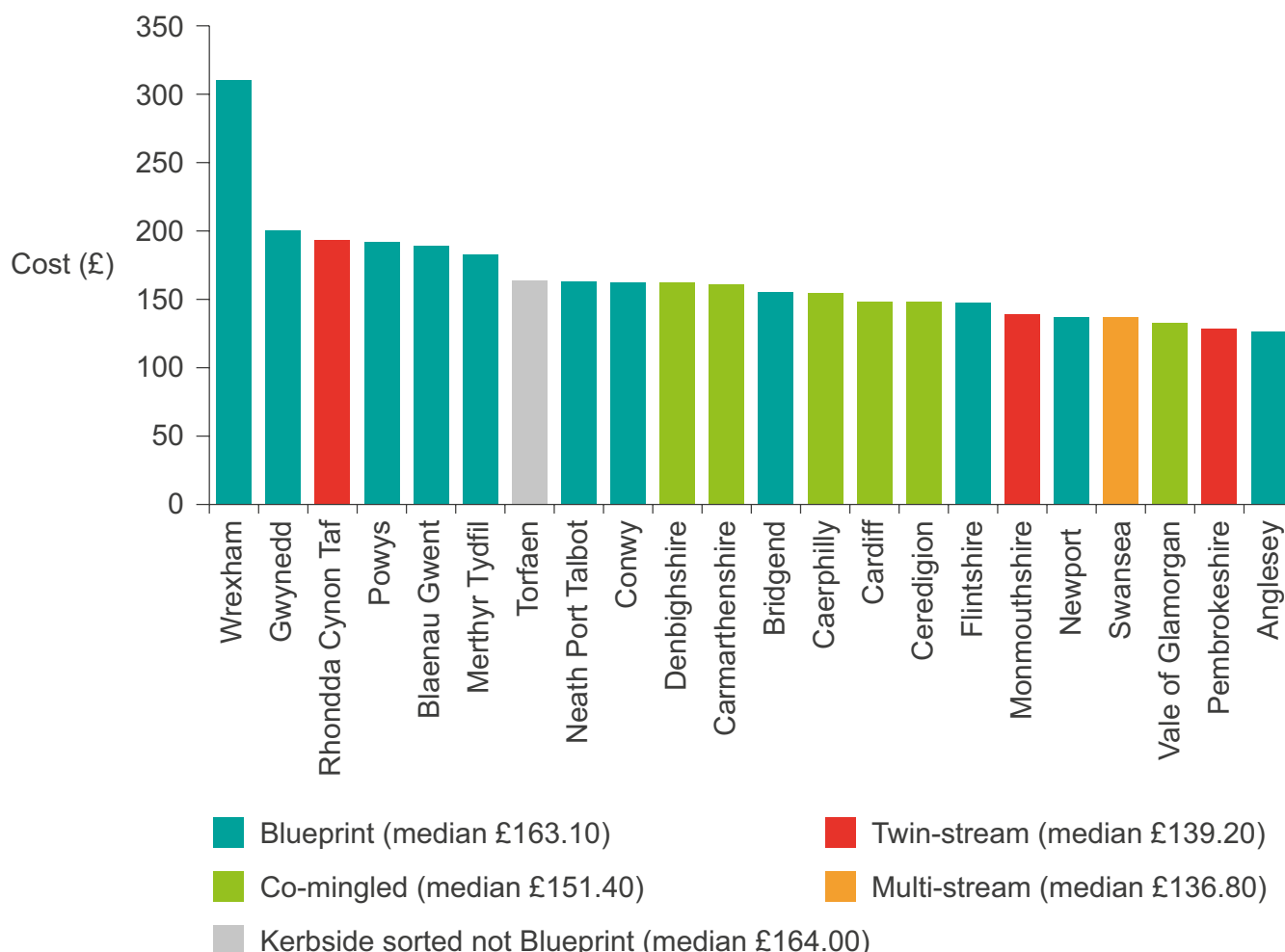
- 1 There can be variation within each method of collection. For example, with councils operating the Collections Blueprint where there are differences such as in collection crew size and in customer charges.
- 2 Other factors may have more influence over the cost of delivering household waste services than the choice of collection method, including any one-off costs. An example is the Private Finance Initiative used to deliver waste services in Wrexham County Borough Council and the fact that the Council changed its recycling fleet in 2016-17.
- 3 The median value lies at the midpoint of a frequency distribution of observed values, such that there is an equal probability of a value falling above or below it. Using the median value is a good way to analyse data with a small sample size and high variability.

Source: Welsh Local Government Association, **Waste Finance Data Report 2016-17**, March 2018.

- 1.48 While there is a lack of conclusive evidence, it is also possible that the choice of method used to collect dry recyclables at the kerbside has some impact on the cost of other services. In particular, arrangements for recycling collection rounds may affect the cost of food and garden wastes collections, and kerbside recycling is also likely to affect the use of household waste recycling centres. Restricting the frequency and the capacity of residual waste collection, under the Collections Blueprint or otherwise, is known to often lead to less residual waste and more recyclables.
- 1.49 The Welsh Local Government Association defines household waste service cost as the 'aggregated total of cost associated with kerbside dry recycling, kerbside food waste, kerbside green waste, household waste recycling centres, bring sites and residual waste'. Each element includes costs of collection, transfer, treatment and disposal of waste. Costs associated with trade waste, trade recycling, and clinical waste, bulky waste, procurement of waste treatment, other municipal solid waste and awareness raising costs are not included. Income is included to better reflect the net costs of services.
- 1.50 **Figure 6** shows that seven of the 11 councils with the highest cost to provide waste services to each household in 2016-17 were all using the Collections Blueprint. Of the 11 councils with the lowest costs only four were on the Collections Blueprint. Four of the six councils changing to Collections Blueprint in 2015-16 reported a reduction in costs in 2016-17, while other councils that have used this method for some years noted increased costs in 2016-17. The costs for councils using other methods of collection either reduced, or were relatively stable.
- 1.51 Further analysis is required to consider the impact of transitional costs and other factors, including the costs prior to transition or the impact of contract prices for waste services. Many councils have, or will shortly, transition from landfill disposal of their residual wastes to treatment at energy from waste facilities. As these changes play-out and landfill taxation is no longer paid and the Welsh Government's subsidies are applied, the cost of residual waste treatment for many councils will be slightly less expensive than at present.



Figure 6 – cost per household for councils’ household waste services in 2016-17 and the median cost per household collection method<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>



Notes:

- 1 There can be variation within each method of collection. For example, with councils operating the Collections Blueprint where there are differences such as in collection crew size and in customer charges.
- 2 Other factors may have more influence over the cost of delivering household waste services than the choice of collection method, including any one-off costs. An example is the Private Finance Initiative used to deliver waste services in Wrexham County Borough Council and the fact that the Council changed its recycling fleet in 2016-17.
- 3 The median value lies at the midpoint of a frequency distribution of observed values, such that there is an equal probability of a value falling above or below it. Using the median value is a good way to analyse data with a small sample size and high variability.

Source: Welsh Local Government Association, **Waste Finance Data Report 2016-17**, March 2018.

## Part 2

Weight-based statutory targets have driven a much improved recycling rate over time, but could better reflect wider sustainability considerations



- 2.1 This part of the report considers the overall trends in recycling performance. However, it also explores the limitations of using a weight-based target for municipal waste that is prepared for reuse, recycling or composting (the 'recycling target'), and how carbon measurement is becoming an increasingly important measure of sustainable waste management. The final sections consider issues arising for the Welsh Government in its planned review of the national waste strategy **Towards Zero Waste**.

**Weight-based statutory targets have driven a much improved recycling rate over time – to as high as 63.8% across Wales in 2016-17 – although there has been a slight decrease for 2017-18**

**The recycling rate increased steadily to 63.8% in 2016-17, helped a little by a change in measurement from 2012-13, but decreased to 62.7% in 2017-18 due in part to better quality reporting**

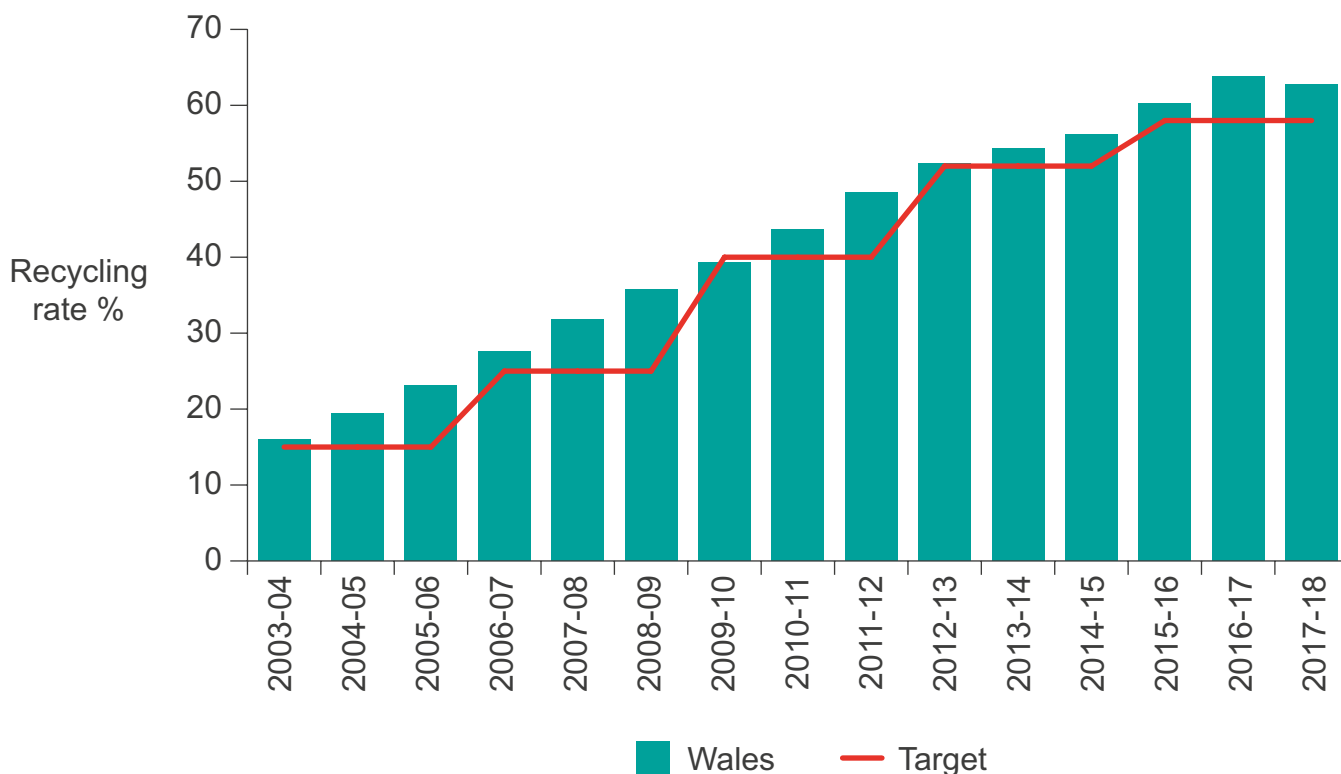
- 2.2 The recycling rate is a weight-based measure that sets the weight of recycled wastes against the overall weight of council collected municipal wastes, and it became a statutory target in Wales from 2012-13. This simple means of assessing progress has allowed both the measurement of municipal recycling in Wales and reporting against European Union requirements in the Waste Framework Directive. A weight-based recycling target is shared by all countries in the European Union, and more widely, and has helped to drive increased recycling rates. However, a weight-based target provides no direct measure of sustainability and does not specifically prioritise the recycling of wastes that have the most effect in reducing Wales' carbon footprint. In addition, a weight-based recycling target does not prioritise recycling of resources that are valuable because they are particularly scarce, and these targets can even have the opposite effect.

- 2.3 In 2011-12, Wales' recycling rate was 48.5% and, for the first time, the amount of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting exceeded the amount disposed to landfill. Councils had achieved increased recycling through the provision of new services such as kerbside recycling collections and the separate collection of food waste. Councils also improved waste collection infrastructure, such as through upgrading civic amenity waste sites to become household waste recycling centres.
- 2.4 From 2012-13, the Welsh Government changed the way that it calculates the recycling target to include rubble, incinerator residues, plasterboard and waste from beach cleaning. However, the new definition meant that recyclables collected but subsequently stockpiled and not actually sent for processing, did not count in the recycling rate until they were processed. The net effect of the new definition was to increase the recycling rate for Wales in 2012-13 from 50.4%, under the old definition, to 52.3%. Twenty councils saw an increase of up to 4.8 percentage points but the recycling rate decreased for two councils, by up to 1.9 percentage points.
- 2.5 Wales recycles a high percentage of municipal waste, with 63.8% of municipal waste reused, recycled or composted in 2016-17 (Figure 7). Recycling in Wales exceeds the rate recorded in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland<sup>29</sup> and compares favourably with countries in the European Union and estimated recycling rates elsewhere in the world<sup>30</sup>. Benchmarking work has shown that recycling of commercial wastes collected by councils has also improved from just under 16% in 2011-12, to 45.3% in 2016-17.

<sup>29</sup> In England, Northern Ireland and Scotland recycling is measured using the household waste recycling rate, a measure that excludes some of the components that are included in the municipal waste recycling rate in Wales. Data for 2016 is the most recent available and shows the household waste recycling rates to be: England (44.9%); Northern Ireland (43%); Scotland (42.8%); Wales (57.3%).

<sup>30</sup> In December 2017, the consultants Eunomia estimated that Wales is currently ranked fourth in the world for the weight of municipal waste recycled. When they compared on a 'like-for-like' basis with other countries the recycling rate for Wales was reduced by 12 percentage points to 52.2% (to exclude rubble and incinerator bottom ash and adjusting for contamination during collection). Eunomia also adjusted the recycling rates for other countries. Eunomia, **Recycling; who really leads the world? Identifying the world's best municipal waste recyclers**, March 2017 report updated with 2016-17 data in late 2017.

Figure 7 – municipal waste recycling rates from 2003-04 to 2017-18



Note: changes to the definition of municipal waste meant that from 2012-13, rubble, incinerator residues, plasterboard and waste from beach cleaning were included. In addition, data for years prior to 2012-13 are based on waste collected for disposal/treatment. Data for 2012-13 onwards are based on waste sent for disposal/treatment.

Source: Based on data reported in the Welsh Government’s, **Statistical First Release, Local Authority Municipal Waste Management, 2017-18**, October 2018.

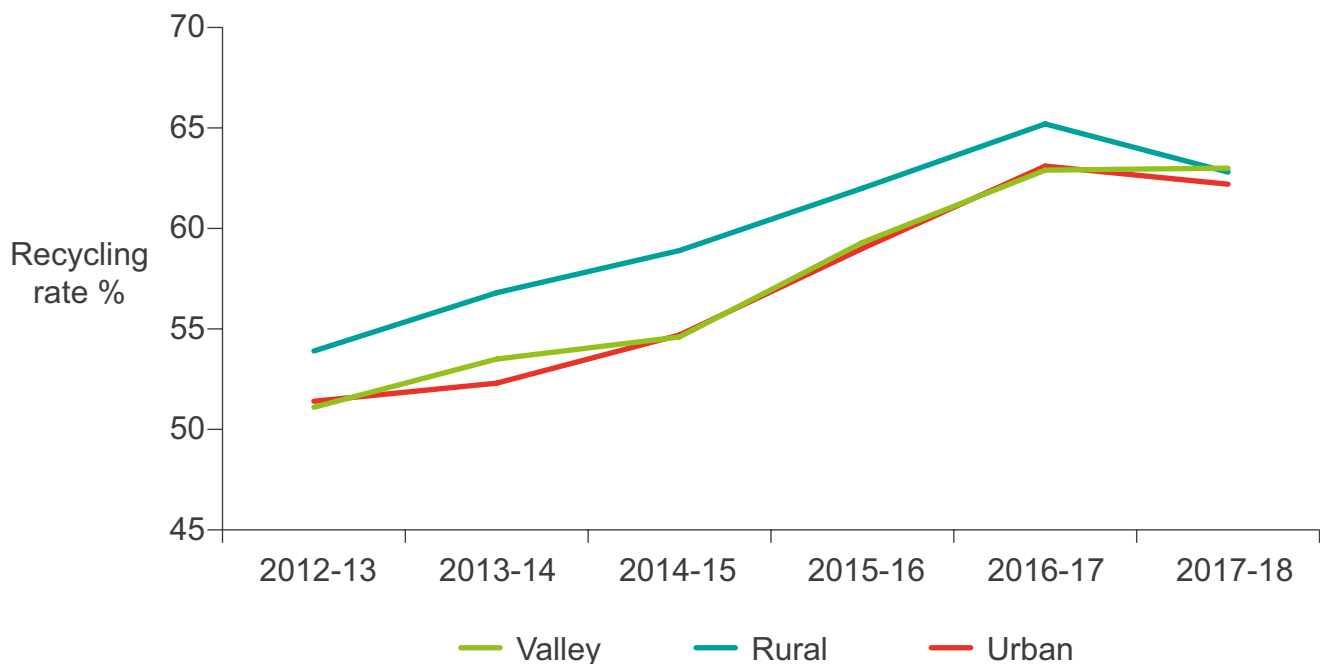
- 2.6 In October 2018, the Welsh Government published the latest recycling data for 2017-18. It shows that for the first time over the past two decades, there was a small year-on-year decrease to 62.7%. The decrease has been attributed to a combination of complex factors but including the improved accuracy of reporting in respect of wood recycling.
- 2.7 Overall, 20 of the 22 Welsh councils met or exceeded the statutory recycling target of 58% for 2017-18. The recycling rates varied from 56.0% in Blaenau Gwent to 72.2% in the Isle of Anglesey ([Appendix 3](#)). By contrast, nine councils failed to meet the 52% recycling target in 2012-13, the first year that this target became statutory. Councils' recycling rates in other parts of the UK vary to a greater extent than in Wales.
- 2.8 Of the 22 councils, 17 reported a decrease in their recycling rate for 2017-18. Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion councils saw the largest decreases. Ceredigion had previously recorded the highest rate of all councils in 2016-17 (70.1%) but saw this reduce to 63.7% in 2017-18, still above the statutory target and the Wales average. The recycling rate in Pembrokeshire fell from 65.3% to 57.0%. Bridgend County Borough Council reported the largest increase, from 57.9% to 68.6%. The increase has been attributed to changes in the Council's kerbside collection scheme.
- 2.9 Progress in improving the recycling rate at individual councils can fluctuate, even for those with generally good recycling rates. A recycling rate that is marginally less than the previous year may not necessarily indicate a performance problem. Performance changes could be due, for example, to service changes, seasonal issues, and the reprioritisation of resources. However, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has not achieved the recycling target in five of the six years since the target became statutory. The Council also failed to meet the target six times between 2003-04 and 2012-13.
- 2.10 The Welsh Government has the option to levy financial penalties on councils that fail to meet the target. There had been 20 instances where councils had failed to meet recycling targets between 2012-13 and 2016-17. In practice, levying a financial penalty may simply impact on councils' available resources to support improvement. For the first time, the Welsh Government levied a £77,800 fine on Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council for its failure to meet the 2016-17 target.

**The Welsh Government continues to apply the same recycling target to all councils, but until 2017-18 the combined recycling rate across rural areas had been consistently higher than for valleys areas and urban areas**

- 2.11 Our 2012 report considered that national plans for recycling did not take sufficient account of local geographical, compositional and socio-economic differences. Rural councils achieved a combined recycling rate that was consistently higher than valleys councils, by as much as seven percentage points in 2009-10, and a few points higher than urban councils.
- 2.12 Many physical, social and economic factors can act as barriers to recycling. The Waste and Resources Action Programme has undertaken some work that pointed towards a link between higher deprivation in urban areas and the likelihood of lower recycling rates. Whether residents have gardens and can produce a large quantity of organic garden wastes for recycling may also be part of the reason for the higher recycling rates observed historically by rural councils, and particularly over valleys councils.
- 2.13 We recommended previously that the Welsh Government analyse the recycling rates for councils to determine if there is a significant difference in the performance of predominately urban, valleys and rural local councils. We also recommended that the Welsh Government use this analysis together with socio-economic differences when setting future recycling targets and redirect and target support for any councils shown by the analysis to be disadvantaged.
- 2.14 In responding to these recommendations, the Welsh Government considered provisional recycling data for the 2015 calendar year only. That data showed rural recycling to be 60%, urban recycling 58% and valleys recycling 57%. The Welsh Government's conclusion was that a range of three percentage points was not a significant difference between these recycling rates. The Welsh Government has also noted not all of the rural councils have higher individual recycling rates than urban and valleys councils. The Welsh Government considers that it has implemented the recommendation and does not need to take any further action by considering variable recycling targets or targeting support, but says that it will review its approach if the gap widens.

2.15 In each of the five years from April 2012 to March 2017, rural councils maintained the highest combined recycling rate (Figure 8). In 2013-14, rural councils achieved a combined recycling rate that was 4.4 percentage points more than either urban or valleys councils. Similarly, in 2014-15, this difference was 4.3 percentage points. However, the gap closed gradually in 2015-16 and 2016-17 and the latest data for 2017-18 shows a different picture, with the combined rate for valleys councils marginally higher than for rural and urban councils. The factors that contributed to the overall decrease across Wales impacted rural councils more than other councils but some of these factors may only be temporary.

Figure 8 – combined municipal recycling rate for rural, valleys and urban councils in Wales from 2012-13 to 2017-18



Note: Rural councils are: Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, Monmouthshire, Pembrokeshire, Powys, and the Vale of Glamorgan. Valleys councils are: Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Merthyr, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taf, and Torfaen. Urban councils are: Cardiff, Flintshire, Newport, Swansea, and Wrexham.

Source: Welsh Government, **StatsWales website - National Strategic Indicators datasets, Reuse/recycling/composting rates by local authority and year**, accessed October 2018.



## There has been an increasing focus on carbon impacts as a means of measuring the sustainability of recycling alongside simple weight-based measurement

- 2.16 Reducing the amount of waste that arises is by far the best way to reduce the climate damaging carbon impact of waste management. However, diverting waste from landfill disposal and treating it by other means, such as by increasing recycling or using energy from waste, also reduces its carbon impact.
- 2.17 Modelling<sup>31</sup> undertaken for the Welsh Government to explore the carbon impact of collecting recyclables suggests that kerbside sorted collection systems used can give 'a relatively significant climate change benefit in comparison to the equivalent performance of co-mingled systems'. Researchers attribute these benefits to higher quality recycled paper and glass, and less transportation impacts, from kerbside sorted recycling collections.
- 2.18 Several leading expert bodies on waste management have promoted different ways of measuring carbon impact as a means of assessing the sustainability of recycling. In particular, the Waste and Resources Action Programme suggests using weight and carbon targets together and, since 2013, Scotland has also used the 'Carbon Metric' to assess councils' carbon footprint from waste, including the impact of recycling.
- 2.19 Eunomia produces an annual Recycling Carbon Index for all UK councils although it only quantifies the carbon impact of recycling. This means that a council that generates high volumes of waste, but achieves a high recycling rate, would rank higher than a council with a similar recycling rate from a lower overall volume of waste. By contrast, the Scottish Carbon Metric considers the whole-life impacts of waste<sup>32</sup>.

31 The Waste and Resources Action Programme and Eunomia, **The Climate Change Impacts of Recycling Services in Wales**, September 2016.

32 Zero Waste Scotland provides a good example of the benefits of recycling waste with high embodied carbon. Zero Waste Scotland has calculated a carbon factor for each material type, expressing the embodied carbon emissions as kg CO<sub>2</sub>eq per tonne of material. Using their Carbon Metric calculations, Zero Waste Scotland showed that every tonne of plastic bottles that is recycled saves 3.2 tonnes of embodied carbon emissions, whereas the same weight of rubble saves just 16 kilograms of embodied carbon emissions. The carbon benefit of recycling a product is the amount of these embodied emissions that are 'saved' by preventing the need to produce new products.

2.20 Over recent years, the Recycling Carbon Index has shown that Wales already achieves the greatest carbon saving per head of population from municipal recycling in the UK. In 2016-17, the 94kg per person carbon saving calculated for Wales was 36% greater than for England and 24% greater than for Northern Ireland. Nevertheless, there is still scope to recycle more of the waste resources that have the highest carbon benefit.

2.21 **Figure 9** compares the performance of the seven leading Welsh councils for recycling in 2016-17 to their ranking among Welsh councils in the Recycling Carbon Index. The comparison highlights some clear differences in relative performance using the two measures. In 2015-16, only two of the five best performing Welsh councils in the carbon index used a kerbside sorted method for collecting recyclables but in 2016-17 all of the top five did so. In both 2015-16 and 2016-17, four of the five worst performing councils in the index used either a co-mingled or multi-stream method. The exception is Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, which moved from a twin-stream method to kerbside sorted collection during 2015-16 (**Box 2**).

**Figure 9 – ranked performance in 2016-17 of the top seven Welsh councils for recycling compared with their Carbon Index rating**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Rank for recycling target 2016-17 (out of 22)</b>	<b>Rank in Carbon Index 2016-17 (out of 22)</b>
Ceredigion	1	6
Wrexham	2	8
Monmouthshire	3	14
Flintshire	4	9
Carmarthenshire	5	11
Isle of Anglesey	6	3
Caerphilly	7	19

Source: Wales Audit Office comparison using data from the Welsh Government's **Statistical Bulletin October 2017** and Eunomia's **Recycling Carbon Index 2016-17**.

2.22 Waste management consultants Ricardo Energy & Environment have also suggested measuring the carbon contribution of waste services and have produced a carbon league table. Although different from the Scottish Carbon Metric in certain respects, the carbon league table also looks beyond recycling activity alone to provide a more holistic view of the carbon performance and overall 'environmental strength' of a council's waste services. Ricardo Energy & Environment have noted that high recycling levels do not determine overall carbon performance and that weight-based measurement has encouraged councils to 'chase' certain heavier waste materials, in particular garden waste, despite arguably marginal environmental benefits<sup>33</sup>. The Welsh Government has noted that for Wales, compositional analyses of the waste collected by local authorities in 2003, 2009 and 2015 did not suggest an increase in the overall amount of garden waste collected when also adjusting for population growth.

2.23 In June 2015, Ricardo Energy & Environment ranked the performance of UK councils against both their recycling rate, and their position on the carbon league table. Using data from 2013-14, their analysis found that:

- reliance on landfill disposal has a big impact in producing a considerable amount of carbon emissions, but energy from waste has negligible impact on carbon. So, from the perspective of carbon emissions, a shift from landfill to energy from waste as a means of waste disposal is a good thing.
- many of the councils with the highest recycling rate did not perform well on the carbon league table because of the materials they recycle.
- Denbighshire County Council was the only Welsh council in the UK top ten when ranked in terms of carbon benefit. The Council ranked third highest, and achieved this with an overall carbon benefit of 270 kg CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per tonne. The Council was also fourth-ranked in terms of recycling rate. By comparison, Monmouthshire County Council was fifth highest for recycling rate, but its carbon benefit was ranked 31st.

33 Ricardo Energy & Environment, **Which local authorities would be the winners and losers if we moved to a carbon league table rather than the traditional recycling % table?** Article in Recycling and Waste World, June 2015.

- 2.24 The carbon impacts of various wastes are a result of the different processes that are undertaken to gain, use and then to dispose of each waste. For example, the processing required to extract and to manufacture metals, plastic and textiles means that a lot of carbon emissions are generated during this stage. This means that these materials have high embodied carbon, and replacing them requires the same investment of processing and leads to the same generation of carbon emissions. For these materials, therefore, recycling is good because it avoids repeating the extraction and manufacturing stages of production. In addition, for some of these materials, for example some metal resources like copper, or plastics because they are derived from oil, there is only a finite amount of the resource available.
- 2.25 But waste materials also have a carbon impact at the end of their use, as a consequence of their disposal. Unless composted by householders or burnt in garden bonfires, before councils began to collect separately food and garden waste it would have gone to landfill with other residual wastes where it would have a significant carbon impact. Since 2004, councils have had to meet legislation<sup>34</sup> that requires a progressive reduction in the amount of biodegradable wastes, including food and garden waste, which they can dispose to landfill.
- 2.26 Councils can also include as recycled, other organic wastes from non-household sources such as grass cuttings and leaves that they 'collect' from municipal parks and gardens, and this includes clearing some organic materials from highways. Since the definition was amended in 2012-13, organic wastes collected during beach cleaning are also counted towards the recycling target if composted.

<sup>34</sup> The Landfill Allowances Scheme (Wales) Regulations 2004 were introduced in response to the Landfill Directive Council Directive 1999/31/EC. There are other legislative drivers to discourage disposal of green waste to landfill, such as the duty of care under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (section 34).

- 2.27 Invariably, and with exception of issues like highway safety and amenity, plant wastes such as leaves and clippings would pose less of a potential to harm the environment if they could be left uncollected and for the natural decomposition processes of the carbon cycle to take place. The reality is that councils will often need to clear plant wastes for reasons such as amenity<sup>35</sup>, and small scale composting has for years provided a means of managing these wastes. However, by collecting and bulking up garden wastes into the composting ‘windrows’ frequently used by councils, inadequate aeration could increase the risk of releasing significant concentrations of greenhouse gases, especially methane and nitrous oxide, to the atmosphere<sup>36</sup>. Both of these gases are a far more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Were councils to dispose of garden waste by incinerating it at energy from waste facilities, treatment in this way would not count towards recycling targets<sup>37</sup>.
- 2.28 By far the most preferable environmental option for food waste is for householders and businesses to minimise its production. This is because every tonne of food waste that is produced creates the equivalent of four tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. But preventing food waste can save more than 53 times more carbon emissions than recycling that same waste. As a more environmentally preferable option to landfill, councils now send the food waste that they collect for treatment by anaerobic digestion where the methane that is generated during treatment is captured and burnt to generate some electricity. The potential carbon impact of food waste is reduced significantly when it is treated by anaerobic digestion<sup>38</sup>.

35 There are advantages to removing organic material for amenity and potentially some health reasons as decomposing organic material can provide harbourage for pests. However, there are sometimes disadvantages, for example, removing seaweed from sand beaches is known to promote wind-blown erosion.

36 The Welsh Government has noted that there is a similar risk of this happening in home compost bins.

37 Incinerating food waste is also technically possible, but can be inefficient and operationally difficult due to water content.

38 The carbon benefit of anaerobic digestion and energy from waste is linked to the carbon intensity of the grid electricity that they are replacing. As the grid continues to decarbonise, the carbon benefits of anaerobic digestion and energy from waste will decline and eventually they will be net emitters of carbon.

2.29 Recycling glass using closed-loop methods that maintain its value is worthwhile because although a considerable amount of energy is used in glass re-melting, making new glass takes even more energy. However, if disposed to landfill, glass is inert so causes no real environmental harm other than possibly some amenity issues. The justification for recycling on the basis of preserving raw resources is not as strong as for other materials, although there are still concerns about the supply of sand and the environmental impact of its extraction. It is also far more preferable to keep glass out of the waste stream and to reuse rather than recycle it, although reuse of glass containers is currently under-developed. There are statutory targets for the recycling of glass packaging under the EU's Packaging Waste Directive.

## Weight-based targets have encouraged councils to recycle wastes that have a relatively small carbon impact per tonne collected

2.30 In our 2012 report, we noted that some councils were 'not taking account of the sustainability objectives underpinning the national strategy' and that 'targets, and the threat of financial penalties means some have tried to meet their landfill allowance and recycling targets by any means without being specifically concerned with sustainability'. The Environment and Sustainability Committee recommended in 2014 that the Welsh Government 'investigate whether weight-based targets are having any unintended impact on reducing the ecological footprint of waste', and to do this by the end of 2015. The Welsh Government has not yet implemented this recommendation, although its evaluation of the Wales waste plan has reported more generally on reductions in the ecological footprint of all wastes and the landfilling of waste in the period 2010 to 2015.

2.31 Recycling rubble, garden waste and wood makes a relatively small contribution to saving carbon emissions. But, together with some other wastes, these are mainstays of municipal waste recycling in Wales, as has also been seen elsewhere in the UK. To indicate the point, **Figure 10** shows how garden waste, rubble, wood, incinerator bottom ash and glass recycling contributed to councils' overall recycling performance in 2016-17. These wastes accounted for just over half of Wales' recycling rate of 63.8% in that year.

Figure 10 – the contribution that garden waste, rubble, glass and incinerator bottom ash made to Wales’ recycling performance in 2016-17

Material recycled	Percentage points in Wales recycling rate	Range in percentage points contributed to individual councils’ recycling rates
Garden waste <sup>1</sup>	11.4	4.0 to 19.4
Wood <sup>2</sup>	4.2	0.0 to 6.4
Rubble <sup>3</sup>	9.2	2.0 to 20.6
Glass	5.1	3.7 to 8.1
Incinerator bottom ash (including metals) <sup>4</sup>	6.1	1.0 to 9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>26.4 to 46.5</b>

Notes:

- 1 Our estimate is based on separately collected garden waste and assuming that garden waste makes up 75% of any mixed garden and food waste collected. Some councils have suggested a slightly lower percentage split as part of recent benchmarking work. The 75% assumption is based on figures reported by the Waste and Resources Action Programme for a sample of weekly mixed collections in **Performance analysis of mixed food and garden waste collection schemes**, February 2010. The proportion of food waste in fortnightly mixed collections was higher.
- 2 At 0.0%, Denbighshire County Council separately collects wood from recycling parks. However, this material is used as biomass fuel and does not therefore count towards the recycling rate.
- 3 The contribution that rubble (collected as a percentage of waste arising from recycling and residual sources) makes to the recycling rate is very slightly different to our figures because it is based on what is sent for recycling in the scheme year and includes aggregate recovered from street sweepings.
- 4 Individual councils are gradually transitioning to energy from waste facilities.

Source: Wales Audit Office analysis of WasteDataFlow data.

- 2.32 The examples of garden waste, rubble, wood, glass and incinerator bottom ash show that, within the limitations of the Welsh Government's recycling target, there are some incentives for councils to recycle certain readily available wastes that have a relatively small carbon impact per tonne collected. For individual councils, these wastes accounted for between two-fifths and just over two-thirds of their recycling rates in 2016-17.
- 2.33 The contribution that rubble has made to Wales' recycling performance has steadily increased since its inclusion in the measurement of the recycling rate. In 2012-13, rubble accounted for 4.4 percentage points within the overall recycling rate of 52.3%. In 2016-17, rubble accounted for 9.2 percentage points within the overall recycling rate of 63.8%. However, construction waste cannot be counted under the new EU targets and definition of municipal waste.
- 2.34 The amount of incinerator bottom ash sent for recycling had been increasing as councils increase their use of energy from waste facilities. Bottom ash can be recycled into building materials and metal is also recovered. Unlike in England, the Welsh Government allows bottom ash from energy from waste to be included in its recycling target although this cannot be included in figures returned to the European Union or in the calculation of the UK recycling rate. The Waste and Resources Action Programme anticipates that bottom ash will eventually increase recycling rates by perhaps seven or eight percentage points. However, the Welsh Government has reported that a drop in incinerator bottom ash reported as recycled, at least in the short-term, was one of the factors contributing to the decrease in the overall Wales recycling rate in 2017-18.
- 2.35 The separate collection of garden waste from their domestic kerbside waste collection rounds is now a routine activity for all councils in Wales with the exception of Powys County Council and some councils still collect mixed garden and food waste. Meanwhile, with about 25% of garden wastes brought by residents to household waste recycling centres, councils do not have to fund the collection of this waste.
- 2.36 Charging for the kerbside collection of garden wastes is suggested in the Welsh Government's Collections Blueprint and is beginning to happen across Wales. For these reasons, the separate collection of garden waste and central composting offers councils a relatively easy improvement to their recycling performance, with waste that is both dense and with a reduced cost of collection and treatment. The strong promotion of kerbside garden waste collection in response to the need to raise recycling performance has meant that, in our experience since 2012, councils now give less prominence to home composting.



2.37 In the case of glass, the ability of a council to gain recycled material to contribute to the overall municipal recycling rate may depend on competition from the private sector for collection from non-household sources. It could also depend on the availability of bring banks and the extent of their use by traders. However, estimates of the overall amount of glass in the municipal waste stream across Wales suggest that some councils may be collecting and recycling a high proportion of the glass available.

## The review of Towards Zero Waste provides an opportunity for the Welsh Government to revisit how recycling performance is measured and to consider the overall value for money of its support for recycling

### The Welsh Government recognises the limitations of weight-based targets and is committed to reviewing its approach

2.38 While acknowledging the limitations of a weight-based target, the Welsh Government has so far considered that there is no better option to replace the current approach. The Welsh Government has been concerned that moving to a carbon recycling target might give rise to the unintended consequence of councils 'chasing' wastes with high embodied carbon for recycling rather than prioritising their prevention.

2.39 The Environment and Sustainability Committee's 2014 inquiry into recycling noted that a weight-based approach could have the unintentional impact of discouraging waste reduction. For example, the Committee noted that if waste prevention becomes more successful, as the national strategy is seeking, smaller quantities of wastes will be presented for councils to collect. Recycling rates could decrease if waste prevention disproportionately focused on materials that would otherwise have become waste and been recycled, rather than reducing all types of waste by the same proportion. A reduction in the amount of waste available for recycling could also have a negative impact on the income that councils gain from their sale. The Committee sought an analysis of the relationship between recycling and waste prevention, and the possible effects of this on council's recycling performance. The Welsh Government has not progressed this recommendation pending its refresh of **Towards Zero Waste** in 2018.

- 2.40 In reviewing **Towards Zero Waste**, the Welsh Government has set itself an objective to explore afresh whether there are any realistic alternatives to weight-based targets which can better demonstrate the delivery of its ecological footprint and carbon reduction goals<sup>39</sup>.
- 2.41 It might be feasible, for example, to create a carbon target for recycling that is relative to the total amount of waste generated, or alternately material specific carbon targets. Carbon measurement is likely to need a better ongoing understanding of the composition of residual waste, and this would come at some additional cost, although such analysis should also inform efforts to improve waste capture. A different approach to recycling targets could have the potential to recognise more clearly the value of materials that have a finite supply such as copper, or materials relying on oil extraction such as plastics. As noted in **paragraph 1.28**, the Welsh Government is keen to focus more recycling effort on such materials.
- 2.42 In March 2017, the Welsh Government announced its intention to consult on raising the municipal waste recycling target to 80% in 2034-35, with Ministers also declaring the intention for Wales to be the best recycling nation in the world. The Welsh Government could simply continue to push on with higher targets of the same type, and **Towards Zero Waste** already sets an ‘aspirational’ weight-based recycling target of 100% to be achieved by 2050. Understandably, the Welsh Government wants to retain an indicator for recycling that both councils and the public can comprehend and, in the short-term at least, will still need to report against EU-defined targets. But rather than merely measuring what is easy to measure, focusing performance measurement on quality as well as, or instead of, quantity could engender greater awareness and support from the public and would provide a better fit with wider sustainable development objectives.

<sup>39</sup> As also reflected for example in the requirements of the **Environment (Wales) Act 2016** and the indicators established under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**.

- 2.43 For many recyclable resources, the green jobs, economic activity, and other sustainability benefits that are sought from their management are not necessarily reliant on them being part of a recycling target. There are wider benefits and other reasons that could lead councils to continue to collect and send for treatment many recyclable waste resources. As such, residents might see little change to their visible waste collection services. Outside of a recycling target, councils might collect and pass some wastes to commercial re-processors not because they offer an easy way of attaining higher recycling performance, but because these wastes need to be managed for other reasons, such as compliance with legislation to avoid landfill disposal, to lessen contamination of recyclable waste streams, or for amenity considerations like fly tipping. In this way, councils could focus their recycling activity more on the material that best deliver the aims of national waste strategy.
- 2.44 For example, outside of recession there is clearly a viable market for rubble recycling as secondary aggregates and in reuse, and each year the commercial sector successfully manages several million tonnes of demolition waste without the need for a statutory target. High value scarce waste resources like metals are also readily recycled within the private sector without statutory targets, with the scrap industry creating jobs and economic activity due to commercial viability derived from market demand for these resources.
- 2.45 As with the food wastes collected by councils, garden wastes can also be treated to produce compost products for which there is a ready high demand. **Box 6** shows that if funding support for council collection and for gate fees is maintained, treating garden and food wastes is already commercial viable. In addition, estimates of the value of preventing the emission of greenhouse gases highlight the wider financial benefits that could accrue from the anaerobic digestion of food waste alone.

## Box 6 – commercial viability of treating food and garden wastes

Food waste can be recycled by anaerobic digestion and this produces valuable products such as natural fertilizers. Methane-based gas is also generated and captured, and this is used as a renewable fuel and to generate electricity. By 2020, the Welsh Government says that anaerobic digestion of food wastes will prevent the emission of 660,000 tonnes of climate damaging carbon dioxide emissions.

Garden wastes are commercially composted to produce compost and soil improvers. If produced to the appropriate standard these outputs are classed as a product rather than a waste, and can be used freely within the open market.

The Welsh Government says that 'that there are ample markets for this material, with more than two million tonnes of identified potential demand... Current indications are that potential demand will significantly exceed supply'.

Source: Welsh Government, **Collections, Infrastructure and Markets Sector Plan**, July 2012.

**The review of Towards Zero Waste provides an opportunity to reflect more generally on the role of the private sector and the overall value for money of the public investment in support of recycling**

- 2.46 We recommended in our 2012 report that the Welsh Government and councils should more closely engage the private sector to gain a more complete understanding of the way that market forces and technological advances are changing the recycling industry. We also recommended that the Welsh Government should work closely with councils to consider targets, incentives and legislation to steer the private sector towards the optimum outcomes of sustainability, value for money and public acceptability for municipal recycling.
- 2.47 These recommendations recognised that there was an opportunity to put the private sector recycling industry more in control of securing the high quality recyclables that they need for their treatment processes and to gain the highest income from resale of resources. Pressure from the private sector, including through their contracts with councils, can help drive up both the quality and quantity of recycled resources and more fully realise their income potential.

- 2.48 As yet, the Welsh Government has chosen not to introduce statutory targets, incentives or legislation to steer the private sector towards the outcomes sought in the national strategy. However, businesses that put packaging on the market have to meet packaging recycling targets under EU and UK legislation<sup>40</sup>. Progress to increase the quantity and quality of recycling across the private sector has so far successfully relied on voluntary commitments from industry and the demand pressure for materials created in resource markets. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 now includes new powers for the Welsh Government to regulate aspects of recycling in the private sector. These new powers provide opportunities to more closely align the regulation of councils with the private sector, require the separation of certain key types of recyclable wastes by commercial businesses, and to make even more use of market forces.
- 2.49 Late in 2017, waste markets were affected when the Chinese administration announced that it was not going to accept imports of poor quality recyclable materials during 2018, and with further restrictions to follow. For Welsh councils, the impact is currently unclear, but potentially significant as China is by far the largest market for the paper and for plastic wastes they collect. In a recent report on the recycling obligation system as laid out by the Producer Responsibility (Packaging Waste) Regulations, the National Audit Office noted that the action taken by the Chinese authorities could lead to a dip or decline in recycling performance if alternative markets cannot be found to replace capacity<sup>41</sup>.
- 2.50 Since 2001-02, at the beginning of its sustainable waste management programme, we estimate that the Welsh Government has spent around £4 billion on municipal waste services in the round. This expenditure includes specific waste management grant funding and costs met through the local government Revenue Support Grant. In responding to issues raised by the National Assembly's Public Accounts Committee following publication of our 2012 report, the Welsh Government recognised that there was more to be done to see how recycling targets could be met at a lesser cost and by driving further value for money benefits alongside better environmental outcomes.

40 As set under the EU Packaging Waste Directive and associated UK regulations.

41 National Audit Office, **The packaging recycling obligations**, July 2018.

2.51 In 2015, the Welsh Government commissioned a review of the Sustainable Waste Management Grant. This grant, has since been superseded by the Single Revenue Grant which brought together grant funding for a wider range of environment-related work<sup>42</sup>. In 2015-16, the Single Revenue Grant contributed about £59 million to council waste services, or approximately 26% of their overall net expenditure of £228 million with most of the remainder met by councils' Revenue Support Grant<sup>43</sup>. However, the review of the Sustainable Waste Management Grant did not arrive at any clear overall conclusions about value for money (Box 7).

### Box 7 – value for money of the Sustainable Waste Management Grant

The review of the Sustainable Waste Management Grant set out to explore whether councils had used the funding effectively to provide value for money and meet wider waste policy objectives.

The review questioned whether all of the grant funding had been spent on achieving Welsh Government policy priorities. It also noted that the broad range of activities supported by the grant funding made it difficult to attribute outcomes to the investment. But the review also concluded that the ongoing need for funding did not in itself indicate that it represented value for money.

The review also showed that in 2013-14, the average cost for a council per tonne of recyclable waste managed was £104.82. In stark comparison, the same cost for English councils was just £50.64. This finding does not provide reassurance about efficient spending by Welsh councils on recycling services.

The review recognised that carbon savings do not represent the entire benefit associated with recycling services in Wales. However, it did not quantify wider benefits through, for example, more efficient use of scarce resources, increased resource security, job creation and social benefits. For 2013-14, the review found that the value of carbon savings from recycling was equivalent to £11.94 per household in Wales. The total value of these savings equated to just 22.8% of the annual grant funding.

Source: Enomia, **Review of the Sustainable Waste Management Grant**, September 2015.

<sup>42</sup> From 2018-19, much of the waste element of the Single Revenue Grant has been transferred into the Revenue Support Grant settlement for councils. The Welsh Government has used the remainder to re-establish a stand-alone Sustainable Waste Management Grant with a total value of £18.2 million.

<sup>43</sup> From the Welsh Local Government Association's, Waste Finance Data Report 2015-16, January 2017. The net expenditure also includes funding raised by councils mainly through Council Tax.

- 2.52 That recycling is generally beneficial is not disputed and the Welsh Government is widely promoting what it sees as the significant potential economic and other benefits of moving to a 'circular economy'. However, there is on-going pressure on public funds and there have been sizeable reductions over several years to the Welsh Government's waste budget. In refreshing *Towards Zero Waste* and prioritising future expenditure, the Welsh Government needs to be able to demonstrate that not only is it possible to recycle more municipal waste, but that the quantifiable returns make it worth doing this above other ways of achieving its sustainable development objectives.
- 2.53 For example, there are other options for managing waste, including waste prevention and, increasingly, the use of waste treatment technologies such as energy from waste. These options offer waste management solutions that can be of significantly less cost than landfill, and particularly as landfill taxation is avoided. In 2016-17, council recycling services prevented the emission of 287,500 tonnes of carbon<sup>44</sup>, but the same carbon saving could potentially be delivered at less cost by actions other than recycling.
- 2.54 While the Welsh Government has not yet published an overall assessment of its progress against the key outcomes that it sought through **Towards Zero Waste** (Figure 2 on page 9), there is evidence available about benefits from municipal recycling and wider waste management. For example, in January 2017, the Welsh Government published a report<sup>45</sup> which highlighted around £465 million of output and £104 million of gross value added from the municipal waste sector in 2015-16, with the sector supporting just over 4,400 employment opportunities. The report also pointed to how the output from the sector impacts on the wider Welsh economy.
- 2.55 The Welsh Government is also undertaking a detailed review of its Wales Waste Plan. The evaluation work undertaken has included consideration of the contribution of the Plan to the goals of the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 and its alignment with the Act, even though the Act was not in place when the Plan was developed. The evaluation has highlighted some limitations in the data available to facilitate a fuller assessment. However, it has included, for example, a specific analysis of the economic contribution made by Sustainable Waste Management Grant funding and consideration of the economic impact from carbon reduction.

44 Eunomia, **Recycling Carbon Index**, Autumn 2018.

45 Welsh Government, **A study of Employment in the Municipal Waste Sector in Wales**, January 2017.

## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Audit methods

Appendix 2 – Our assessment of progress in response to previous recommendations on recycling

Appendix 3 – Councils' collection systems and recycling performance

Appendix 4 – Glossary of terms used in this report





# Appendix 1 – Audit methods

To inform this report, we obtained data from verified sources such as WasteDataFlow, StatsWales Bulletins issued by the Welsh Government, and from the National Strategic Indicator set.

We also sourced additional data on costs and performance from reports to the Ministerial Programme Board for waste management on behalf of the councils represented on the All Wales Waste Management Benchmarking Group and the County Surveyor's Society Waste Sub-Group. Wales Audit Office staff have facilitated the preparation of those reports as part of work commissioned on behalf of these groups. That benchmarking work has focused on different elements of councils' waste management services each year and we have drawn on the most recently collected data in each case.

In addition, we researched papers published by waste management consultancies including Eunomia and Ricardo-AEA. We also obtained financial and other information from the Welsh Local Government Association, Zero Waste Scotland, and from Natural Resources Wales.

We spoke with Welsh Government waste management officials, as well as seeking the views of:

- the Welsh Local Government Association;
- Natural Resources Wales;
- the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management;
- the County Surveyors Society – the representative body for local authority waste managers in Wales;
- the Waste Resources and Action Programme; and
- the Environmental Services Association – a professional organisation representing the UK's waste and secondary resources industry.

## Appendix 2 – Our assessment of progress in response to previous recommendations on recycling

As part of our work we have considered the action that the Welsh Government has undertaken to implement the recommendations in our previous February 2012 report on **Public Participation in Waste Recycling**. Similarly, we have considered the action taken in response to recommendations made by the National Assembly’s Environment and Sustainability Committee in its 2014 report on **Recycling in Wales**.

Where we state below that a recommendation is ‘implemented in part’ we mean that the Welsh Government has already given some consideration to the requirements of this recommendation and has taken some action, but not all actions required by the recommendation have been implemented. Where we state below that a recommendation is ‘not implemented’ there may have been some early consideration, but without substantive progress.

### Recommendations of the Auditor General’s 2012 study **Public Participation in Waste Recycling**

Previous recommendation	Status
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government and local authorities should work together much more effectively to ensure that there is an independent performance assessment of the methods used for the kerbside collection of recyclable wastes at every local authority. In particular, the Welsh Government and Welsh Local Government Association should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a</b> form a Board or similar body capable of designing and implementing an independent and objective assessment;</li> <li><b>b</b> ensure the assessment follows good practice and takes account of all aspects of sustainability; and</li> <li><b>c</b> build consensus by agreeing the criteria and standards underpinning the assessment with key stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implemented in part</b></p>

Previous recommendation	Status
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b></p> <p>We recommend that if a local authority’s collection system does not meet the standards of this assessment, the Welsh Government and the local authority should agree a measured plan to achieve the performance assessment standards and timescale.</p>	<p><b>Implemented in part</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government should analyse the combined recycling and composting rates for Welsh local authorities to determine if there is significant difference in the performance of predominately urban, valleys and rural local authorities. The Welsh Government should use this analysis together with socio-economic differences when setting future recycling targets. The Welsh Government should redirect and target support for any local authorities shown by the analysis to be disadvantaged.</p>	<p><b>Implemented in part</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government should coordinate and signpost local authorities to the information and guidance that they need to develop capacity to increase public participation in recycling, and so that they can manage the progress of recycling initiatives through better engagement of the public and stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Implemented</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government should set up a system that captures good practice and disseminates the shared learning with local authorities on improving recycling performance through public participation. Local authorities should more actively seek, and make better use of, good practice in improving their waste management services.</p>	<p><b>Implemented</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b></p> <p>We recommend that in partnership with local authorities, the Welsh Government should develop consistent performance indicators to measure public participation in recycling.</p>	<p><b>Not implemented</b></p>

Previous recommendation	Status
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government and local authorities should more closely engage the private sector to gain a more complete understanding of the way that market forces and technological advances are changing the recycling industry. The Welsh Government should work closely with local authorities to consider targets, incentives and legislation to steer the private sector towards the optimum outcomes of sustainability, value for money and public acceptability for municipal recycling.</p>	<p><b>Implemented in part</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government should create contingency plans in readiness to apply financial incentives or penalties on the public if they do not reduce the waste they produce, reuse, recycle or compost their waste sufficiently in response to persuasion and education. However, the Welsh Government should take this course of action only if all other means of meeting EU waste diversion targets or key sustainable waste management outcomes of One Wales: One Planet have failed.</p>	<p><b>Implemented in part</b></p>

## Recommendations of the Environment and Sustainability Committee's 2014 inquiry into **Recycling in Wales**

Previous recommendation	Status
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government commissions an independent review of the 'Collections Blueprint' and the evidence it is based upon. In commissioning this review, the Government should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that the Welsh Local Government Association is involved in establishing the terms of reference and selecting the reviewer;</li> <li>• include an analysis of the latest data on reject rates and destination of recyclates from all collection methods; and</li> <li>• complete the review by the end of March 2016 so that it can inform the approach taken by local authorities to achieving the 2019-20 target of 64%.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implemented</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government encourages collaboration between local authorities when renewing contracts for providing householder receptacles for recyclable waste.</p>	<p><b>Implemented</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government works with local authorities to make information on the destination of waste collected from householders publicly available.</p>	<p><b>Implemented</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government investigates weight-based targets and whether they are having any unintended impact on reducing the ecological footprint of waste. This should be completed by the end of 2015.</p>	<p><b>Not implemented</b></p>

Previous recommendation	Status
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government commissions research into the relationship between projections for waste reduction, local authority income from waste; and the ability of local authorities to meet their recycling targets in the period to 2019/20 and then to 2024/25. This should be completed by the end of March 2016.</p>	<p><b>Not implemented</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government investigates the case for resourcing a national 'broker' for the sale of recyclates from local authorities across Wales. The Government should publish its findings by the end of December 2015.</p>	<p><b>Implemented</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b></p> <p>We recommend that the Welsh Government considers the merits of investing in a national campaign to help drive higher rates of recycling including to promote understanding of the need to reduce the ecological footprint of waste and the importance of other measures, particularly waste reduction.</p>	<p><b>Implemented</b></p>

# Appendix 3 – Councils’ collection systems and recycling performance

Figure 11 – the main collection system currently used at each council together with their recycling performance between 2012-13 and 2017-18

Council	Collection method for recyclables <sup>1</sup>	Recycling rate (%) <sup>2</sup>					
		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Blaenau Gwent	B	<b>51.2</b>	54.8	<b>50.3</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>56.0</b>
Bridgend	B	57.1	56.5	57.1	59.0	<b>57.9</b>	68.6
Caerphilly	CM	57.1	57.6	54.6	61.9	65.5	66.7
Cardiff	CM	52.2	<b>49.7</b>	53.4	58.2	58.1	58.3
Carmarthenshire	CM	53.8	55.7	59.6	63.5	66.2	63.6
Ceredigion	CM	53.6	58.4	61.6	68.1	70.1	63.7
Conwy	B	56.4	56.3	59.1	59.7	62.6	63.7
Denbighshire	CM	58.0	63.2	65.9	62.4	64.7	64.2
Flintshire	B	54.9	55.1	55.0	58.5	68.2	67.6
Gwynedd	B	<b>51.2</b>	54.0	55.1	58.7	61.1	60.3
Isle of Anglesey	B	55.2	54.4	55.2	59.5	65.8	72.2
Merthyr	B	<b>49.1</b>	<b>48.2</b>	<b>51.2</b>	61.6	65.2	62.7
Monmouthshire	TS	55.5	62.9	63.2	61.9	68.7	65.8
Neath Port Talbot	B	<b>48.3</b>	54.0	58.1	58.3	62.8	60.5
Newport	B	<b>49.2</b>	<b>51.7</b>	52.0	<b>57.1</b>	61.4	59.8
Pembrokeshire	TS	53.1	60.3	65.4	64.9	65.3	<b>57.0</b>
Powys	B	<b>50.9</b>	52.5	52.1	59.1	65.2	60.4
Rhondda Cynon Taf	TS	<b>46.2</b>	<b>49.3</b>	53.8	60.5	64.4	61.3
Swansea	MS	<b>47.9</b>	52.8	56.7	59.5	63.7	63.3
Torfaen	NB	<b>47.1</b>	52.3	52.7	<b>57.4</b>	63.6	60.6
Vale of Glamorgan	CM	54.5	54.8	56.0	64.5	65.3	63.2
Wrexham	B	52.8	54.7	56.4	62.3	68.7	65.4
<b>Wales rate</b>		<b>52.3</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>60.2</b>	<b>63.8</b>	<b>62.7</b>
The Welsh Government’s statutory recycling target		52.0	52.0	52.0	58.0	58.0	58.0
Range – lowest to highest recycling rate		11.8	15.0	15.6	19.4	13.3	16.2

Notes:

- 1 Co-mingled single stream (CM), multi-streamed methods (MS), Twin-stream (TS), Kerbside sorted Collections Blueprint (B), Non-Blueprint kerbside sort (NB). Data is for 2016-17.
- 2 Figures in bold for individual councils denote a failure to achieve the recycling target.

Source: recycling rates are from the Welsh Government's Statistical Bulletins published annually between 2013 and 2018 and collection methods are from the Welsh Local Government **Association Waste Finance Data Report 2015-16**, January 2017.



## Appendix 4 – Glossary of terms used in this report

**Anaerobic digestion** - A biological process where biodegradable wastes, such as food waste, is encouraged to break down in the absence of oxygen in an enclosed vessel. It produces carbon dioxide, methane (which can be used as a fuel to generate renewable energy) and solids/liquors known as digestate which can be used as fertiliser.

**Bring site** – recycling point where the public can bring material for recycling, for example bottle and can banks. They are generally located at household waste recycling centres, supermarket car parks and similar locations.

**Capture rate** – the total quantity of a recoverable waste that is diverted for reuse or recycling as a percentage of the total quantity of the recoverable waste generated.

**Carbon footprint** – the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular individual, organization, or community.

**Climate change** – a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet’s weather patterns or average temperatures.

**Closed-loop recycling** – recycling where recycled materials are being used continually for the same purpose, for example a glass bottle recycled into new glass product rather than downgraded (for example being used as an aggregate).

**Collections Blueprint** – the Collections Blueprint is the Welsh Government’s recommended service profile for the collection of waste from households. Recyclable resources are presented part-segregated by residents, and then further sorted as they are collected.

**Co-mingled collection** – also known as ‘single-stream’ recycling, and involves the collection of recyclable materials in a single compartment vehicle with the sorting of these materials occurring at a separate facility.

**Commercial waste** – waste generated from premises used wholly or mainly for the purposes of a trade or business. The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 list wastes that should be treated as commercial waste.

**Composting** – an aerobic, biological process in which organic wastes, such as garden and food waste, are converted into a stable granular material which can be applied to land to improve soil structure and enrich the nutrient content of the soil.

**Dry recyclable wastes** – municipal waste that typically includes glass bottles, cans, tins and foil, plastics, card and paper and Tetrapaks. Excludes food and garden waste.

**Ecological footprint** – the ecological footprint methodology calculates the land area needed to feed, provide resource, produce energy and absorb the pollution (and waste) generated by our supply chains.

**Embodied carbon footprint** – a carbon emission equivalent that calculates the impact of resource consumption and the environmental consequences of what people buy, use and then throw away, with those consequences considered throughout the supply chain.

**Energy from waste** – technologies include anaerobic digestion, direct combustion (incineration), use of secondary recovered fuel (an output from mechanical and biological treatment processes), pyrolysis and gasification. Any given technology is more beneficial if heat and electricity can be recovered. The Waste Framework Directive considers that energy efficient waste incineration (where waste is used principally as a fuel or other means to generate electricity) is a recovery activity provided it complies with certain criteria, which includes energy efficiency.

**Greenhouse gas emissions** – emissions that contribute to climate change via the 'greenhouse' effect when their atmospheric concentrations exceed certain levels. They include emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride.

**Household waste** – includes waste from household collection rounds (waste within Schedule 1 of the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992), waste from services such as street sweeping, bulky waste collection, hazardous household waste collection, litter collections, household clinical waste collection and separate garden waste collection (waste within Schedule 2 of the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992), waste from civic amenity sites and wastes separately collected for recycling or composting through bring/drop off schemes, kerbside schemes and at household waste recycling centres.

**Household waste recycling centres** – sites provided by a council for their residents, and sometimes traders, for the recycling and disposal of municipal waste including bulky items such as beds, cookers and garden waste.

**Kerbside sorted collection** – the sorting of recyclable materials at the kerbside into different compartments of a specialist collection vehicle (includes collections for recyclables by kerbside sorting that are not compliant with the Collections Blueprint).

**Food waste** – this term refers to the food derived organic component of household waste e.g. vegetable peelings, tea bags, banana skins.

**Landfill sites** – any areas of land in which waste is deposited. Landfill sites are often located in disused mines or quarries. In areas where there are no available voids, the practice of land raising is sometimes carried out, where waste is deposited above ground and the landscape is contoured.

**Municipal waste** – meaning in this report 'local authority municipal waste' and referring to household (typically about 85%) and non-household waste (about 15%) that is collected and disposed of by councils. It includes regular household collections, specific recycling collections, special collections of bulky items, waste received at civic amenity sites and waste collected from non-household sources (e.g. rubble, incinerator residues, matter from beach cleansing and plasterboard). Local authority municipal waste excludes abandoned vehicles.

**Recycling** – the reprocessing of wastes, either into the same product or a different one. Many non-hazardous industrial wastes such as paper, glass, cardboard, plastics and scrap metals can be recycled. Hazardous wastes such as solvents can also be recycled by specialist processes.

**Re-processor** – a person who carries out one or more activities of recovery or recycling.

**Residual waste** – waste that remains after recycling or composting material has been removed from the waste stream.

**Resource efficiency** – managing raw materials, energy and water in order to minimise waste and thereby reduce cost.

**Reuse** – using a product again for the same or different use perhaps after some repairing or reconditioning (preparing for reuse).

**Reuse/Recycling/Composting Rate (Statutory target definition)** –

percentage of local authority municipal waste generated that is recycled, reused or composted, calculated at time of distribution to landfill or recycling/composting contractors. This is, therefore, based on the amount of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting, rather than collected for the purpose of being reused, recycled or composted.

**Twin/multi-stream collection** – residents are provided with two (or more, as there are lots of variations) recycling containers to place different materials, typically paper and card in one and plastics, glass and cans in the other. These materials are kept separate but collected (usually) on one vehicle which has two chambers.

**Waste arising** – the amount of waste generated in a given locality over a given period of time.

**Waste reduction** – reducing waste is a priority from the manufacturing process by optimum use of raw (and secondary) materials and recirculation processes. It can be cost effective, both in terms of lower disposal costs, reduced demand for raw materials and in terms of energy costs. Householders can reduce waste e.g. by home composting, reusing products and buying goods with reduced packaging.

**Waste treatment** – physical, thermal, chemical or biological processes, including sorting, that change the characteristics of the waste in order to reduce its volume or hazardous nature, facilitate its handling or enhance recovery.

**Windrow composting** – the production of compost by piling organic matter or biodegradable waste in long rows. Windrow composting is used for processing garden waste, such as grass cuttings, pruning and leaves in either an open air environment or within large covered areas where the material can break down in the presence of oxygen.

**Zero Waste** – ‘Zero Waste is a goal that is ethical, economical, efficient and visionary, to guide people in changing their lifestyles and practices to emulate sustainable natural cycles, where all discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use. Zero Waste means designing and managing products and processes to systematically avoid and eliminate the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them. Implementing Zero Waste will eliminate all discharges to land, water or air that are a threat to planetary, human, animal or plant health.’ (Zero Waste International Alliance [www.zwia.org](http://www.zwia.org)).



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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>31 January 2019</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>

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

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

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

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

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

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

## **4. Report details**

- 4.1 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 13 December 2018. No items were referred by the Group to this Committee for consideration. The Group will hold its next meeting during the afternoon of 31 January 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's through it 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.

**Contact Officer:**

Scrutiny Coordinator

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

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
21 March	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	1. <i>Draft Sustainable Travel Plan (provisional scheduling – timing may change)</i>	<i>To consider the draft sustainable travel plan (including the Council's role in facilitating the locating of vehicle charging points across the county, its work with other local authorities and stakeholders with respect of their availability and in relation to other potential alternative travel modes, and in supporting the community to switch to sustainable fuels)</i>	<i>To provide observations and recommendations that will support the delivery of the corporate priorities relating to the environment and connected communities by reducing CO2 emissions and improving travel connectivity</i>	<i>Emlyn Jones/Mike Jones</i>	<i>By SCVCG June 2018</i>
	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	2. <i>Dolwen Residential Care Home</i>	<i>To consider the Task and Finish Group's recommendations relating to the future provision of services at Dolwen Residential Care Home, Denbigh</i>	<i>Pre-decision scrutiny of the task and finish group's findings and the formulation of recommendations for presentation to Cabinet with respect of the future provision of services at Dolwen with a view to ensuring that everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs and are able to live independent and resilient lives</i>	<i>Task and Finish Group/Phil Gilroy/Abbe Harvey</i>	<i>July 2018</i>
	<b>Cllrs. Tony Thomas and Bobby Feeley</b>	3. Housing Services	To outline how the Services are addressing the two proposals for improvement outlined in the WAO Service User Perspective Review – the Welsh Quality Housing Standard (Sept. 2018) in relation to working with tenants:	To ensure compliance with regulatory recommendations whilst supporting the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities relating to housing and resilient communities	Geoff Davies/Jamie Groves/Phil Gilroy/Ann Lloyd/Katie Newe	By SCVCG October 2018

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			(i) to help those experiencing damp and homes that are not adequately heated, fuel efficient, or well insulated; and (ii) to review the long-term impact of the ending of the resident warden service from its sheltered housing schemes			
	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	4. <i>Draft Fleet Management Strategy (provisional scheduling – timing may change)</i>	<i>To consider the new draft fleet management strategy (including an evaluation of the use of potential alternative fuel sources to run the fleet)</i>	<i>To provide observations and recommendations on the strategy that will support the delivery of the corporate priority relating to the environment by reducing CO2 emissions from the Council's own vehicle fleet and the realisation of financial efficiencies</i>	<i>Tony Ward/Vincent Russell</i>	<i>By SCVCG June 2018 (rescheduled by the Committee Nov 2018)</i>
2 May	<b>Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill</b>	1. Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register	Effective monitoring and management of identified risk to reduce risks to residents and the Authority	Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale/Emma Horan	May 2018
13 June	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	1. Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report for 2018/19	To scrutinise the content of the draft annual report to ensure it provides a fair and clear evaluation of performance in 2018/19 and clearly articulates future plans	Identification of any specific performance issues which require further scrutiny by the committee in future	Nicola Stubbins	May 2018)
		2. The effectiveness of Well-being Impact Assessments (WIA)	To consider an approach towards evaluating the effectiveness of the Council's WIAs	To agree an approach to be used across the Council for evaluating and challenging WIAs, which will realise better, more holistic, decision making	Emma Horan	By SCVCG June 2018 (rescheduled by the

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
						Committee Nov 2018)
18 July	<b>Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill</b>	1. Corporate Plan (Q4) 2017/2022	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2017-22	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets to deliver its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale/Heidi Barton-Price	May 2018
	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	2. Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report for 2018/19	To scrutinise the content of the draft annual report to ensure it provides a fair and clear evaluation of performance in 2018/19 and clearly articulates future plans	Identification of any specific performance issues which require further scrutiny by the committee in future	Nicola Stubbins/Ann Lloyd	July 2018
26 Sept	<b>Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts</b>	1. Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments <b>[Education]</b>	To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children	Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement	Karen Evans/Julian Molloy/GwE	May 2018
	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	2. Hafan Deg, Rhyl (12 months following the commencement of the contract)	To monitor the effectiveness of the transfer of the facility and services to an external provider and the impact of the transfer on services-users, staff, local residents and the local community (including lessons learnt from the process)	To evaluate the impact of the transfer of the facility and services on all stakeholders and to assess whether the services provided at Hafan Deg are in line with the contract specification, support the Council's vision for adult social care and the five ways to well-being and the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014	Phil Gilroy/Katie Newe	March 2018
	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	3. Cefndy Healthcare Annual Report	To consider the company's performance during 2018/19 and its Annual Plan for 2019/20	An assessment of the company's performance in delivering its business within	Phil Gilroy/Simon	July 2018

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
		2018/19 and Annual Plan 2019/20		budget and meeting targets will assist with the identification of future trends and requirements and support the delivery of the Council's priority relating to Resilient Communities	Rowlands/Nick Bowles	
28 Nov	<b>Cllr. Julian Thompson -Hill</b>	1. Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register	Effective monitoring and management of identified risk to reduce risks to residents and the Authority	Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale/Emma Horan	May 2018
	<b>Cllr. Julian Thompson -Hill</b>	2. Corporate Plan (Q2) 2017/2022	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2017-22	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets to deliver its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale/Heidi Barton-Price	February 2017
	<b>Cllr. Richard Mainon</b>	3. <i>Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) System</i>  <i>(provisionally scheduled – tbc)</i>	<i>To review the implementation of the new CRM system and its performance in delivering efficient and effective customer focussed services in line with the product specification and the Council's expectations</i>	<i>An efficient and effective customer enquiries system that deals with enquiries quickly, to a high level of customer satisfaction, whilst realising value for money for the Authority</i>	<i>Liz Grieve/Ffion Angharad</i>	<i>September 2018</i>

**Future Issues**

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
<i>School Improvement Plans</i> <b>[Education]</b>	<i>To discuss with representatives of particular schools their progress in achieving their improvement plans</i>	<i>Provision of support to the schools to ensure they deliver their plans and improve outcomes for their pupils and the school as a whole</i>	<i>Karen Evans/Julian Molloy</i>	<i>February 2018</i>
Implementation of the Donaldson Report 'Successful Futures' – Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales <b>[Education]</b>  <b>Dependent upon the legislative timetable</b>	To consider and monitor the plans to implement the agreed measures adopted by WG following the consultation on the review's findings	Better outcomes for learners to equip them with jobs market skills	Karen Evans	April 2015

**Information/Consultation Reports**

Date	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
<b>October 2018</b>	Data on School Exclusions in Denbighshire <b>[Education]</b>	To detail the number of fixed-term (under and over 5 days) and permanent exclusions from the county's schools for the years 2014/15; 2015/16 and 2016/17. The information to include the numbers per individual school in the county and the reasons for excluding pupils	Karen Evans/Julian Molloy	April 2018
<b>March 2019 &amp; September 2019</b>  <b>[Information]</b>	Corporate Plan 2017/22 (Q1) 2018/19 & Corporate Plan 2017/22 Q3 2018/19 To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets and delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale/Heidi Gray	September 2018

<p><b>Feb/May/Sept/November 2019</b></p> <p>[Information]</p>	<p>Quarterly 'Your Voice' complaints performance to include social services complaints</p>	<p>To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints and identify areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. The report to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe;</li> <li>(ii) how services encourage feedback and use it to redesign or change the way they deliver services; and</li> <li>(iii) details of complaints which have been upheld or partially upheld and the lessons learnt from them.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Consideration of the information provided will assist the Committee to determine whether any issues merit detailed scrutiny</i></b></p>	<p>Kevin Roberts/Ann Lloyd/Phil Gilroy</p>	<p>November 2018</p>
<p>Information Report</p> <p>(6 monthly <b>March &amp; September</b>)</p>	<p>Customer Effort Dashboard</p>	<p>To monitor the progress achieved in relation to developing the Customer Effort Dashboard. The feedback trend received from the system and how it is used to benefit residents in relation to assisting them to easily access required services and consequently improving the customer satisfaction experience of the Council</p> <p><b><i>Consideration of the information provided will assist the Committee to determine whether any issues merit detailed scrutiny</i></b></p>	<p>Liz Grieve/Ffion Angharad</p>	



**Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines**

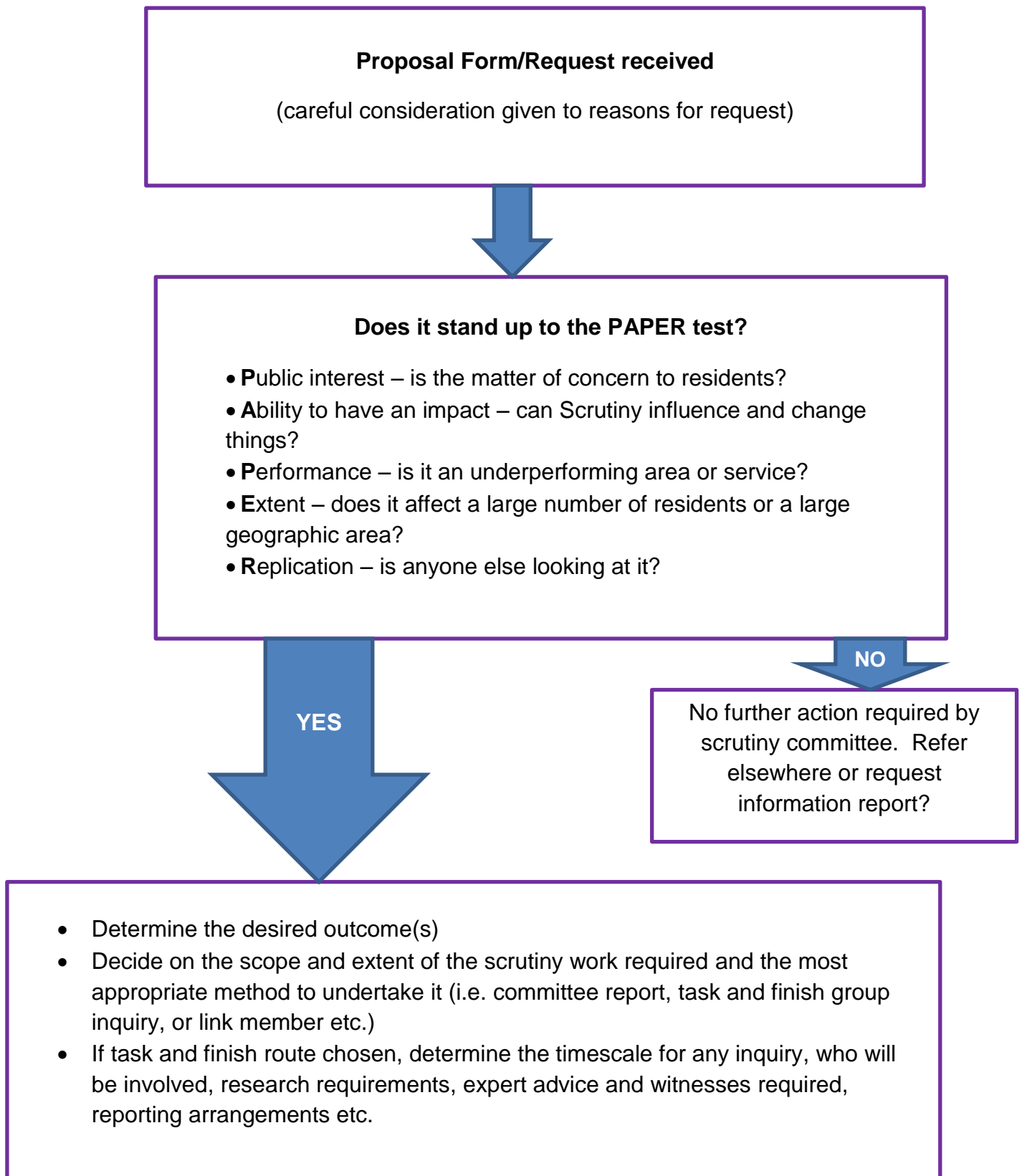
Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
21 March	<b>7 March</b>	2 May	<b>18 April</b>	13 June	<b>30 May</b>

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Updated 17/01/19 RhE

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

## Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

## Appendix 3

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
<b>26 Feb 2019</b>	1	Denbighshire's Replacement Local Development Plan – Draft Pre Deposit (preferred strategy) for consultation.	To consider a recommendation to Council.	Tbc	Councillor Brian Jones / Angela Loftus
	2	Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) Write-Offs	To seek Cabinet approval to write off irrecoverable NDR (Business rates) as detailed within the report	Yes	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh
	3	North Wales Construction Framework 2	To appoint contractors for the project	Yes	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Tania Silva
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>26 Mar 2019</b>	1	Implementation of an Alternative Delivery Model for various leisure related activities/functions	To approve the business case	Yes	Councillors Bobby Feeley and Julian Thompson-Hill / Sian Lloyd Price
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Richard Weigh

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

## Appendix 3

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>30 Apr 2019</b>	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
<b>28 May 2019</b>	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
<b>25 Jun 2019</b>	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

## Appendix 3

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
<b>30 July 2019</b>	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

Future Issues – date to be confirmed

<i>Item (description/title)</i>	<i>Purpose of report</i>	<i>Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)</i>	<i>Author – Lead member and contact officer</i>
Rhyl Regeneration Programme re-launch	To support the future arrangements regarding the regeneration of Rhyl	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Graham Boase

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
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<i>February</i>	<b>12 February</b>	<i>March</i>	<b>12 March</b>	<i>April</i>	<b>12 April</b>

Updated 22/01/19 - KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc



## Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
29 November 2018	5. PROVISIONAL EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS AND TEACHER ASSESSMENTS	<p><b>Resolved:</b> - subject to the above observations –</p> <p>(i) to acknowledge the performance of schools against previous performance, and support the areas identified for improvement;</p> <p>(ii) that a letter be sent on the Committee's behalf to Qualifications Wales registering members' concerns and disappointment in relation to the significant increase in the 'C' grade threshold for the summer 2018 GCSE English examination in comparison to the 2017 threshold, and its consequential adverse effect on students; and</p> <p>(iii) that the report scheduled for presentation to the Committee in January 2019 on the Verified External Examination Results include actual numbers as well as percentage figures, and where possible regional comparative data, along with data on absenteeism and exclusions rates at each of the County's school.</p>	<p>Lead Member and relevant officers advised of the Committee's observations</p> <p>(ii) letter sent to Qualifications Wales on 4 December 2018 (copy included in the 'Information Brief' for members' information)</p> <p>(iii) report included for discussion on the business agenda of the current meeting</p>
	6. CORPORATE PLAN 2017-22 Q2 2018-19	<p><b>Resolved:</b> - subject to the above observations and the provision of the requested information to acknowledge the Council's performance, at the end of Quarter 2 2018-19, in delivering its Corporate Plan and improving outcomes for the county's citizens</p>	<p>Lead Member and officers informed of the Committee's observations and requests</p>

	<p><b>7. YOUR VOICE COMPLAINTS QUARTER 2</b></p>	<p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b> -</p> <p>(i) <i>to acknowledge the consistent excellent performance in responding and resolving complaints submitted under its 'Your Voice' customer feedback policy and statutory complaints procedure; and</i></p> <p>(ii) <i>that in future the report be submitted to the Committee on a quarterly basis as an 'Information Report' to enable it to continue to monitor policy compliance and call-in any Service who regularly under-performed or failed to comply with the 'Your Voice' policy and procedure</i></p>	<p>Lead Member and officers advised of the Committee's observations.</p> <p>Future reports will be submitted to the Committee on a quarterly basis as 'Information Reports' (see Appendix 1 for schedule). Next report due for circulation in February 2019. Committee members should read these reports and consider whether any issue or Service merits being invited to scrutiny to explain any underperformance in compliance with the procedure and/or underperformance in delivering services</p>
	<p><b>8. CUSTOMER EFFORT DASHBOARD</b></p>	<p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b> <i>that following consideration of all the information and data provided -</i></p> <p>(i) <i>to acknowledge the continuous increasing trend in public satisfaction with the Council's performance in dealing with their enquiries; and</i></p> <p>(ii) <i>that in future the Customer Effort Dashboard report be submitted to members on a six-monthly basis as an 'Information Report' to enable them to continue to monitor public satisfaction with Services' performance in dealing with enquiries and facilitate the Committee to call-in any Service that regularly under-performed in this aspect of delivering their services</i></p>	<p>Lead Member and officers advised of the Committee's comments.</p> <p>Future reports scheduled into the Committee's forward work programme as 'Information Reports' (see Appendix 1 attached) next report due for circulation during March 2019</p>