

To: Members of the County Council

Date: 7 October 2020

Direct Dial: 01824706141

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COUNTY COUNCIL** to be held at **10.00 am** on **TUESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2020** in **VIA WEBEX**.

PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO THE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL AND THE REQUIREMENT FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING THIS MEETING WILL NOT BE HELD AT ITS USUAL LOCATION. THIS WILL BE A REMOTE MEETING BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Yours sincerely

G Williams
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

AGENDA

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 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF COUNTY COUNCIL

Due to the coronavirus response Welsh Government passed emergency legislation enabling councils to postpone the annual meeting. In recognition of the difficulties caused by remote meetings that emergency legislation also permits Councils to extend the tenure of office holders until May 2021 if desired. It is proposed, with their agreement, that the Chair and Vice Chair should continue in office until May 2021 when it should be possible to hold an annual meeting with the appropriate level of ceremony. This would allow the incoming office holders to have a full year in office when it is hoped that circumstances will allow for the holding of civic events.

4 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

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

5 MINUTES (Pages 7 - 14)

To receive the minutes of the meeting of County Council held on 25 February 2020 (copy attached).

6 TACKLING CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL CHANGE IN COUNCIL DECISION MAKING (Pages 15 - 46)

To consider a report by the Climate Change Programme Manager on the proposed amendment to the Council's Constitution to support the Council in having regard to tackling climate and ecological change when making decisions (copy attached).

7 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2019 TO 2020 (Pages 47 - 146)

To consider a report by the Strategic Planning Team Manager and the Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader to provide information regarding the Council's progress in delivering Corporate Plan outcomes as at quarter 4, 2019 to 2020 and quarter 1, 2020 to 2021 (copy attached).

8 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES 2019/2020 (Pages 147 - 182)

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Co-ordinator for Council to consider the Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committees for 2019/2020 (copy attached).

9 ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE AND APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINY CHAIRS (Pages 183 - 196)

To consider a report by the Democratic Services Manager seeking decisions on Committee related issues (copy attached).

10 COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2021 (Pages 197 - 214)

To consider a report from the Democratic Services Manager and Committee Administrator to approve a Committee Timetable for 2021 (copy attached).

11 NOTICE OF MOTION (Pages 215 - 216)

Council to consider a Notice of Motion by Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts (copy attached).

12 NOTICE OF MOTION (Pages 217 - 218)

Council to consider a Notice of Motion by Councillor Joe Welch (copy attached).

13 NOTICE OF MOTION (Pages 219 - 220)

Council to consider a Notice of Motion by Councillor Paul Penlington (copy attached).

14 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 221 - 222)

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

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies (Chair)

Councillor Alan James (Vice-Chair)

Mabon ap Gwynfor
Brian Blakeley
Joan Butterfield
Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones
Ellie Chard
Ann Davies
Gareth Davies
Hugh Evans
Peter Evans
Bobby Feeley
Rachel Flynn
Tony Flynn
Huw Hilditch-Roberts
Martyn Holland
Hugh Irving
Brian Jones
Pat Jones
Tina Jones
Gwyneth Kensler
Geraint Lloyd-Williams
Richard Mainon
Christine Marston

Barry Mellor
Melvyn Mile
Bob Murray
Merfyn Parry
Paul Penlington
Pete Prendergast
Arwel Roberts
Anton Sampson
Peter Scott
Glenn Swingler
Andrew Thomas
Rhys Thomas
Tony Thomas
Julian Thompson-Hill
Graham Timms
Joe Welch
Cheryl Williams
David Williams
Eryl Williams
Huw Williams
Emrys Wynne
Mark Young

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a *member/co-opted member of

*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Denbighshire County Council

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

*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)**

Signed

Date

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

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COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin LL15 1YN on Tuesday, 25 February 2020 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Mabon ap Gwynfor, Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Ellie Chard, Ann Davies, Gareth Davies, Meirick Davies (Chair), Hugh Evans, Peter Evans, Bobby Feeley, Rachel Flynn, Tony Flynn, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Martyn Holland, Hugh Irving, Alan James (Vice-Chair), Brian Jones, Gwyneth Kensler, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Richard Mainon, Christine Marston, Barry Mellor, Melvyn Mile, Merfyn Parry, Paul Penlington, Pete Prendergast, Arwel Roberts, Anton Sampson, Peter Scott, Andrew Thomas, Rhys Thomas, Tony Thomas, Julian Thompson-Hill, Graham Timms, Joe Welch, Cheryl Williams, David Williams, Huw Williams, Emrys Wynne and Mark Young

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (JG), Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services (GW), Head of Finance and Property (SG), and Committee Administrator (SLW)

Also in attendance:

Sue Lewis – Member of the Public

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brian Blakeley, Pat Jones, Tina Jones, Bob Murray and Glenn Swingler

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest.

At this juncture, the Chair paid tribute to the late Councillor Huw Jones who had passed away recently.

Tributes were paid by Councillor Rhys Thomas, on behalf of Plaid Cymru, Councillor Joe Welch on behalf of the Independent Group, Councillor Joan Butterfield, on behalf of the Labour Group and Councillor Martyn Holland, on behalf of the Welsh Conservative Group.

Condolences were conveyed to Councillor Jones' family and as a mark of respect, all in attendance stood in silent tribute.

The Chair also conveyed condolences to Judge Ian Trigger, Chair of the Standards Committee who had recently lost his wife, Jennifer Ann Trigger.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters.

Question put forward by a member of the public, Sue Lewis, Bodfari –

“The Clwyd Pension Fund Committee, hosted by Flintshire, has recently consulted with employer members of the Fund, including Denbighshire, on the development of its Responsible Investment Policy. Amongst other things, this looks at the issue of disinvestment from fossil fuels. Did Denbighshire respond to this consultation, and if so, can you share with us your response please?”

Response by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets as follows -

Denbighshire is a member of the Clwyd Pension Fund which is administered by Flintshire County Council. The late Councillor Huw Jones was the elected member on the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee (“the Committee”) on which he had served for a number of years. The Committee oversees the Pension Fund. In addition, officers from Denbighshire County Council interact on a regular basis with officers from the Clwyd Pension Fund.

Clwyd Pension Fund has an investment strategy in place, obviously, its primary objective is to ensure current and future pension liabilities are able to be met in full. The Fund update those policies on a regular basis and their investment strategy does state that they will make selective investments in environmental areas such as clean energy, environmental infrastructure, and forestry projects.

Currently around 1.2% of the Funds’ assets are invested in fossil fuel areas. Denbighshire County Council’s Head of Finance and Property attended Steering Group meetings in the autumn and early winter 2019 and fed back into that Group the discussions we had been having internally within Denbighshire regarding the development of our policies to become carbon neutral. All of those discussions fed back into a draft version of the Responsible Investment Policy for the Clwyd Pension Fund. The draft Policy very much reflected Denbighshire’s own internal discussions which had taken place with regards to prioritising the importance of climate change and taking that into account in their decisions going forward.

Therefore, we are support the adoption of the draft Policy as it was in line with Denbighshire’s internal discussions.

Highlighting a section from the Policy as follows:

Consideration in respect of climate change is not only the duty of the Fund but is also consistent with the long term nature of the Fund. The Fund investments need to be sustainable to be in the best interests of all stakeholders. Engagement is the best approach to enabling the change required to address the climate emergency. However, selective risk based disinvestment is appropriate to facilitate the move to a low carbon economy.

The Fund has three main priority areas and one of those in the responsible investor priorities states that they intend to measure and understand the carbon exposure within the investment portfolio and then once assessed, that there be an agreed carbon reduction target within twelve months to be implemented over the next five years.

Supplemental Question put forward by Sue Lewis –

Would Denbighshire County Council follow the Welsh Government and other councils such as Cardiff and Camarthenshire and pass a resolution stating they wish their Pension Fund to disinvest entirely from fossil fuels within a fixed time frame.

It is understood that the council can only advise fund managers but this would, nevertheless, give a very powerful message to the public, to its beneficiaries that you mean business and would be in line with your Policy of carbon reduction.

Further response by Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, as follows –

It is possible Denbighshire County Council could make such a resolution. In terms of the governance structure, we are only one vote amongst five on the Committee, so it would depend on the other local authorities having a similar point of view. It is not within our gift to insist upon it, but I see no reason why such a resolution could not be made. We could not do it today but would have to take it through the formal process.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of Special Council held on 19 November 2019 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Special Council held on 19 November 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The minutes of Full Council held on 28 January 2020 were submitted.

Matters Arising –

Page 6 – Councillor Rhys Thomas asked following developments at the Ruthin Independent School since the last Full Council meeting, were this council satisfied that the safeguarding issue had been resolved?

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Lead Member for Education, Children's Services and Public Engagement responded that following the recent developments, he could assure members that local authority officers were working with Estyn and CIW on all recommendations and that safeguarding of the students was paramount.

Page 7 – District Enforcement Limited.

Councillor Rhys Thomas confirmed the Lead Member for Planning, Public Protection and Safer Communities had circulated the activity statistics to all members. He expressed concern as only 22 of the 147 offences had been for dog

fouling or dogs running loose on fields. It was requested that the Lead Member contact District Enforcement to ascertain if the offences of discarded cigarettes was as easier option for the issuing of fixed penalty notices.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of Full Council held on 28 January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 COUNCIL TAX 2020/2021 AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill introduced the report (previously circulated) to set the levels of Council Tax for 2020/2021.

Councillor Thompson-Hill particularly referred to:

- The main features of the budget which had been approved on 28 January 2020
- Observations of the Head of Finance and Property on the robustness of budget estimates and adequacy of reserves
- A breakdown of the precepts from City, Town and Community Councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales
- Recommendations for the levels of Council Tax 2020/2021
- A positive settlement of +4.3% in the Council's Local Government revenue from Welsh Government

Historical data including Fire, Police and Community Councils precepts was requested to enable comparisons to be made. This was agreed to be circulated to all members.

Councillor Mark Young raised the issue of flooding. It had been reported that homes affected by flooding in England were to receive 100% Council Tax relief. He questioned whether this would happen in Wales. Also householders who had been affected by flooding in England were to receive £5000 but in Wales that figure would be £500. Councillor Young expressed his displeasure at the difference in the amounts.

The Head of Finance and Property confirmed that it was a devolved issue for Wales. Denbighshire were working closely with Citizens Advice Bureau to assist residents with claims to any funding available. A statement with all relevant contact numbers and an online link would be circulated to all members for their information.

Regarding the Council Tax Relief, local authorities would need to take this into consideration as it would be taken from their budget.

During the discussion, the Barnett formula had been referred to and it was explained that it was a very complicated formula, one block formed part of what the council received as the revenue support grant. If additional money announced during the year then it has a knock on effect to the budget in the following year.

Following the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that Council:

- (i) *Note that it is necessary for the County Council, as the Billing Authority, to consider the precepts received from the Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales and the Town/Community Councils and declare the Council Tax levels for the 2020/2021 financial year.*
- (ii) *Approve the recommendation that the amounts calculated by the Council for the 2020/2021 financial year, in accordance with Sections 32 to 34 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act) and Alteration of Requisite Calculations (Wales) Regulations 2008 be as Appendix A section 3.*
- (iii) *Approve the recommendation that the amounts calculated by the Council for 2020/2021 financial year, in accordance with Sections 34 (2) to 36 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act) be as Appendix A section 4.*
- (iv) *That the amounts of Council Tax for the 2020/2021 financial year for each of the categories of dwellings be as shown in Appendix C.*
- (v) *Approve the level of discount for Class A, B and C as prescribed under the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings)(Wales) Regulations 2004 be set at zero for the financial year 2020/2021 with the caveat that this is dependent on no changes to legislation or local conditions.*

6 CAPITAL PLAN 2019/2020 - 2022/2023 AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STRATEGIC INVESTMENT GROUP

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, introduced the report (previously circulated) to provide members with an updated Capital Plan including an update on major projects and the Corporate Plan.

The full Capital Plan had been last reported to Council in February 2019. Monthly updates had been presented to Cabinet. The Estimated Capital Plan was now £33.86m. The Plan had been updated since being reported to Cabinet on 18 February 2020.

Councillor Thompson-Hill guided members through the report.

Both Councillor Thompson-Hill and the Head of Finance and Property responded to questions regarding various aspects of the Capital Plan. Main areas of discussion focused on the following:

- Traffic Block Capital Bid 2020-21 – Brown signs to be Welsh above English. The Vale of Clwyd brown sign scheme would sign Rhuddlan Castle, Denbigh Castle and St. Asaph Cathedral. It would also include the title of Vale of Clwyd and, therefore, raise awareness of the Vale. Members asked for timescale of the signs and it was confirmed that “Tourism Signage Strategy for Denbighshire” was to be presented at Communities Scrutiny Committee on 12 March 2020.
- It was queried if schools not within the report would be modernised at a future date. It was clarified that band A 21st Century Schools had been

completed and the Council was now embarking under band B. Schools not in band A or B were delayed due to financial constraints. It was confirmed by the Lead Member for Education, Children's Services and Public Engagement that he would look into the timescales.

- Councillor Gwyneth Kensler stated she had received negative feedback regarding the new Christ the Word School building in Rhyl as there had been a number of snagging issues. A number of members confirmed that with all new builds there were snagging issues. They assured Council that the building was of a good standard and encouraged members to visit the school to view the building.
- Funding allocated for bridges had been welcomed but there was an £11m backlog of work. Councillor Martyn Holland asked if there would be any further funding for repair of bridges especially following the adverse weather conditions over recent months. It was confirmed that the Welsh Government would be contacted with regards to additional funding.
- Concerns regarding potholes on the roads was raised. In response, Councillor Brian Jones advised that work was ongoing to find a more permanent solution and in addition to the forthcoming annual visits to Member Area Groups to discuss road maintenance, a members' workshop was also being arranged on highway matters. Councillor Jones confirmed officers were looking at new technology and cost effective solutions.

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts referred to the recent adverse weather conditions and thanked staff for their hard work in that regard.

At this juncture, Councillor Graham Timms moved for close of debate and to go to the vote. This proposal was seconded.

Therefore, a vote took place whether to proceed to the vote by a show of hands. Members were unanimously in favour to close debate and to go to the vote.

RESOLVED that Members:

- Note the latest position on the 2019/2020 element of the Capital Plan and the update on major projects*
- Support the recommendation of the Strategic Investment Group as detailed in Appendix 5 and summarised in Appendix 6*
- Approve the 2020/2021 Capital Plan*
- Approve the Capital Strategy Report for 2020/2021 as detailed in Appendix 7*
- Request that officers in the Highway Service carry out an assessment of damage caused to the network by the recent storms in order that the extent of further funding can be identified.*

7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2020/2021 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2020/2021 - 2022/2023

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, introduced the report (previously circulated) to seek Council's approval of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2020/2021 and Prudential Indicators 2020/2021 to 2022/2023.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management required the council to approve the TMSS and Prudential Indicators annually.

It was confirmed that investments were always with banks. Temporary investments in the short-term were carried out and the Council did not have any other investments.

When investing, the Council's priorities were to:

- Keep money safe (security)
- Make sure that the money came back when it was needed (liquidity)
- Make sure a decent rate of return was achieved (yield).

Councillor Paul Penlington requested a list of the Banks in which investments were made.

RESOLVED that Council:

- Approves the TMSS for 2020/2021 (Appendix 1)*
- Approves the setting of Prudential Indicators for 2020/2021, 2021/2022, and 2022/2023 (Appendix 1 Annex A)*
- Approves the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (Appendix 1 Section 6)*
- Confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) as part of its consideration.*

8 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services introduced the Council's Forward Work Programme together with the Council Briefing Forward Work Programme (previously circulated).

Members were invited to put forward nominations for Vice-Chair of Council for the forthcoming municipal year commencing in May 2020.

RESOLVED that the Council and Council Briefing Forward Work Programmes be approved and noted.

The meeting concluded at 12:05 p.m.

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Report to	Council
Date of meeting	13 th October 2020
Lead Member / Officer	Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, Cllr Brian Jones & Cllr Tony Thomas / Judith Greenhalgh
Report author	Helen Vaughan-Evans
Title	Having regard to tackling climate and ecological change in Council decision making

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report is about the amendments proposed to the Council's Constitution to support the Council in having regard to tackling climate and ecological change when making decisions.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To outline the amendments proposed to the Council's Constitution and supporting documents and processes and the timeline for implementing these changes, if approved by Council, including the roll out of Carbon Literacy Training.
- 2.2. The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee considered these proposals on 9th September and agreed unanimously that the recommendation be put forward to Council for approval.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 That Council approve to amend Section 13.2 of the Council's Constitution- Principals of Decision Making to include an additional bullet point under "*All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles*" with the following wording: "*having regard to tackling climate and ecological change*".

3.2 That Council confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix A) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

4.1. The Council declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency on 9th July 2019. Please see appendix B for background information and relevant wider context.

4.2. A number of pieces of work have been identified by the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency working group as “kick start” actions to be completed in 2020/21 which are practical, feasible and affordable and have the potential to make a significant difference. These were included in the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Declaration progress report to Council on 28th January 2020. This included the action to have sufficient regard to tackling climate and ecological change in Council decision making with the example to include ‘environmental’ implications on all reports.

4.3. In lessons learned of previous large projects delivered by the Council it is also recognised that earlier and fuller consideration of tackling climate and ecological change in decision making on funding for the project and development of the project would have influenced the final outcome for the better.

4.4 By having regard for tackling climate and ecological change in decision making we hope to limit the Councils impact on further exacerbating climate and ecological change and maximise on the opportunities to make a positive contribution.

4.5 Following consultation with the Monitoring Officer, the change proposed is to Section 13.2 of the Council’s Constitution- Principals of Decision Making. It is the addition of a bullet point under “*All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles*” with the following wording: “*having regard to tackling climate and ecological change*”. Full detail of the change is provided in Appendix C.

4.6 To support the organisation and its Members in “*having regard to tackling climate and ecological change*” in their decision making it is proposed a number of documents and processes are amended in consultation with officer leads. See

Appendix D for a description of the potential change per document/ process. If approved at Council, these changes would be rolled out from November with appropriate communication and support for officers and Members.

- 4.7 An investment in Carbon Literacy Training is proposed for all Councillors and key officers to support them in enacting the principals of decision making as amended- having regard to tackling climate and ecological change. This will be an accredited 1-day training course with providers being able to deliver it remotely on an online video conference platform. It is intended that this training will be undertaken throughout Autumn and Winter.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan, by having regard to tackling climate and ecological change in decision making, and supporting officers and Members in assessing options and making decisions to the benefit of addressing the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency will make a direct contribution to the current Environment Priority within the Corporate Plan 2017-2022.
- 5.2 It will also provide a significant contribution towards the Council achieving its aim of becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030 in response to the Climate Change and Emergency declared by the Council in 2019 and in line with the Welsh Government policy for the public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030 and the Councils statutory duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to “seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity”.

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

- 6.1 The action to the change the Council Constitution and supporting documentation will not incur any additional cost to the Council aside from staff time. From indicative quotes, Carbon Literacy Training would cost c.£70 per head. There is a one-off budget set aside for 2020/21 in order to help progress the net carbon zero and ecologically positive work which includes provision of staff time and funding for Carbon Literacy Training.

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

- 7.1 The DCC's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan in its very nature of combating climate and ecological change has protecting and improving the well-being of generations now and in the future at its heart. Having regard to tackling climate and ecological change in decision making is a key enabling action for the Council to contribute to mitigating climate and ecological change impacts now and for future generations and the development and delivery of the 9-year programme will continue to maximise on the opportunities, taking a long term view, to do just that.

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

- 8.1 The proposed change to the Principals of Decision Making Section of the Council's Constitution has been developed in consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer and engagement with regard to the amendments of the supporting documentation and process has been undertaken with all relevant officers.
- 8.2 These proposals have been discussed and agreed in principal by Cabinet and Group Leaders in July and are supported by the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Working Group. The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee considered these proposals on 9th September and agreed the recommendation put forward to Council.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 The report is supported in principle. The proposed changes to Council processes and forms will ensure that this key target is embedded in decision making. It is expected that a budget pressure will need to be included in the 2021/22 budget proposals in order that progress can continue in this area.

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

- 10.1 Notable risks are included in Appendix D.

11 Power to make the decision

- 11.1 See Appendix E.

Appendix A- Wellbeing Impact Assessment

See separate PDF

Appendix B- Background and wider context

- i. The Council declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency on 9th July 2019 which contained a set of actions for DCC including the goal for the Council to become net carbon zero by 2030 at the latest, to enhance biodiversity in Denbighshire and to draw up a clear plan to achieve this.
- ii. In 2019, the Welsh Government published Wales' Low Carbon Delivery Plan "Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales" which contained a requirement for "public sector to baseline, monitor and report progress towards carbon neutrality" (policy 20) and set the ambition for the public sector in Wales to be net carbon zero by 2030.
- iii. The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan seeks to get the Council to net carbon zero and ecologically positive by 2030. The strategy will contain a set of existing and new policies across the range of Council services and operations that are supportive of low carbon, increased carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement. The action plan will cover the years 2021/22 – 2029/30 and outline the projects the Council intends to deliver, subject to the securing of the necessary funds, to reduce carbon, to increase carbon sequestration and improve biodiversity. By the Council reducing its carbon as fast and as far as it can it will deliver our contribution to tackling climate change as well as maximise on the financial savings that can be realised over the life of the strategy and beyond.
- iv. It is proposed that the final Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan is submitted to Cabinet and Full Council for formal approval in January 2021. Once adopted, it is proposed that progress in achieving the goals set out in the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored by the Corporate Plan Board up until 31st March 2022 and the equivalent Board which may be established thereafter. Once adopted (scheduled for January 2021), it is proposed that the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Working Group disbands and compliance and progress scrutinised by Internal Audit and Scrutiny Committees at appropriate points and at the discretion of the Chief Internal Auditor and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs.

Appendix C- Amendments in detail to the Council's Constitution

CURRENT	PROPOSED
<p data-bbox="220 423 730 512">page 76, Section 13.2- Principals of decision making</p> <p data-bbox="165 568 775 636">All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:</p> <p data-bbox="165 678 767 745">13.2.1 proportionately (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);</p> <p data-bbox="165 788 767 855">13.2.2 due consideration and the taking of professional advice from Officers;</p> <p data-bbox="165 898 620 931">13.2.3 respect for human rights;</p> <p data-bbox="165 974 639 1041">13.2.4 a presumption in favour of openness;</p> <p data-bbox="165 1084 639 1151">13.2.5 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;</p> <p data-bbox="165 1193 708 1261">13.2.6 consideration of any alternative options; and</p> <p data-bbox="165 1303 783 1393">13.2.7 the giving and recording of reasons for the decision and the proper recording of these reasons.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1435 767 1547">13.2.8 having regard to the sustainable development principles and the well-being of future generations.</p>	<p data-bbox="866 423 1377 512">page 76, Section 13.2- Principals of decision making</p> <p data-bbox="810 568 1430 636">All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:</p> <p data-bbox="810 678 1425 745">13.2.1 proportionately (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);</p> <p data-bbox="810 788 1417 855">13.2.2 due consideration and the taking of professional advice from Officers;</p> <p data-bbox="810 898 1270 931">13.2.3 respect for human rights;</p> <p data-bbox="810 974 1286 1041">13.2.4 a presumption in favour of openness;</p> <p data-bbox="810 1084 1286 1151">13.2.5 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;</p> <p data-bbox="810 1193 1358 1261">13.2.6 consideration of any alternative options;</p> <p data-bbox="810 1303 1433 1393">13.2.7 the giving and recording of reasons for the decision and the proper recording of these reasons;</p> <p data-bbox="810 1435 1417 1503">13.2.8 having regard to tackling climate and ecological change; and</p> <p data-bbox="810 1545 1417 1657">13.2.9 having regard to the sustainable development principles and the well-being of future generations.</p>

Appendix D- Amendments to supporting documents and processes

DOCUMENT/ PROCESS	CHANGE PROPOSED
Wellbeing Impact Assessment online tool and report generator	Online tool is amended to include specific guidance/ questions on tackling climate and ecological change and contribution that can be made to the Council achieving its net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals. The Lead Officer for Climate Change to be a member of the WIA Critical Friend Group.
Council's Report Template (Council, Committees, SLT)	<p>Guidance included in the template under the following sections to ensure report author includes information and recommendations with regard to the decisions impact on climate and ecological change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section 5- How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities? - Section 6- What will it cost and how will it affect other services? - Section 7- What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment? - Section 8- What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?
The Terms of Reference for the Council's Budget Board, Strategic Investment Group (SIG) and Asset Management Group (AMG)	Inclusion in the terms of reference for these advisory/delegated authority committee's requirements around seeking information in relation to, and considering in the decision and actions of the committee, tackling climate and ecological change.

DOCUMENT/ PROCESS	CHANGE PROPOSED
<p>Strategic Investment Group (SIG) Business Case Template</p>	<p>Adjustment to the Business Options section so that an enhanced eco option is always presented in the option appraisal for the project.</p> <p>Updating the revenue impact section and providing excel template for the calculation and presentation of the whole life cost for proposed scheme.</p> <p>Updating of the existing carbon impact and biodiversity impact sections in light of the net carbon zero and ecological positive goals in terms of scope and ambition.</p> <p>Inclusion of a Lead Officer for Climate Change Statement, alongside the County Landlord and Chief Finance Officer Statement.</p>
<p>The Council's Project Management Templates (Verto system).</p>	<p>Inclusion of a carbon impact and biodiversity impact section along the lines of the SIG business case.</p> <p>Guidance on developing Business Options along the lines of the SIG business case.</p> <p>The inclusion of the Lead Officer for Climate Change in the online review and approval process for the various project management gateways.</p>

Appendix E – Notable Risks

RISK	DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION ACTION
<p>Securing Funding to deliver the Programme</p>	<p>There is a risk that the Council is unable to commit sufficient resource (revenue and capital) to coordinate the programme, deliver net carbon zero and ecologically positive projects and deliver other projects in an enhanced eco way meaning funding bids are not submitted, opportunities not maximised, actions are not delivered and benefits are not realised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Literacy Training and ongoing support to officers to factor in eco enhancement from inception stage of projects, building in sufficient provision within external funding bids. • Implementing whole life costing into business case process to capture fully the long term costs and benefits of schemes. • Maximising on the delivery of the many projects which save both money and carbon annually for the Council. • Maximising on the delivery of projects which deliver upon COVID-19 recovery requirements and carbon saving for the Council. • Early input into the Budget Board on calls on revenue and capital for 2021/22 and in particular securing resource commitment for programme and project management support. • Ongoing dialogue with Section 151 officer in relation to longer financial plans via the Medium Term Financial Plan. • Proactively seeking external finance with Welsh Government and Whitehall Departments using the strategy and action plan as our narrative. • Submitting strong and coordinated external funding bids, working collaboratively across the region as well as across internal DCC departments.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION ACTION
Meeting Public Expectation	There is a risk of not meeting public expectation on this agenda and the democratic and reputational damage that could cause.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with the public proactively, constructively and sensitively on this agenda being very clear on the scope and scale of the Council's targets. • Through working with the Public Service Board (PSB) and community development partners, support the public in contributing personally to this agenda at a community level. • Celebrating the Council's existing and continued success in this agenda via press releases/social media and ensuring the public are aware of the range of work the Council are undertaking via webpages.
Reputational Damage	There is a risk of reputational damage to the Council if don't meet Welsh Government and locally set carbon reduction, sequestration and biodiversity targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a clear strategy and action plan on this agenda, coordinated framework for delivery and understood measures of achievement. • Resourcing (revenue and capital) the delivery of the programme, maximising on external funding opportunities where possible.

Appendix F- Power to make the decisions

LEGISLATION	POWER
Section 2, Local Government Act 2000	<i>the power to do anything which DCC consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.</i>
Section 111, Local Government Act 1972	<i>the power to do anything which is conducive to, or calculated to facilitate, the discharge of the Council's functions.</i>

Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan

Well-being Impact Assessment Report

This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number:	802
Brief description:	The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan seeks to get the Council to net carbon zero and ecologically positive by 2030. The strategy will contain a set of existing and new policies across the range of Council services and operations that are supportive of low carbon, increased carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement. The action plan will cover the years 2021/22 – 2029/30 and outline the projects the Council intends to deliver, subject to the securing of the necessary funds, to work towards achieving our net carbon zero and ecologically positive Council goals. Note: The scope of the strategy and action plan is council owned emissions and council owned land- coverage isn't the whole of Denbighshire as a geographical county.
Date Completed:	26/08/2020 17:06:10 Version: 1
Completed by:	Helen Vaughan-Evans
Responsible Service:	Business Improvement & Modernisation
Localities affected by the proposal:	Whole County,
Who will be affected by the proposal?	- DCC Staff - DCC Councillors - DLL Staff - Schools - Those who use our buildings - Those who use our vehicles (fleet car, pool cars etc) - Our supply chain - Shared Services - Those who use or would like to use our open green spaces - Wildlife - DCC Volunteers - Residents, visitors, businesses, landlords who may use a more 'green' service from us in the future.
Was this impact assessment completed as a group?	No

IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

★ ★ ★ ☆ (3 out of 4 stars) Actual score : 27 / 30.

Implications of the score

We have scored high in the collaborative approach to strategy and action plan development and delivery being undertaken internally across the Council and also with the public.

The strategy and action plan could score higher in relation to prevention by broadening the scope to include climate change adaptation. Although this is not intended at this time.

The strategy and action plan take a long term view, with actions for 10 years leading up to 2030, with influence and benefits realised beyond that period.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals

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

Positive

Positive

Positive

Neutral

Positive

Neutral

Positive



Main conclusions

The net carbon zero and ecologically positive are 2030 goals and the DCC's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan is for a 9-year period 2021/22-2029/30 so it engenders long term thinking at its core. It will outline the action needed over next 9 years to ensure DCC contributes to mitigating climate and ecological change impacts now and for future generations.

Under the five delivery principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act the developing Strategy and Action Plan scored 3 out of 4 stars (actual score 27/30). To maintain the score, it will be important to continue the collaborative and integrated approach to its development both internally across the Council and in consultation with the public.

Against the seven well-being goals of the Act, the potential impact of the Strategy and Action Plan is evaluated as 5 Positive and 2 Neutral. The strategy and action plan in its very nature of combating climate and ecological change has protecting and improving the well-being of generations now and in the future at its heart and the development and delivery of the programme will continue to maximise on the opportunities to do just that.

To ensure the realisation of this benefit, the programme should take a long term view on maintaining and managing anything that is put in/delivered/created and also to continue to involve residents and communities in delivering the Council's programme. This could include sharing learning so they themselves can deliver action to tackle climate and ecological change in their personal lives and within their communities. The Council will need to balance the ambitions of our local populous with the internal resource available.

Evidence to support the Well-being Impact Assessment

- We have consulted published research or guides that inform us about the likely impact of the proposal
- We have involved an expert / consulted a group who represent those who may affected by the proposal
- We have engaged with people who will be affected by the proposal

THE LIKELY IMPACT ON DENBIGHSHIRE, WALES AND THE WORLD

A prosperous Denbighshire	
Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	Impact is a positive one due to the direct positive impact on generating a low carbon society, the improvement in infrastructure and transport and the knock on benefits around economic development, jobs and skills.
Further actions required	It will be important to minimise any negatives around any potential reduction co-location of staff in central offices.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society	<p>This strategy and action plan is all about reducing carbon and increasing carbon sequestration (carbon absorbed by Council owned and operated land).</p> <p>We will aim to reduce our carbon from our supply chain, buildings, fleet, business travel, commuting, street lighting, waste.</p> <p>Our learning will be shared with the public and partners.</p> <p>Our staff and councillor behaviour will be encouraging for low carbon both professionally and personally.</p>
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	<p>Investment in our buildings to reduce carbon will increase the quality of them.</p> <p>Investment in low carbon transport and travel to support staff and councillors to choose low carbon travel options.</p> <p>Protection, restoration and creation of green spaces to provide infrastructure for well being.</p>
Economic development	<p>Leveraging environmental benefit in local communities via procurement and engagement with our supply chain.</p> <p>Low carbon purchasing may increase spend in more local suppliers.</p>
Quality skills for the long term	<p>It is proposed to invest in carbon literacy training for staff and councillors which would improve their skill and knowledge.</p> <p>Carbon sequestration and ecological improvement projects will provide volunteer opportunities for existing volunteers and new.</p>
Quality jobs for the long term	<p>The strategy and action plan will be delivered as a programme and will create 2 new job roles and generate work for existing staff within project management.</p> <p>The programme will target the securing of external funding which will create jobs to deliver those particular projects/initiatives.</p>
Childcare	<p>Encouragement and strengthening of flexible working for staff and councillors will enable positive choices for staff in making work work around other responsibilities.</p>

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society	No negative impacts. This strategy and action is all about reducing carbon and increasing carbon sequestration.
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	There may be a reduction in the number of buildings the Council own and operate in the County which potentially could impact on the footfall of people supporting rural towns.
Economic development	Reducing travel potentially impacting footfall in local town locations.
Quality skills for the long term	Potential automation or/and reduction of some tasks, loss of those skills.
Quality jobs for the long term	Potential risk that these 2 new jobs will be temporary in nature if predominately externally funded.
Childcare	N/A

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	<p>The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of low carbon, increasing carbon sequestration, protecting and restoring biodiversity and creating resilient ecosystems.</p> <p>It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions.</p> <p>A biodiversity enhancing approach is often a more hands off approach with associated revenue savings. Similarly the reduction of energy and fuel consumption will reduce cost.</p>
Further actions required	A holistic view around carbon reduction is required to ensure any unintended consequences are avoided in terms of deliberate action taken. Read across from the strategy to work being undertaken in the sphere of climate change adaptation will be required. Taking a whole life cost approach to projects and procurement decisions will be important and ensuring maintenance/management costs of any new green spaces is properly explored and reduced as much as possible via appropriate land management choices.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	<p>The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of protecting and restoring biodiversity and creation resilient ecosystems.</p> <p>It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions.</p> <p>A biodiversity enhancing approach is often a more hands off approach with associated revenue savings.</p>
Biodiversity in the built environment	<p>The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of protecting and restoring biodiversity and creation resilient ecosystems.</p> <p>It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions.</p>

<p>Reducing waste, reusing and recycling</p>	<p>The Strategy will contain policies to support the reduction of waste and the increase in reuse and recycling.</p> <p>It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions in these areas.</p> <p>Reducing carbon in our supply chain should also support reducing waste as whole life costing will discover products/services which have a longer operating life.</p>
<p>Reduced energy/fuel consumption</p>	<p>The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of low carbon .</p> <p>It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions to reduce energy use in our buildings and fuel consumption in our fleet. It will also target reduction of energy and fuel consumption in our business travel and staff commuting.</p> <p>Energy/fuel reduction project not only reduce carbon but also reduce cost through reduced consumption.</p>
<p>People’s awareness of the environment and biodiversity</p>	<p>The strategy and action plan has been and will continue to be developed in consultation and engagement with the public.</p> <p>Opportunities to continue the discussion and debate with the public will be taken via online discussion forums on our county conversation portal.</p> <p>Opportunities will be taken to include learning from our work into school eco committees, geography curriculum, youth forums.</p> <p>Biodiversity and carbon sequestration projects could involve volunteers and will create spaces for nature and focus for awareness and education.</p>
<p>Flood risk management</p>	<p>Contributing to the reduction of carbon and mitigate the impacts of climate change will contribute to not making the flooding situation worse from rain and weather events.</p> <p>Opportunities will be taken to link the carbon sequestration and ecological improvement agendas to reducing surface water, fluvial and coastal flooding e.g. upland management (tree planting), installation of urban rain gardens.</p>

Negative impacts identified:

<p>Biodiversity and the natural environment</p>	<p>Need to ensure if we create any new woodlands for example that management plan is deliverable in terms of capability and capacity.</p>
<p>Biodiversity in the built environment</p>	<p>Need to ensure any Green Infrastructure installed is fit for purpose and properly maintained</p>
<p>Reducing waste, reusing and recycling</p>	<p>Products that have a longer life may cost more upfront but cost less over the lifetime of the product.</p>
<p>Reduced energy/fuel consumption</p>	<p>Ensure that reducing energy/fuel use in one area doesn't increase energy/fuel use in another e.g. reducing business travel and staff commuting by more home working which increases carbon generated in the home over and above what is saved.</p>
<p>People’s awareness of the environment and biodiversity</p>	<p>The scope of the strategy and action plan is council owned emissions and council owned land- coverage isn't the whole of Denbighshire as a geographical county.</p> <p>Use of the online Y Portal only could preclude those lacking in digital skills and connectivity the opportunity for further engagement on the development of future projects under this proposal.</p>

Flood risk management	<p>This strategy is about carbon reduction and climate mitigation rather than focused on climate adaptation which as the very least needs to be mentioned.</p> <p>Collaborative working with Flood Risk Management to understand the environmental and broader climate change impacts of flood mitigation is required.</p>
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A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	<p>The strategy and action plan will aim to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones.</p> <p>Access to local green space has been linked to better social outcomes around health and well-being.</p> <p>Spaces will aim to be restored and created via the use of volunteers.</p>
Further actions required	Need to ensure any green spaces created are designed with all users in mind including biodiversity.

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	<p>The strategy and action plan will aim to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones.</p> <p>Access to local green space has been linked to better social outcomes around health and well-being.</p>
Access to good quality, healthy food	Action may fall out of this work to increase use of allotments in schools and the use of this food in school catering.
People's emotional and mental well-being	<p>The strategy and action plan will aim to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones.</p> <p>Access to local green space has been linked to better social outcomes around health and well-being.</p> <p>Carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement work will involve volunteers. Volunteering and getting involved has been linked to increase sense of well being.</p>
Access to healthcare	There may be a reduction in health related issues as people are outdoors / social prescribing
Participation in leisure opportunities	<p>Carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement work will involve volunteers- an active leisure option.</p> <p>The strategy and action plan will aim to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones. This will aim to improve and offer more options for local green spaces for leisure.</p>

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	Need to ensure any spaces for nature that are created are inclusive spaces and any anti social behaviour concerns designed out from the outset.
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Access to good quality, healthy food	N/A
People's emotional and mental well-being	Need to endeavour to ensure spaces and views are protected that mean a lot to people. e.g. trees aren't planted which then block a cherished view. There could be a negative impact on those required to work from home as a result in reduction of office space/ location. Due to digitalisation of services there could be a negative impact on wellbeing due to less physical/ face to face contact, increasing social isolation.
Access to healthcare	N/A
Participation in leisure opportunities	Access for leisure needs to be balanced with requirements for land management of the space for biodiversity improvement.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	Limited deliberative action on this wellbeing goal. However the strategy and action plan will have a positive influence in bringing about better outcomes for all people.
Further actions required	For the strategy and action plan to have more impact on this well-being goal we would need to increase its scope to include supporting the reduction of emissions from the county of Denbighshire as well as the County Council.

Positive impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation	Enshrined in the ethos of the strategy and action plan is for DCC to make its contribution to reduce further climate change which will be damaging to the wellbeing of all people but particularly those young people who will need to live with climate change impacts the longest. Enshrined in the strategy and action plan is taking a long term view.
People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage	N/A
Areas with poor economic, health or educational outcomes	The protection, restoration and creation of new green spaces in urban as well as rural locations will provide access to spaces for exercise and recreation. People in deprived areas will benefit from a reduction of travel and the conversion of miles into low carbon options will improve air quality and reduce congestion.
People in poverty	N/A

Negative impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation	If more services are digitalised, consideration would need to be given to accessibility to mitigate any possible negative impact for those with disabilities.
People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage	N/A
Areas with poor economic, health or educational outcomes	N/A
People in poverty	The strategy and action plan does not target carbon reduction/fuel poverty of those in private rented/social housing/privately owned homes.

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	The development of the strategy and action plan has involved the public from the outset via the emergency declaration to the public engagement period in early 2020 and will be consulted on before taking to Council for approval. There is a active group of c.56 members of the public who are engaged on this agenda with regular 2 way dialogue with DCC. Increasing low carbon travel options and the quality and quantity of green spaces will have a positive impact on the attractiveness of local areas, connected communities and rural resilience.
Further actions required	Need to ensure no one is left behind in the shift to digitalised services.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	N/A
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Community participation and resilience	<p>Development of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan started in January with the public engagement period asking for the public's feedback on the Council's proposed net carbon zero and ecologically positive Council goals. Summary of the responses received can be accessed here:- https://countyconversation.denbighshire.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Public%20Engagement%20Summary%20Report.pdf. The DCC Staff Council have been asked for their ideas. Workshops with each service area are taking place in June, July and August to gather ideas and information for policies and projects within each service function to support the Council in becoming net carbon zero and ecologically positive by 2030.</p> <p>The development of any Council wide strategy should provide the opportunity for public consultation, particularly on a topic of this magnitude. It is proposed that the final draft Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan goes out to public consultation for 21 days during November. In light of COVID-19, the following is proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey. Hard copies provided in libraries/one stop shops (if open). • Booked place drop in Q&A sessions at libraries/one stop shops (if open). • One booked place public meeting based in Council Chamber with heavily restricted numbers, pre submitted questions, on the night questions via twitter and webcasted. • Virtual presentations at pupil School Council and Youth Council/Parliament meetings. <p>The Council will continue to engage with the public proactively, constructively and sensitively on this agenda being very clear on the scope and scale of the Council's targets. This will be via online discussion forums hosted by the Council on our County Conversation platform and email digests to the 'green mailing group'</p>
The attractiveness of the area	<p>The strategy and action plan will target the protection, restoration and creation of 'green' spaces and the access to quality natural habitat across the whole of Denbighshire.</p> <p>The strategy and action plan is about reducing carbon from business travel, staff commuting and fleet- reducing miles travelled and converting as many miles to low carbon which will reducing pollution, improve air quality and reduce congestion.</p>
Connected communities	<p>The strategy and action plan may lead to projects relating to low carbon travel, e.g. bus provision/cycle ways, car share schemes across the county to encourage people out of their cars. However this is not confirmed.</p>
Rural resilience	<p>The strategy and action plan will target the protection, restoration and creation of 'green' spaces and the access to quality natural habitat across the whole of Denbighshire</p>

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	N/A
Community participation and resilience	There is a risk of not meeting public expectation on this agenda. Some sectors of the public would like DCC to be targeting reduction of the carbon emissions across the whole of Denbighshire as a county.
The attractiveness of the area	Need to ensure we have the capability and capacity to manage and maintain whatever we put in/install/create to ensure attractiveness for the long term
Connected communities	Need to ensure the staff and councillors feel connected even if there is more home working.
Rural resilience	As the Council continues to channel shift delivery to more online and less physical, need to make sure that broadband infrastructure is sufficient in all areas of the county to support this. As well as addressing any other possible barriers e.g. access to services, digital skillset.

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	Whilst Denbighshire's natural environment is a big contributor to the culture and heritage of the county, the strategy and action plan will not deliver direct deliberative action to generate a vibrant culture or a thriving Welsh language.
Further actions required	Ensure a good amount of time is provided to support welsh translation of any technical/specialist terminology documents.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh	N/A
Promoting the Welsh language	All literature, signage, information boards will be provided in both Welsh and English. Any public meetings will have bilingual slides and translator. Consultation/ Online forums to be carried out bilingually
Culture and heritage	Reducing the running cost of culture and heritage sites by reducing energy and fuel use will contribute to the financial viability of these sites/services. Protecting and restoring natures landmarks as part of this programme will support their availability for future generations.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh	N/A
Promoting the Welsh language	Specialist terminology is sometimes difficult to translate.
Culture and heritage	Consideration needs to be given to what is and isn't permissible on buildings within conservation area.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	Our carbon footprint includes our supply chain and the strategy and action plan will target reduction of carbon emissions from our supply chain. This has the potential to stimulate local supply chains and provide local benefit. The programme will also look to leverage environmental benefit at the community level via Community Benefits process which will include the supported delivery of carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancing projects. The delivery of the climate and ecological change programme will be done in collaboration with neighbouring authorities and partners where possible.
Further actions required	Need to ensure the climate and ecological change strategy and action plan is understood by our partners and neighbouring authorities so opportunities for collaboration are identified and progressed. Build in time for collaboration.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	<p>The strategy will target reduction of carbon emissions from our supply chain. This will lead to the development of low carbon encouraging specification for goods and services which will include transportation from point of origin to us as the client. This has the potential to stimulate local supply chains and provide local benefit.</p> <p>The programme will also look to leverage environmental benefit at the community level via Community Benefits process which will include the supported delivery of carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancing projects.</p>
Human rights	N/A
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	<p>The strategy and action plan will help support the Public Service Board (PSB) in the delivery of their Environmental goals.</p> <p>The procurement service is a shared service with Flintshire County Council (FCC) and so work to decarbonise our supply chain can lead to more joint procurement and benefit in both counties.</p> <p>The strategy and action plan will provide the narrative on which to seek external funding which we can do collaboratively across the region.</p>

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	The focus on local supply chain may mean spend on more national and international supply chains will reduce.
Human rights	N/A
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	Collaboration can sometimes slow progress initially but can lead to better outcomes. Need to programme in time for collaboration.

Appendix B- Background and wider context

- i. The Council declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency on 9th July 2019 which contained a set of actions for DCC including the goal for the Council to become net carbon zero by 2030 at the latest, to enhance biodiversity in Denbighshire and to draw up a clear plan to achieve this.
- ii. In 2019, the Welsh Government published Wales' Low Carbon Delivery Plan "Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales" which contained a requirement for "public sector to baseline, monitor and report progress towards carbon neutrality" (policy 20) and set the ambition for the public sector in Wales to be net carbon zero by 2030.
- iii. The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan seeks to get the Council to net carbon zero and ecologically positive by 2030. The strategy will contain a set of existing and new policies across the range of Council services and operations that are supportive of low carbon, increased carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement. The action plan will cover the years 2021/22 – 2029/30 and outline the projects the Council intends to deliver, subject to the securing of the necessary funds, to reduce carbon, to increase carbon sequestration and improve biodiversity. By the Council reducing its carbon as fast and as far as it can it will deliver our contribution to tackling climate change as well as maximise on the financial savings that can be realised over the life of the strategy and beyond.
- iv. It is proposed that the final Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan is submitted to Cabinet and Full Council for formal approval in January 2021. Once adopted, it is proposed that progress in achieving the goals set out in the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored by the Corporate Plan Board up until 31st March 2022 and the equivalent Board which may be established thereafter. Once adopted (scheduled for January 2021), it is proposed that the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Working Group disbands and compliance and progress scrutinised by Internal Audit and Scrutiny Committees at appropriate points and at the discretion of the Chief Internal Auditor and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs.

Appendix C- Amendments in detail to the Council's Constitution

CURRENT	PROPOSED
<p>page 76, Section 13.2- Principals of decision making</p> <p>All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:</p> <p>13.2.1 proportionately (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);</p> <p>13.2.2 due consideration and the taking of professional advice from Officers;</p> <p>13.2.3 respect for human rights;</p> <p>13.2.4 a presumption in favour of openness;</p> <p>13.2.5 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;</p> <p>13.2.6 consideration of any alternative options; and</p> <p>13.2.7 the giving and recording of reasons for the decision and the proper recording of these reasons.</p> <p>13.2.8 having regard to the sustainable development principles and the well-being of future generations.</p>	<p>page 76, Section 13.2- Principals of decision making</p> <p>All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:</p> <p>13.2.1 proportionately (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);</p> <p>13.2.2 due consideration and the taking of professional advice from Officers;</p> <p>13.2.3 respect for human rights;</p> <p>13.2.4 a presumption in favour of openness;</p> <p>13.2.5 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;</p> <p>13.2.6 consideration of any alternative options;</p> <p>13.2.7 the giving and recording of reasons for the decision and the proper recording of these reasons;</p> <p>13.2.8 having regard to tackling climate and ecological change; and</p> <p>13.2.9 having regard to the sustainable development principles and the well-being of future generations.</p>

Appendix D- Amendments to supporting documents and processes

DOCUMENT/ PROCESS	CHANGE PROPOSED
<p>Wellbeing Impact Assessment online tool and report generator</p>	<p>Online tool is amended to include specific guidance/ questions on tackling climate and ecological change and contribution that can be made to the Council achieving its net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals. The Lead Officer for Climate Change to be a member of the WIA Critical Friend Group.</p>
<p>Council's Report Template (Council, Committees, SLT)</p>	<p>Guidance included in the template under the following sections to ensure report author includes information and recommendations with regard to the decisions impact on climate and ecological change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section 5- How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities? - Section 6- What will it cost and how will it affect other services? - Section 7- What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment? - Section 8- What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?
<p>The Terms of Reference for the Council's Budget Board, Strategic Investment Group (SIG) and Asset Management Group (AMG)</p>	<p>Inclusion in the terms of reference for these advisory/delegated authority committee's requirements around seeking information in relation to, and considering in the decision and actions of the committee, tackling climate and ecological change.</p>

DOCUMENT/ PROCESS	CHANGE PROPOSED
<p>Strategic Investment Group (SIG) Business Case Template</p>	<p>Adjustment to the Business Options section so that an enhanced eco option is always presented in the option appraisal for the project.</p> <p>Updating the revenue impact section and providing excel template for the calculation and presentation of the whole life cost for proposed scheme.</p> <p>Updating of the existing carbon impact and biodiversity impact sections in light of the net carbon zero and ecological positive goals in terms of scope and ambition.</p> <p>Inclusion of a Lead Officer for Climate Change Statement, alongside the County Landlord and Chief Finance Officer Statement.</p>
<p>The Council's Project Management Templates (Verto system).</p>	<p>Inclusion of a carbon impact and biodiversity impact section along the lines of the SIG business case.</p> <p>Guidance on developing Business Options along the lines of the SIG business case.</p> <p>The inclusion of the Lead Officer for Climate Change in the online review and approval process for the various project management gateways.</p>

Appendix E – Notable Risks

RISK	DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION ACTION
<p>Securing Funding to deliver the Programme</p>	<p>There is a risk that the Council is unable to commit sufficient resource (revenue and capital) to coordinate the programme, deliver net carbon zero and ecologically positive projects and deliver other projects in an enhanced eco way meaning funding bids are not submitted, opportunities not maximised, actions are not delivered and benefits are not realised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Literacy Training and ongoing support to officers to factor in eco enhancement from inception stage of projects, building in sufficient provision within external funding bids. • Implementing whole life costing into business case process to capture fully the long term costs and benefits of schemes. • Maximising on the delivery of the many projects which save both money and carbon annually for the Council. • Maximising on the delivery of projects which deliver upon COVID-19 recovery requirements and carbon saving for the Council. • Early input into the Budget Board on calls on revenue and capital for 2021/22 and in particular securing resource commitment for programme and project management support. • Ongoing dialogue with Section 151 officer in relation to longer financial plans via the Medium Term Financial Plan. • Proactively seeking external finance with Welsh Government

RISK	DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION ACTION
		<p>and Whitehall Departments using the strategy and action plan as our narrative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitting strong and coordinated external funding bids, working collaboratively across the region as well as across internal DCC departments.
Meeting Public Expectation	There is a risk of not meeting public expectation on this agenda and the democratic and reputational damage that could cause.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with the public proactively, constructively and sensitively on this agenda being very clear on the scope and scale of the Council's targets. • Through working with the Public Service Board (PSB) and community development partners, support the public in contributing personally to this agenda at a community level. • Celebrating the Council's existing and continued success in this agenda via press releases/social media and ensuring the public are aware of the range of work the Council are undertaking via webpages.
Reputational Damage	There is a risk of reputational damage to the Council if don't meet Welsh Government and locally set carbon reduction, sequestration and biodiversity targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a clear strategy and action plan on this agenda, coordinated framework for delivery and understood measures of achievement. • Resourcing (revenue and capital) the delivery of the programme, maximising on external funding opportunities where possible.

Appendix F- Power to make the decisions

LEGISLATION	POWER
Section 2, Local Government Act 2000	<i>the power to do anything which DCC consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.</i>
Section 111, Local Government Act 1972	<i>the power to do anything which is conducive to, or calculated to facilitate, the discharge of the Council's functions.</i>

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Report to	County Council
Date of meeting	October 13, 2020
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets / Alan Smith, Head of Business Improvement and Modernisation
Report author	Nicola Kneale, Strategic Planning Team Manager / Iolo McGregor, Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader
Title	Annual Performance Review 2019 to 2020

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 This report accompanies the council's draft Annual Performance Review for 2019 to 2020, which the council is required to publish by October 31 each year under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.
- 1.2 Last year this report was published in July and included our quarter 4 update on the Corporate Plan. However, because of disruption caused by the Covid-19, this report was delayed, so now also covers quarter 1 where the information is available, and seeks in particular to demonstrate how the council has maintained key services, and more, for the benefit of our residents during the pandemic.
- 1.3 As well as providing our quarterly and end of year analysis, specific projects for delivery in 2020 to 2021 are also highlighted, therefore representing our Annual Delivery Document.
- 1.4 The Annual Performance Review also includes case studies and examples of progress against our corporate priorities from the council's wider portfolio (i.e. it is not strictly limited to Corporate Plan projects). This recognises that services do other important work outside of the Corporate Plan that benefits residents.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 To provide information regarding the council's progress in delivering Corporate Plan outcomes as at quarter 4, 2019 to 2020, and quarter 1, 2020 to 2021, meeting our statutory obligation to publish an annual report on performance by October 31. This also fulfils our duty under the Equality Act 2010 and Wales Measure 2011 to publish progress against equality objectives, which Denbighshire has embedded within its Corporate Plan.
- 2.2 To inform members about Corporate Plan projects planned for delivery in 2020 to 2021, which the council is required to publish to meet its improvement duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.
- 2.3 Regular reporting is an essential monitoring requirement of the Corporate Plan to ensure that the Council exercises its duty to improve. We monitor our performance regularly, taking quarterly reports to Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings, and produce an Annual Performance Review to evaluate progress.
- 2.4 A decision is required to approve the Annual Performance Review 2019 to 2020.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 It is recommended that, subject to any agreed changes, Council approve the Annual Performance Review 2019 to 2020.

4. Report details

- 4.1 The council's Corporate Plan 2017 to 2022 sets the strategic direction for the council and its priorities for the five-year period. The detail about what the council intends to do each year to help deliver these priorities is set out in annual service plans. The projects originate from Service and Programme Plans. Progress will be reported Performance Scrutiny, Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team through our Quarterly Performance Reports.

4.2 This annual performance report provides a retrospective evaluation of the council's success in delivering against these plans during 2019 to 2020 and for quarter 1 2020 to 2021, and whether the council has successfully fulfilled its obligation to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. It also looks ahead to what will be delivered in 2020 to 2021.

4.3 Appendix I contains narrative on the progress in delivering our corporate priorities, including the current status and programme progress. Within each corporate priority subsection there are also case studies, sustainable development and equality & diversity information included. The Corporate Project Register and Corporate Risk Register can also be found at the back of the document.

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

5.1 The Annual Performance Review includes an evaluation of the council's success in delivering against its corporate priorities.

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

6.1 There is no cost associated with this report.

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

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) is not required for this report. A WIA was undertaken on the Corporate Plan itself, and was presented to County Council when the plan was approved in October 2017. Individual projects / programmes of work within the Corporate Plan will subsequently have been individually assessed.

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

8.1 The report has been developed by the Strategic Planning Team, in consultation with other council services. The performance information contained within the document has been provided by services, and has been drawn from the Verto performance management system. Consultation has taken place with the Senior

Leadership Team (SLT), Cabinet and Performance Scrutiny prior to seeking County Council approval.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from the report.

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

10.1 Failure to publish the Annual Review by the October 31 deadline would be likely to result in statutory recommendations from the Wales Audit Office, with significant implications for the reputation of the council.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 The Corporate Plan and the Annual Performance Review are key elements of the Wales Programme for Improvement (2010), which is underpinned by the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1999 and Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

Annual Performance Review 2019 to 2020

This document presents the council's performance against its priorities in 2019 to 2020, including the Public Sector Equality Duty; outlines our plans for Corporate Plan delivery in 2020 to 2021; shows the progress of council projects; and highlights the council's progress in managing its risks.

Contents

Introduction	5
Finance	6
Responding to Covid-19	12
Summary position for our Corporate Plan 2019 to 2020	18
Housing: Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs.....	20
Sustainable Development	25
Equality and Diversity	26
What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?.....	27
Connected Communities: Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links	29
Sustainable Development	37
Equality and Diversity.....	37
What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?.....	38
Resilient Communities: The council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience	40
Sustainable Development	47
Equality and Diversity.....	48
What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?.....	50
Environment: Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity ...	52
Sustainable Development	59
Equality and Diversity.....	60
What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?.....	61

Young People: A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so	63
Sustainable Development	73
Equality and Diversity	73
What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?	75
Sustainable Development	77
Equality and Diversity	77
Welsh Language	79
Project Register	81
Risk Management	83
External Regulators	84
National Data Collections	86
Appendix 1: Project Register (August 2020)	87
Appendix 2: Corporate Risk Register (September 2020)	93

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We welcome correspondence in Welsh. There will be no delay in responding to correspondence received in Welsh.

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Introduction

2020 brought with it significant challenges for the public sector, and Denbighshire did not escape the reach of Covid-19. Our staff, many of who took up new roles this year to aid our response to the virus, have been working tirelessly to keep communities safe. It has been an “all hands on deck” effort to help mitigate the worst case scenario and ensure that our service operations continue, albeit in a different way. We begin this report by thanking all of our staff, partners and providers who are working so hard to make sure Denbighshire residents have the essential services they need.

Every year we review our performance to evaluate our success in delivering benefits for our communities, and this year is no different, despite the disruption to services that we have experienced. 2019 to 2020 represents the third year of our ambitious Corporate Plan, which seeks to build on strengths and opportunities, but also address the very real challenges and risks faced by our communities. The Plan can only be delivered through working in partnership with residents, public sector partners, not-for-profit sector colleagues and the private sector; and this report evaluates our progress so far. It also seeks to capture the good work we have seen in response to the pandemic.

Despite Covid-19, we are proud to say that the council continues to make good progress with its priorities, seeing impressive flexibility in the way projects and services have adapted to change. Inevitably there has been slippage in some timescales, but in the main projects remain on course to deliver the benefits that we want for our communities. During July, our Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team took the opportunity to hold a second Tranche Review on the Plan, a health-check on where things were up to (considering especially the impact of Covid-19), and a chance to confirm still our commitment to the projects that we have chosen to deliver.

We know the Covid-19 outbreak has had a devastating impact on every aspect of the County's social and economic well-being. Residents, businesses, communities and the council have been severely affected and the repercussions for everyone will mean that the world in front of us will be different to the one we knew. We will learn from the experience of the last few months to transform the way the council works for the benefit of our residents, and continue to plan for a Denbighshire that is equal, greener, healthier, and on the road to recovery.

Finance

The council sets a revenue budget each year. This is a budget that it will provide for services in the year, which is paid for by service users, Welsh Government Grants, Council Tax and Business Rate payers. For 2019 to 2020, this gross expenditure budget was £309.5m.

As part of the ongoing reductions to public spending, the funding available to local government has continued to reduce in real terms and the council has had to identify savings to balance the budget. To deliver its budgets for 2019 to 2020, the council underwent a rigorous budget process to identify areas for savings and cuts. We asked all services to identify efficiency savings. In the autumn a series of meetings involving Cabinet members and Heads of Service considered the budget proposals, service reserves and further possible savings. All of this information informed the Medium Term Financial Plan, which sets out how the council will make these savings and takes account of known and likely changes to the council's budget settlement. Prior to approval by County Council, the savings were agreed with Heads of Service and Lead Cabinet Members, and presented to a series of councillor budget workshops.

After budgeted use of Reserves, savings of £5.672m were required and successfully identified to achieve a balanced budget as summarised below:

- Corporate savings identified in 2018 to 2019 (£0.5m)
- Schools savings of 2% (£1.32m)
- Service efficiencies and savings (£3.852m)

The table below shows council spend across its services:

Services	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Communities and Customer Services	3,611	3,497	(114)

Services	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Education and Children's Service	16,061	17,095	1,034
Business Improvement and Modernisation	4,589	4,478	(111)
Legal, HR and Democratic Services	2,606	2,423	(182)
Finance and Property Services	3,950	3,897	(53)
Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services	16,043	16,038	(5)
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	9,312	9,806	495
Community Support Services	35,834	36,490	656
Denbighshire Leisure Ltd	2,375	2,411	37
Total Service Budgets	94,380	96,136	1,756

The table below shows council spend for schools:

Schools:	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Schools Delegated	74,351	75,567	1,217

Schools:	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Schools Non-delegated	(5,066)	(5,138)	(71)
Total Schools Budgets	69,284	70,430	1,145

The table below shows council spend across its corporate budgets. Please note that 'Levies' refers to the levy paid to the Fire Service; and Capital Financing is the annual loan repayment and interest costs of council debt incurred to fund capital expenditure.

Corporate Budgets:	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Corporate	16,416	14,015	(2,401)
Capital Financing / Investment Interest	13,652	13,339	(313)
Levies	4,806	4,806	None
Total Corporate Budget	34,874	32,160	(2,714)

The table below shows our total spend across services, schools and corporate budgets:

Services, Schools and Corporate Budgets	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Total	198,538	198,725	187

The table below shows the funding that we received:

Funding	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Welsh Government Funding	143,637	143,637	None
Council Tax and Balances	54,901	54,161	741
Total Funding	198,538	197,797	741

The final table shows our final allocation against our net and overall position:

	Variance (£'000)
Net Position	928
School Balances Carried Forward	1,217
Service Underspends Carried Forward	(289)
Overall Position	1,856

By the end of the year, the council had spent £0.9m more than it budgeted for on services and corporate budgets. Specific pressures remain evident in social care budgets (both Adults' and Children's), School Transport and Waste services, despite the investment included in the 2019 to 2020 budget. These are base budget and therefore ongoing pressures, and these pressures have been reflected in the Budget Proposals for 2020 to 2021. However, despite the 2020 to 2021 Budget approved in January addressing a number of the key pressures and investing in core priority services such as schools, the new financial pressures associated with Covid-19 represent a huge challenge for the council. Strategies are currently being worked on that will help the council cope, although ultimately additional Welsh Government funding will be required.

Although school balances have decreased this financial year, this largely relates to a small number of schools and the position will be kept under close review. Not only are Education Finance working closely with schools to help develop robust plans, but chief and senior officers in Education and Finance meet regularly to review those plans and take remedial action if necessary. We are working particularly close with a small number of schools who are experiencing difficult circumstances.

Service requests to carry forward underspends amounting to £0.289m were approved by Cabinet in June. The funds will be used to help mitigate against known pressures and provide funds for service investment.

Funding the Corporate Plan

Some projects that support our Corporate Plan priorities require significant capital investment, whereas others are revenue funded, and some may be delivered at no additional cost. We think we need to invest somewhere in the region of an additional £135m in our corporate priorities during the life of the Plan, if we are to achieve all that we'd like. To pay for the capital investment identified, we will need to commit revenue budget and cash to the priorities. During 2017 to 2018 we identified £0.5m of our revenue budget for 2018 to 2019, and £1m cash to support corporate priorities. A further revenue contribution of £0.5m was secured through the 2019 to 2020 budget process. Further annual budget allocations will be required but it is recognised that this will be difficult to achieve as the council's total budget reduces.

Although £135m is a large sum, the council would not have to provide all of this money itself, in reality contributing around £71m of the £135m. For example, we plan to use income from housing rent to help fund the new council housing; and we expect that grants from the Welsh Government will be available to help fund the planned work to our flood defences, and to improve schools.

Capital Expenditure

The table below shows the total capital expenditure across council service areas:

Expenditure	£'000
--------------------	--------------

Legal, HR and Democratic Services	14
Finance and Property Services	3,888
Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services	7,187
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	2,787
Community Support Services	301
Communities and Customer Services	11
Business Improvement and Modernisation	1,899
Education and Children's Services	12,408
Housing Revenue Account	8,500
Total	36,995

Responding to Covid-19

The ongoing nature of the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to put adverse pressure on the council's ability to deliver its services. Crucially we can expect increased budgetary pressures (including loss of income); reduced staff capacity; and delayed timescales to the projects that we want to deliver. Covid-19 also challenges the resource capacity of our partners and the providers that we work with. These factors, combined with the restrictions necessary to deal with the virus, ultimately means that we must continue to be flexible in how services are delivered. This may mean changes to what our residents expect from us.

During the pandemic the council has introduced a range of new innovations to support our communities:

- The council established 17 'hub' schools for key worker children. We had 625 children registered to access the provision, and on average 220 to 250 pupils attended per week. When all schools opened to deliver the provision, we saw 5,252 pupils (week commencing July 6) and 4,696 pupils (week commencing July 13) attend at least one session during the respective weeks. Our last term counts for pupils were 8,755 primary pupils (including Nursery) and 5,924 secondary pupils (7 to 11 years only).
- 1,724 families received a free school meal payment, supporting 3,089 children. Over £1.1m was paid between March and August.
- Working with Welsh Government and the army, and supported by community donations and volunteers, we established new mechanisms to store and distribute vital Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies to care settings across the County, including to private care homes and providers. The council also established new mechanisms to ensure adequate provision and support was made available to keep schools and council staff safe as services were maintained or prepared to reopen.
- The council, with the support of Denbighshire Leisure Ltd, proactively contacted more than 9,250 shielded people and residents aged 70 or over who have been isolating. The purpose of the calls was to offer advice and support and ensure

residents could access the supplies and services they needed whilst remaining at home. This work has included making referrals to community groups, local charities and council services for tailored help, including grocery shopping, medication collection, telephone befriending, and basic care needs assessments. Working alongside our external partners, including Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC) and the British Red Cross, we have referred more than 250 people for Welsh Government food boxes, and more than 300 people to DVSC to find help with shopping and collecting medications.

- Contacting businesses, providing advice and signposting to help available in Wales, as well as processing and paying grants to small businesses. So far 2,584 businesses have applied for Welsh Government Business Rate Relief administered by Denbighshire County Council. 2,287 have received £10k grants, and 297 have received £25k grants, with the overall total being over £30.2m.
- Setting up a 'redeployment bureau', which moved over 200 staff to new roles including front line social care, community calling and support response, drivers, and contact tracing and testing.
- Pro-active communications through our website, social media and press releases saw over 170 press releases being issued between March and August, with 7.4 million social media impressions. 383,918 people engaged with these, with 52,424 post link clicks. Two of the most successful videos on social media were the NHS video thanking NHS staff for their efforts, being watched 546,000 times (our highest performing social media message of all time), and a video of tenants at Gorwel Newydd, Rhyl, singing on VE Day being viewed 146,000 times. We have also created around 30 new webpages on our website because of Covid-19 to keep our public informed and better able to access our services during lockdown.
- Coronavirus Act flexibilities have enabled the council to maintain sufficiency of care for its vulnerable citizens while creating 'surge capacity' to ensure effective and timely 7-day a week discharges from hospitals. Flexibilities were also utilised to reduce bureaucracy, streamline process and facilitate quick and effective action.

- A team of staff at the council are helping the national efforts to tackle Covid-19 by working as contact tracers, as part of the Welsh Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) programme. The team are provided with details of any confirmed or suspected cases locally and then have the role of tracing people who may have come into contact with the individual. This alerts those contacts, where necessary, and notifies them they need to self-isolate to help stop the spread of the virus. By following instructions to self-isolate, people who have had close recent contact with someone with Covid-19 will be protecting their family, friends, colleagues and other people around them, and will play a direct role in stopping the spread of the virus. During June to August, from a total of 162 tests, 89 proved to be positive cases. 81 of these cases were followed up (91%) and led to 170 new contacts being generated. 141 of these were eligible for tracing, 126 of which were followed up (89%).
- Use of our CAG software, where users access the council's systems remotely, has risen during this period from around 200 per day up to nearly 1,600. Nearly all meetings, operational and democratic, are currently 'virtual'. Working in this way has broadly brought about a number of benefits, including improved work life balance for many; a reduction in local congestion and pollution; a reduction in commute and business mileage (which will contribute significantly to the council's carbon reduction agenda); and significant time savings.

Business critical activities

In addition to the above, we have also focussed on maintaining business critical activities. In a number of cases this has meant we have had to adapt the way in which services are delivered:

- Community Support Services, working with the health board to support those with the virus, providing care at home and residential care.
- Child care, establishing safe child care for key workers and vulnerable children.
- Continuity of learning, ensuring pupils continue to learn and have access to educational resources and support.

- Reopening our schools and arranging transport in a way that is safe for pupils, parents and teachers.
- Homelessness, supporting those needing to be brought indoors and adequately housed.
- Public protection, maintaining public health, which includes enforcing closures of premises where necessary, and managing local contact tracing.
- Highway maintenance, ensuring essential repairs are carried out and an emergency response is available.
- Refuse and recycling, ensuring that our general waste and recycling collections were maintained.
- Children's services, ensuring children are protected and safeguarded.
- Libraries, re-opening in a phased approach.
- Customer services and communications, ensuring that the public, our councillors and our staff are regularly updated and informed.
- Maintaining essential corporate support services, including workforce, finance and ICT.

Case study

Preventing Street Homelessness

At the start of the pandemic, Denbighshire County Council followed the Welsh Government's directive to ensure that everyone presenting as homeless was accommodated and that we did not have anyone sleeping on the streets. This formed Phase 1, the Crisis management phase of Welsh Government's 3 phase plan.

Firstly, we were encouraged to make use of local Bed and Breakfast provision to ensure that people were able to adequately socially distance and self-isolate if required. Information was provided for citizens and we made arrangements to ensure that people did not have to share washing or toilet facilities, and had access to either prepare their own meals or for food provision on site.

Phase 2 of the plan started from June onwards. The expectation from Welsh Government is that we do not return anyone to being street homeless and to look at how we could permanently accommodate everyone we have in emergency accommodation during lockdown.

Historically, we usually accommodate in the region of 80 to 90 households but the demand has doubled during Covid-19 and we are currently accommodating over 180 households. This is made up of single people, couples and families.

As a result, Welsh Government invited bids, both capital and revenue, totalling £20m across Wales. Following a successful bid Denbighshire have secured revenue funding to provide additional support for some of our most complex households. Critical Intervention workers have been recruited and recently started in post, whilst recruitment is underway for Homelessness Support Practitioners. They will focus on considering social, health and well-being needs that will assist in ensuring that households are able to get the support they need to help them sustain their accommodation and well-being going forward. In addition, funding was granted as part of a regional bid for a Mental Health well-being worker, in partnership across the 6 North Wales authorities with the Area Planning Board and CAIS.

What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?

- We are currently surveying our staff in order to make arrangements for them to receive the seasonal flu vaccination in October 2020. This year, it is even more important for staff to receive the vaccination in order to lessen the impact of seasonal flu alongside any potential cases of Covid-19 amongst staff.
- We will be reminding customers and businesses about the importance of the Test, Trace, Protect strategy. The strategy is key in controlling the spread of new outbreaks, particularly as public spaces start to re-open. Customers are being

assured that it is safe to provide contact information and that it is vital to help isolate an outbreak.

- We have seen many of the council's functions being delivered successfully through virtual working during the pandemic, and we are now considering how we operate in the future. We are currently surveying our staff to ask them about their experience of working during the pandemic. The pandemic has meant that staff that are able to work from home have had no choice but to do so, and although by and large people have been able to do the bulk of their normal work, the softer side – networking, creative work, the companionship of colleagues - has suffered. If we are to implement more dispersed working in future, we also need to think about how to make these things possible as well.
- We worked much more closely with the Third Sector and Community Groups during lockdown. We intend to continue nurturing and building on these relationships in the future to ensure our communities are resilient.
- We will continue our work to prevent street homelessness following our successful bid, which will enable us to purchase a large property e.g. a former Bed and Breakfast to provide our own 'family' emergency accommodation. In addition to this, we have been allocated £1.5m to consider new build properties using modern methods of construction. However, the challenge we are faced with is to complete the required processes and work to spend the funding by March 2021. The planning process for phase 3 is underway with plans to look at developing a model of Rapid Re-housing for homelessness services. This will include a triage hub with our own emergency provision staffed by a multi-disciplinary team, with a view to rapid assessment and ensuring that households have the support they require to move to sustainable, permanent accommodation.

Summary position for our Corporate Plan 2019 to 2020.

The measures evaluation for each priority has been determined through the performance management framework that we have in place. The projects evaluation has been determined by the status of our projects.

Housing: Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs

Measures: Good

Projects: Acceptable

Connected Communities: Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Resilient Communities: The council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Good

Environment: Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity

Measures: Good

Projects: Excellent

Young People: A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

A Note on Measuring Performance

In Denbighshire, our default approach to setting performance thresholds is to take the upper-quartile (best performing) from nationally comparable information as the point where performance is considered 'Excellent'. The 'Priority for Improvement' threshold is usually the median. Midway between these two values determines the threshold between 'Acceptable' and 'Good' performance.

If no data is available that we can compare ourselves with (either nationally or by comparable grouping), then we will take a local view on what we feel reasonably determines 'Excellent' and 'Priority for Improvement'. This should represent our ambition.

For more information on how we manage performance, view the [Performance Management Guide on our website](#).

Housing: Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs

Measures: Good

Projects: Acceptable

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

As at the end of March 2020 there were 1,152 people registered on the SARTH waiting list. This is consistent with the previous year's count of people registered. SARTH was suspended for a temporary period so that we could concentrate on housing the families who have been in emergency accommodation during the pandemic.

A full survey of current housing register applicants was planned for early 2020, but due to Covid-19 this was postponed. The survey is now due to be sent out late October / early November 2020.

Annual Indicators relating to Homelessness Prevention and Relief have now been added to the Corporate Plan Framework. As at the end of March 2020, 57% of households were successfully prevented from homelessness (Section 66 duty). This fell slightly from 58% the previous year because of an increase in the number of individuals presenting to the service at crisis point and requiring direct intervention and emergency accommodation. During 2019 to 20, new service provisions have been put in place and continue to develop with the aim of avoiding people reaching crisis point.

30% of households were successfully relieved from homelessness (Section 73 duty) during 2019 to 2020, down from 38%. This represents 168 successful outcomes from a total of 566 cases. Finding temporary / emergency accommodation has proved difficult due to the availability of suitable long-term accommodation.

To provide equal emphasis in addressing the housing and homelessness priorities, both the existing Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy have been reviewed and merged into a single Strategy and Action Plan. Going forward the priorities identified within the Strategy will be monitored primarily by the Strategic Housing and Homelessness Lead Member and Officer Group who are now meeting on a bi-monthly basis. The major role of the Strategic Housing and Homelessness Group is to enable a more strategic approach to

Housing and Homelessness, continuously reviewing progress on the Housing Strategy and Homelessness Action Plan.

Data for the number of private sector homes improved in standard and quality due to intervention from the council fell slightly in 2019 to 2020 from 819 to 810.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Extra Care Housing

Both Ruthin and Denbigh Extra Care Housing projects have faced significant disruption due to Covid-19, building works being largely suspended. New dates for completion are to be ascertained, but work has continued as the lockdown has eased, and within the limits of what social distancing allows.

Additional Homes

2019 to 2020 saw 242 additional homes being provided in Denbighshire. This has almost doubled from last year's figure of 124. The council also added 10 homes to its own stock during 2019 to 20, up from 4 the previous year.

In terms of the council's own council housing programme, confidence remains that this can still be delivered successfully despite the pandemic; however, there will inevitably be delays in timescales. Work continues to progress a number of projects in Rhyl, Prestatyn, Dyserth, and Denbigh, including our Passivhaus scheme in Denbigh; a potential residential conversion at Lllys Anwyl in Churton Road, Rhyl; and the redevelopment of the former library site in Prestatyn.

Affordable Housing

Achieving delivery of an additional 260 affordable homes is currently on target and delivery confidence will improve as work progresses on site on a number of significant schemes. During 2019 to 2020 a total of 139 new affordable homes were completed throughout the County, which comprised of: 4 Empty Homes; 104 New build dwellings; 3 Supported units for tenants affected with learning difficulties; an adapted property for a specific family in need; 23 additional leased homes for people affected by homelessness; and 4 existing properties.

This is the highest number of additional supply of affordable housing, including social housing, provided during a year since 2010 to 2011 when we had two Extra Care facilities completed. 22 of the new build dwellings have been financed through Innovative Housing Project funding, a short term funding pot made available by Welsh Government to integrate Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) into affordable house developments to improve energy standards and increase build rates. 28 of the new build houses are available through the Rent to Own scheme.

Empty Homes

This project has exceeded its original target, with 179 properties being returned to use during 2019 to 2020. During the year, over 800 letters were sent out to owners and people responsible for empty properties to help us understand why a property is empty and how we can assist in bringing it back into use.

Annual or Biennial Measures

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
The percentage of residents reporting they felt satisfied with the availability of housing in their area – Benchmarked Locally	42	Does not apply No Survey	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents reporting they are satisfied with the standard of housing in their area – Benchmarked Locally	52	Does not apply No Survey	Acceptable
The number of people who were on the Complex Disabilities Specialist Housing Needs Register for whom supported housing has been secured – Benchmarked Locally	10	9	Good
The additional supply of council houses provided – Benchmarked Locally	4	10	Does not apply County only

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
Number of additional homes provided in Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	124	242	Excellent
Number of empty properties brought back into use (old definition) – Benchmarked Locally	181	179	Excellent
The number of private sector homes improved in standard and quality due to intervention from the council – Benchmarked Locally	819	810	Good
The additional supply of affordable housing, including social housing, provided during the year – Benchmarked Locally	23	139	Excellent
Percentage of households successfully prevented from homelessness (Section 66 duty) – Benchmarked Nationally	58	57	Priority for Improvement
Percentage of households successfully relieved from homelessness (Section 73 duty) – Benchmarked Nationally	38	30	Priority for Improvement

Our measure concerning additional Extra Care Homes supported by the council will not be reported until those schemes are completed.

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Measure	Quarter 4 2018 to 2019	Quarter 1 2019 to 2020	Quarter 2 2019 to 2020	Quarter 3 2019 to 2020	Quarter 4 2019 to 2020	Status
Number of people on SARTH waiting list – Benchmarked Locally	1148	1148	1160	1000	1152	Excellent

Project Progress

The following projects are on target:

- Additional affordable homes

- 500 empty properties back into use

The following projects are experiencing obstacles:

- Denbigh extra care housing
- Ruthin extra care housing
- Additional council housing

Case Studies

Eyesore property transformed into a family home

A property that had been empty for 15 years was turned into a family home with help provided by the council in supporting and advising the property's new owners. The property on Brighton Road, Rhyl, was in a poor condition and had become a hot spot for fly-tipping. This former eyesore property has now been renovated to a very high standard and is benefiting the local community.

The council has previously purchased and renovated another property on Brighton Road, which has been converted into three self-contained energy efficient apartments.

Housing Tenant Awards 2019

Improving housing is a priority for the council and hosting our first awards was a way of honouring individuals and communities for their commitment. In May 2019, Denbighshire Housing held its first ever Tenant awards. These awards celebrated the achievements and participation of council tenants within their communities and projects that are happening across Denbighshire. Over 80 guests attended the event, including tenants, local business sponsors and key housing and council professionals.

Our first Denbighshire Housing Tenant Awards winners were:

- Stuart Nield-Siddall – Tenant of the Year, sponsored by Liberty Gas

- The Marsh Community Association – Housing/Resident Group of the Year, sponsored by AICO
- Shirley Rippingale – Denbighshire Housing Customer Service of the Year, sponsored by Denbighshire Leisure
- Bethan Owen – Young Tenant of the Year, sponsored by G Parry
- Trem Y Foel Residents Association – Communal Garden of the Year, sponsored by CAPITA
- Angela Carrington-Roberts – Tenant Garden of the Year, sponsored by Greenspace Team
- Friends of Pengwern – Community Project of the Year, sponsored by NOVUS
- Gina Jones – Denbighshire Housing Award for special recognition

The Chief Executive of Denbighshire County who spoke at the event said, “It was an honour to recognise the tremendous amount of work and commitment that our tenants and our own workforce give to their communities. They are great ambassadors and really show how individuals and communities can work together to improve lives. Well done to everyone who were nominated, shortlisted and those that went on to win.”

Sustainable Development

As the council looks ahead to the development of its action plan for reducing carbon and becoming ecologically positive, sustainable development has to be put at the centre of this important priority. The council has a responsibility to not only promote and foster environmentally positive development, but it must also do so through its own actions too, including the building of any new council housing. This is why the council is pursuing the construction of Passivhaus developments.

We are committed to raising the energy efficiency standards of our current housing stock. Originally we had pledged that all of our stock would reach the energy efficiency rating of

'C' by 2022. However, as we have developed our approach we now know that this would not be financially realistic. We anticipate, however, that 70% will achieve the standard by the end of the Corporate Plan. This pledge complements our Environment Priority, and will also prevent the risk of fuel poverty for our residents.

We have made a joint commitment to end homelessness in North Wales. The six counties of North Wales have joined in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru, recognising that homelessness, and the issues that cause it, have no regard for local authority boundaries. This has been a good opportunity to integrate our goals and share resources.

Equality and Diversity

Our Corporate Plan outlines our commitment to increase the supply and accessibility of housing to people with protected characteristics, particularly those of age and disability. In response we are collaborating with Registered Social Landlords, private landlords, and homebuilders. By managing a diversity of housing stock and creating acceptance for alternative living, Denbighshire County Council endeavours to facilitate everyone's right to a safe and secure place to live.

Denbighshire have successfully resettled 19 Syrian families since April 2016. Our target figure of housing 20 families by end of March 2020 was unfortunately missed by one family because of the Covid-19 outbreak. The Home Office has brought this scheme to an end and has replaced it with a new and wider UK Resettlement Scheme from April 2020 onwards. At Cabinet in January 2020 it was agreed to continue to support the settlement of refugees in Denbighshire through the Global Resettlement Scheme.

Enabling people to better maintain their independence and continue to live safely in their own homes is important to us, and we are continuing to support people to achieve this. A total of 106 Disabled Facilities Grants were delivered during 2019 to 2020.

Long-term Specialist Housing for people with Complex Disabilities was secured for 9 people during 2019 to 2020. These efforts have reduced the specialist housing waiting list. However, some long-term complex cases will take more significant efforts to resolve.

Case Study

Housing First

Covid-19 has reminded us all of the fundamental importance of good-quality affordable housing, and a safe and secure home. Late August 2020 the Conwy and Denbighshire Housing First scheme received the first accreditation from the Minister for Housing and Local Government during a web event hosted by Cymorth Cymru. Housing First is an effective way to support individuals with the most complex needs into long-term, sustainable housing. Housing First is a recovery-oriented approach that moves people experiencing homelessness into independent, permanent housing as quickly as possible, rather than waiting for them to be 'housing ready'. Choice and control, as well as strengths based, multi-agency support is key. Aimed at people who have been sleeping rough with complex or co-occurring mental health and substance misuse issues, international evidence suggests that 80% of people on the scheme maintain their tenancies. Central to the success of the model is maintaining fidelity to the Housing First principles, which have been developed internationally and adapted specifically for the Welsh context.

What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?

We will continue to deliver against the projects that support this priority throughout 2020 to 2021.

Extra Care Housing: We will progress with our Extra Care Housing in both Ruthin and Denbigh. Denbigh is anticipated to be completed during the summer of 2021, and at the same time, demolition of buildings on the Ruthin Extra Care site will begin.

Additional Council Housing: Our first new build homes in Dyserth will have been completed by summer 2020, and we continue to make progress with the development of sites across the County. During the financial year ending in March 2021, we will have provided a further 12 council homes; construction will have started on developments that will provide 55 council homes; and we expect that planning permission will have been granted for developments that will deliver a further 47 council homes.

Affordable Housing: The outstanding number of affordable housing is now 50, which we comfortably expect to achieve by 2022 due to the good number of active development sites progressing in the County.

Empty Homes Back in to Use: We will continue to raise awareness of the issue of empty homes and the role that the council can play in assisting to bring them forward by attending landlord forums, City, Town and Community Council meetings, and other interested parties. We will also continue to work with Registered Social Landlords, private landlords and internal partners to explore innovative ways of bringing more empty homes back into use.

Connected Communities: Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

The latest WIMD release confirms that 14% of Denbighshire LSOAs remain in the top 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Access to Services. This equates to eight LSOAs out of 58 in Denbighshire.

During April to June 2020 we have seen during some modest improvement in our measures around superfast broadband, coverage above 30mbps increasing from 91.3% at the end of the year to 92% in July. Conversely there has been a drop for those households experiencing less than 10mbps, from 6.54% at the end of the year to 4.63% in July. Both, however, remain a priority for improvement for us.

The latest data published through Ofcom's Connected Nations and Infrastructure report shows that 45% of all A and B roads in Denbighshire had mobile 4G signal, from all four network operators. Our ambition at this stage was to have 60% availability as a minimum. By comparison, the all Wales figure is also at 45%, but this is significantly behind the England figure of 62%.

New data on the use of the internet by adults in Denbighshire and Conwy was anticipated in May 2020. For the time being the only available data remains that which was published in May 2019. This showed that 87.7% of people were estimated to have used the internet from a sampling period of three months (January to March 2020). Compared to the previous year, this had increased from 86.8%. It will be particularly interesting in the months ahead as data becomes available to review internet use for the months of March to August 2020, and hopefully identify those at risk of becoming digitally excluded in our communities.

Through 2019 to 2020 we have seen an increase from 38% to 46% of transactions undertaken via the web compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels. Most significantly but not surprising, however, during April to June we

saw a significant 13% increase in online transactions, achieving 52% during lockdown. A great deal of work was done during this time to increase available transactional services on our website to ensure that residents continued to benefit from the access that was no longer physically available.

Due to the disruption caused by Covid-19 there will be no national comparative data published for the A, B and C Road Condition Indicators for 2019 to 2020. Local scanner figures, however, suggest that there has been a slight decline in the condition of A (from 3.4% to 3.6%) and B (from 4.7% to 5.3%) roads during 2019 to 2020, with C roads staying the same (8.2%). Unfortunately, there persists an issue with obtaining data for the 6 monthly Road Condition Score, which we hope to resolve soon.

90% of the 256 category 1 defects for damaged roads and pavements were made safe within the target time of seven days during January to March 2020. This is a slight decrease in performance from 93 in October to December. The average for 2019 to 2020 was 92%, addressing 885 of 962 defects in total.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Travel to Work, Education and Services

When we developed our Corporate Plan, travel to work, education, and services was identified from our conversations with residents as an important area in need of improvement, particularly for our rural communities. Unfortunately, it is, we acknowledge, an area that still requires considerable work and expenditure. During 2019 to 2020, supported by the Welsh Government's Public Services Board support grant, we commissioned Glyndŵr University to research specific barriers to travel, not just for Denbighshire, but for North Wales. We will use this information to inform our business case to improve travel within the County; however, it is likely now that further analysis is needed given the changes brought about to travel, education, work, and service delivery because of Covid-19. Funding also remains a considerable issue for this area of work.

The pandemic has led to unprecedented changes that are affecting transport. The council has been looking at how we can safely reopen our town centres for visitors and this includes making sure there is space for people to adhere to social distancing and to offer alternative forms of transport by making walking and cycling easier. The council has

secured nearly £1 million of transport funding through the Local Sustainable Transport Covid-19 Response Fund, to provide improved access to town centres and schools for pedestrians and cyclists and facilitate social distancing in public spaces and on public transport.

The lockdown period has seen increases in the numbers of people walking and cycling, and many of the measures proposed will further encourage people to choose these modes of transport by providing measures such as wider pavements. Funding has been secured for projects in Rhyl, Llangollen, Ruthin and Denbigh, as well as outside schools throughout the County. Projects include the reallocation of road space for pedestrians and cyclists by introducing one-way systems, and making spaces outside schools safer for social distancing and reducing the number of car journeys outside schools. By making our town centres more accessible for active travel we can help support the County's businesses, improve air quality in our towns, help protect the environment, and improve the health of our residents.

Superfast Broadband and Mobile Networks

In partnership with Cadwyn Clwyd and Wrexham County Borough Council, the council has recruited a Digital Support Officer in 2020 to help promote connectivity options to businesses and rural communities in Denbighshire. The Digital Officer performs a connectivity diagnostic on each client's premise to inform them of their options to improve their digital access. If a resident is in a poorly connected area they are encouraged to form an action group in order to apply for a fibre connection through Openreach's Community Fibre Partnership. There is currently work on-going with six groups around Denbighshire, assisting them to communicate the message to other residents, collating their information as new residents join, and mapping the premises out to enable the group leader to visualise their target area. Once enough premises have joined the group, the Digital Officer assists the group leader to submit the initial Openreach Community Fibre Partnership form. Following this, quotes will be received and a plan of action will be formulated; this is the planned next stage for 2020 to 21. Funding will be available via the Rural Gigabit Voucher scheme, which with the Welsh Government top up are worth £3000 for a residential premises, and £7000 if a business is being run from there. There are currently 4,509 premises in Denbighshire where there are no qualifying networks and none are likely to be developed within 3 years. They are below the target download speed of

10Mbps, often being around 1 to 3Mbps. In addition to this, residents are informed about other available technologies to improve their connections and assistance is provided to diagnose any problems within their home network that may be causing a poor connection.

We are also exploring options to encourage local schemes to improve connectivity where:

- Housing exists in areas of poor broadband coverage and speed;
- Falls into either an area with no superfast coverage, or is not likely to be part of Superfast Cymru 2 roll out.

The focus on this work will be community-led, with the council and social housing partners taking a supportive role. The council is also promoting the Welsh Government's Local Broadband Fund, encouraging community groups to submit bids by September 2020. Discussions are also being held with the Clocaenog Wind Farm Fund, which will hopefully allow for community broadband applications. The fund is to be launched in the autumn, 2020.

Access to Information and Services

This project has experienced some delays as a direct result of both the web team and the web developer being redeployed to support the response to Covid-19. However, based on the current position it is not anticipated that this will delay the 'Go Live' date of our new website, planned for September 16. The scale of the work that has been involved in producing new webpage templates and converting all our documents and information to meet new accessibility standards has been considerable, but we hope residents will agree that it has been worth the effort. Around 30 new pages were also added to our website during the pandemic to better inform and help residents access our services during lockdown.

Our social media presence has continued to grow during March 2019 to August 2020, recording over 18 million impressions, 844,000 engagement and 108,844 post link clicks. We have also issued some 500 press releases in this time. Feedback on our press coverage returned 1,262 positive responses, 134 negative, and 254 that were neutral.

Digital Exclusion

Covid-19 restrictions have caused significant disruption to this project, particularly our work around staff training, volunteer development in libraries, and digital intergenerational work between schools and residential care homes. The only aspect of the project that we have been able to progress is the digital skills audit in libraries and housing services. The current project was due to end in December, but we anticipate that this may now be pushed into 2021 by at least 4-6 months.

In support of this agenda, however, it is worth noting that during the lockdown period residential care homes have acquired new devices to help better connect residents with their families and friends.

Infrastructure for Events

During March to August this project was placed on hold because of Covid-19. However, during a recent tranche review of all Corporate Plan projects in July, senior managers and cabinet members renewed their commitment to this work as an important strand for stimulating the economic recovery of Denbighshire, and in particularly looking at how we can attract larger events to the County.

Roads and Bridges

The council has carried out a number of bridge strengthening works during 2019 to 2020. The arches and cantilevered section of Pont Cilan, a Scheduled Ancient Monument on the River Dee, have been strengthened and reinforced internally by a concrete beam; the bridge now looks identical to how it used to. Pont Llyn Y Gigfran, which carries a road over the Afon Alwen to the west of Bettws Gwerfil Goch, has also had its stonework and arch rebuilt using historic hot lime mortars. We have also carried out emergency repairs to Pont Drefechan and Pont Penstryd following the February floods. Pont Eyarth, which has been a three-year project, was scheduled to be complete this Summer, but has been delayed due to Covid-19.

Over the last 12 months the council has continued its programme of surface dressing considerable lengths of the 'A' Class network, plus small scale resurfacing on urban roads in a number of towns and villages. Higher profile works include the road by Morrisons in Rhyl and on the A525 in St. Asaph. Both locations were challenging in terms of minimising

disruption, but both went well. Both these projects represent nearly £600k of investment by the council in the County's road network.

Annual or Biennial Measures

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
The percentage of principle A roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	3.4	3.6	Acceptable
The percentage of non-principal/classified B roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	4.7	5.3	Priority for improvement
The percentage of non-principal/classified C roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	8.2	8.2	Good
The percentage of adults (aged 16 or over) who have used the internet within the last 3 months (Conwy and Denbighshire) – Benchmarked Locally	87.7	Data pending	Acceptable

Measure	2014	2019	Status
Percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Access to Services (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation - WIMD)	14	14	Does not apply Count only

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Measure	Quarter 1 2019 to 2020	Quarter 2 2019 to 2020	Quarter 3 2019 to 2020	Quarter 4 2019 to 2020	Quarter 1 2020 to 2021	Status
The percentage of Superfast Coverage in Denbighshire (>30 Mbps) –	91.2	91.3	91.3	91.29	92	Priority for improvement

Measure	Quarter 1 2019 to 2020	Quarter 2 2019 to 2020	Quarter 3 2019 to 2020	Quarter 4 2019 to 2020	Quarter 1 2020 to 2021	Status
Benchmarked Locally						
The percentage of premises with Broadband of 10 Mbps or below – Benchmarked Locally	6.57	6.54	6.54	4.93	4.63	Priority for improvement
The percentage of transactions undertaken via the web, compared to the total number of transactions undertaken using all access channels	38	38	47	46	52	Does not apply Count only

Measure	Quarter 4 2018 to 2019	Quarter 1 2019 to 2020	Quarter 2 2019 to 2020	Quarter 3 2019 to 2020	Quarter 4 2019 to 2020	Status
The percentage of mobile 4G road signal (all operators) – Benchmarked Locally	43.08	49.59	47.46	45.68	45.31	Priority for improvement
Percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) – Benchmarked Locally	97.5	100	98.9	92.8	89.7	Priority for improvement

Measure	Quarter 4 2018 to 2019	Quarter 1 2019 to 2020	Quarter 2 2019 to 2020	Quarter 3 2019 to 2020	Quarter 4 2019 to 2020	Status
6 monthly Road Condition Score for around 75% of the remaining network (some C roads and almost all unclassified roads)	Does not apply 6 monthly	393337	Does not apply 6 monthly	Data pending	Does not apply 6 monthly	Does not apply Baseline year

Project Progress

The following projects are on target:

- Superfast broadband and mobile network
- Digital exclusion

The following projects are experiencing obstacles:

- Access to information and services
- Infrastructure for events

The following project is at the business case stage:

- Travel to work, education and services

Case studies

Fflecsi

Fflecsi allows people to request a demand-responsive bus to pick them up near home, work or shops for essential travel, rather than following a set timetable at fixed bus stops. Following a successful pilot scheme in 2019 to 2020 we are now working in partnership with Transport for Wales (TfW), MandH Coaches and Townlynx to extend the 'fflecsi' pilot scheme to Denbigh and Prestatyn. Using ViaVan's technology it will direct passengers to a

nearby “virtual bus stop” for pick-up, allowing for quick and efficient shared trips without lengthy detours, fixed routes or schedules.

Community-led broadband improvement

We have been working with the community at Nantglyn to produce a database of local residents interested in a community broadband scheme. 155 residents have signed up to this, including 49 businesses. A technical broadband option is ready to pursue (FTTP) and work is now focused on developing costs with Openreach and looking for funding options.

Sustainable Development

As a council, we recognise the importance of staying connected. This means investing in the technologies that will keep our communities connected in the long-term, which is why we are working with partners such as the Welsh Government's Superfast Cymru project.

We also recognise that connectivity is complex. While we want to improve travel infrastructure in Denbighshire, we also recognise that some people may want to remove the need to travel at all, by accessing goods and services (or working) online. We know some residents may not feel confident, or lack the skills or means to access services online. For this reason, all of our Corporate Plan projects are managed together as a programme to ensure we plan in a joined-up way that maximises opportunities.

Active Travel means walking and cycling, including electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters, for everyday short-distance journeys, such as journeys to school, work, or for access to shops, services and bus and rail stations. By investing in active travel we are encouraging people to adopt healthier lifestyles and promoting lower carbon transport. This is a preventative approach that integrates complementary goals, and will require working with our partners to design and deliver the solution.

Equality and Diversity

Keeping our communities connected allows everyone to have a voice. Whether this means the ability to access the internet, reach a meeting, or communicate in their chosen language.

Our Corporate Plan projects to improve council information and services online and to tackle digital exclusion will include interventions to ensure services are accessible for everyone. Our website is one of the key platforms for the council to provide advice and information to the public. We have been trialling out our brand new website in order to hear the public's views. The website has been completely redesigned to meet the requirements of the Equalities Act, which expects all public sector organisations to have accessible websites by September 2020. Making a website accessible means that it can be used by people with impaired vision, motor difficulties, learning disabilities, deafness or impaired hearing. The new website has a very different look and feel from the old one. It has a clear and simple design; it should be easier to read in terms of font, colours and contrast, and the language should be easy to understand. It has also been designed so that it can be used on as many digital devices as possible.

Social distancing and hygiene related signage has been erected in our busiest town centres. Some additional signs were developed specifically with Vision Support to highlighting the need to be mindful of guide dog and white cane users when social distancing. We also hope that improvements to active travel routes are also benefiting people with disabilities through improved accessibility, particularly in relation to routes linked to schools.

We continue to monitor the percentage of people reporting they were able to communicate with us in their preferred language. 97.7% of Community Support Services' service users say they are able to communicate in their preferred language.

What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?

We will continue to deliver against the projects that support this priority throughout 2020 to 2021:

Travel to Work, Education and Services: We will continue to invest in active travel and parking improvements.

Superfast Broadband and Mobile Networks: During 2020 to 2021 we will continue our work with the Nantglyn community; ensure new housing developments are fit for purpose from a connectivity perspective; continue to promote options for improving connectivity;

and explore further improvements that we need to make to our own assets to improve connectivity.

Access to Information and Services: Subject to feedback and any necessary amendments our brand new-look website will go live in September 2020. We will focus on providing more services online and allowing customers to access a wide range of information about council services, as well as registering requests, making payments and getting involved in consultations.

Digital Exclusion: Our Digital Support Officer will continue to work with identified groups, businesses and residents to improve connectivity. We will review and update IT provisions within libraries, housing services, sheltered homes and residential settings. We will progress with training front line staff in social care, libraries and housing to help them and their clients, also targeting wider council staff that were identified as having poorer digital skills during the Covid-19 redeployment work. It is also our hope to progress virtually with our intergenerational pilot between Ysgol Caer Drewyn and Cysgod y Gaer residential home, which seeks to raise IT understanding amongst older people.

Finally, since July 2020 the project has started to scope out where it can help with the economically vulnerable. Libraries will be bidding for funding in September 2020 to create IT resource rooms to help the public with virtual spaces for job interviews or other virtual appointments. Other possibilities are being looked into.

Infrastructure for Events: Recognising this as an important strand for stimulating the economic recovery of Denbighshire, as restrictions allow we will work through the remainder of this financial year to continue our investment in key infrastructure, and in particular see how we can attract larger events to the County.

Roads and Bridges: During 2020 to 2021, we will deliver the fourth year of a 10-year maintenance programme for bridges and other highway structures. The aim of this programme is to minimise the need to implement weight restrictions on our bridges.

Resilient Communities: The council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Denbighshire has seen an 11% increase in the number of repeat victims of domestic abuse during 2019 to 2020 when compared with the previous year, rising from 428 to 475. As a whole, North Wales saw a -1.4% decrease in repeat victims of domestic violence in 2019 to 2020. Figures for April to June 2020 also show an increase of 14.5% since the same period last year, rising from 110 to 126 repeat victims.

Denbighshire saw an increase the number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse in 2019 to 2020, from 93 to 98 (+5.4%). The overall picture for North Wales shows repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse decreased by -12.7%. Between April to June 2020 there were 23 repeat offenders of domestic abuse, compared to 14 for the same period last year. Repeat offenders are classed as people who have committed a Domestic Abuse offence on three or more occasions in 12 months; therefore, the value for each month is a snapshot of the previous 12 months.

The number of resources provided by Denbighshire on the Dewis Cymru website increased through 2019 to 2020 to 536, but fell in April to June 2020 to 470. The council does not control Dewis Cymru resources, but does, however, encourage all services and service users to look to this for community information. The number of resources on Dewis for North Wales has also fallen since our last report to 2,381. The number of national resources published have increased to 10,583.

Data for the average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes has decreased throughout 2019 to 2020 from 1021 to 970. A small increase to 984 was then seen during April to June. Although we remain high in relation to the Wales average (800), it is understood that Denbighshire has a high average age population. Our agreed target was to remain below 1,200.

Finally, data for the end of the year reveals that the council carried out 1124 assessments of need for support for carers during 2019 to 2020. During April to June 2020 111

assessments were completed. This is a new measure so we are unable to compare for the same period in the previous year.

Unfortunately, disruption to reporting caused by Covid-19 means that there is no new data for a number of this priority's performance indicators. These have been highlighted in the tables below with our last known position.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Involvement in shaping and improving services

Our confidence in the delivery of this project remains high, though not as originally intended. Aspects that required building strong face-to-face engagement opportunities are now having to be reconsidered. Over the coming months we will assess the ongoing impact of Covid-19 to determine a safe way forward with delivering our engagement work, particularly for those vulnerable and digitally isolated residents who may struggle with more innovative digital engagement mechanisms.

Supporting Carers

The work that we did under this project prior to the onset of Covid-19 and the lockdown put us in a stronger position when it came to responding to the outbreak. Good lines of communication and a skilled project team had already been established. The aim of the project, that all carers in Denbighshire feel supported, has been more important than ever and work is continuing to identify and support carers of all ages, including young carers. It was agreed that the best way forward was to develop a joint approach with the third sector, focusing on the immediate response and the support needed.

Community Resource Teams

A significant project is that of designing seamless health and social care services in the form of Community Resource Teams. Denbighshire is working in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) to deliver this project, with BCUHB being the lead delivery partner. The aim of the Community Resource Teams is to deliver comprehensive, flexible and responsive multi-agency and multi-disciplinary community health and social care services. These are easily and seamlessly accessible from the citizen's perspective. Ruthin's Community Resource Team was established in February

2019. Rhyl's has been in place since 2017. This year a new hub has been established in Denbigh, and despite Covid-19, staff have successfully collocated to those premises.

Community Planning, Windfarms

The community development website resources that Denbighshire developed during 2018 to 2019, which sought to give communities and groups the tools and advice they need to see their ideas and projects come to fruition, has continued to reap significant benefits during the response to Covid-19 as the immediate priorities of our communities changed. Community Development officers have been supporting our City, Town and Community Councils and other community groups to help access new streams of funding that have emerged, as well as promoting what is available through the various windfarm funds Denbighshire can access. The Brenig Windfarm Fund, for example, launched an early third round of funding, which closed in August, in response to Covid-19 to help community resilience. This led to a significant increase in community development enquiries as groups begin planning for Covid-19 recovery and to resume the development of longer term project plans.

Covid-19 has caused a delay in the launch of the Clocaenog Windfarm Fund, which has meant that other project milestones relating to the delivery of community development workshops are unlikely to be met now. Alternative methods of delivering themed information and guidance to our communities will instead be explored. However, the Grant Manager has been appointed and the launch of the fund is now anticipated in the autumn, 2020.

Reduce Domestic Abuse

This is such an important area of work for the council, particularly recognising the rise in domestic abuse that has been seen in our County over the last year, and in recent months during the lockdown. Denbighshire has now appointed a dedicated Project Manager to coordinate the work of this project and we have identified several work streams to take forward during 2020 to 2021. These include supporting the North Wales Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy 2018 to 2023, and ensuring a more consistent approach to identifying those who experience violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The council will work to ensure that we meet our legislative requirements, and the National Training Framework for VAWDASV.

Access to Information

The Denbighshire Library Strategy 2019 to 22 aims to ensure that 'People can access the resources and information they need to live well' and that 'People can access information and services locally'. Libraries deliver this by 'being the access point in each community to local and national information to support individuals and communities' employment, health, well-being, and learning'. Libraries host a wide range of well-being services, including Talking Points and Citizens Advice, and are the location of choice for services to meet their clients and raise awareness of their services, as libraries are perceived as trusted, neutral and local.

In addition to this, as mentioned under our 'Access to Information and Services' project under our Connected Priority, Denbighshire's new website will meet strict accessibility standards and hopefully be another tool to support the independence and resilience of our residents.

Dementia Friendly Council

February 2020 saw Denbighshire County Council being given national recognition for its efforts to work towards becoming a dementia friendly council. The council achieved Alzheimer's Society recognition through its Dementia Friendly Communities initiative for its work to raise awareness and support those living with dementia.

There are 11,000 people living with dementia in North Wales, with 1,511 of those in Denbighshire. The number of people living with dementia in North Wales is expected to almost double by 2030. As part of its work to support those with dementia the council has delivered Dementia Friends information sessions for staff and councillors, set up a staff engagement network, and libraries offer a books on prescription service. There is a reduction in council tax for people living with dementia, while free fire safety checks in homes and help with wheelie bins is also provided. Future plans include an e-learning package to inform staff and councillors; a premises audit for dementia friendly buildings; and libraries will be introducing the loan of memory boxes. The council will be inviting people living with dementia to inform and influence changes in working practices, as well as working with the County's Dementia Friendly Towns to share learning and experiences.

Rhyl Community Development

The council has made significant inroads with its work to support community development in Rhyl, working closely with partners and the third sector, including Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Welsh Water, the Regional Community Cohesion Team, and colleagues in Waste Management. Several projects have been progressed, including a review of the effectiveness of support services and providers available in Rhyl; the development of a Rhyl Community Grant Fund to allow environmental improvements; and the Denbighshire Diverted Giving Scheme, which is to be piloted in Rhyl. Our work was disrupted due to Covid-19 but is now being picked up again, including plans to address Anti-Social Behaviour on the High Street, and a project to stimulate community cohesion and community action through a street cleansing initiative.

Annual or Biennial Measures

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
The percentage of people reporting they have received the right information or advice when they needed it – Benchmarked Locally	88	No data due to Covid-19	Acceptable
The percentage of carers reporting they feel supported to continue in their caring role – Benchmarked Locally	55	No data due to Covid-19	Priority for improvement
The percentage of people reporting that they know who to contact about their care and support – Benchmarked Locally	84	No data due to Covid-19	Acceptable
The percentage of people who agree "my local area is a place where people will pull together to improve the local area" – Benchmarked Locally	59	Does not apply No Survey	Acceptable
The percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area – Benchmarked Locally	27	Does not apply	Priority for improvement

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
		No Survey	

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Measure	Quarter 1 2019 to 2020	Quarter 2 2019 to 2020	Quarter 3 2019 to 2020	Quarter 4 2019 to 2020	Quarter 1 2020 to 2021	Status
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse including non-crime occurrences (3 or more in 12 months, measured as year to date)	110	231	370	475	126	Does not apply Count only
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse (3 or more in 12 months)	14	36	63	98	23	Does not apply Count only
The number of live resources on the Dewis Cymru Platform – Benchmarked Locally	482	459	531	536	470	Excellent
The number of assessments of need for support for carers undertaken during the year	No data	No data	876	1224	111	Does not apply Count only
The average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are	1021	1008	977	970	984	Priority for improvement

supported in residential care homes – Benchmarked Nationally						
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Progress on projects

The following projects are all on target for completion:

- Community Resource Teams
- Dementia Friendly Council
- Act to reduce domestic abuse

The following projects are experiencing obstacles:

- Community planning, windfarms
- People are involved in shaping and improving services
- Supporting carers

The following project is closed:

- Access to information

Case study

A carer's story

A district nurse visited a carer recently, only to discover that they had absolutely no food except one box of cereal. This was reported to the emergency duty team who in turn contacted North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) to see what support could be put in.

NEWCIS delivered a food box to the carer that same day, which provided them with fresh food and produce. The carer was over the moon and very relieved. It was clear that the carer was not confident in understanding what support was available to her and she had not been able to put in place the support that was needed to keep herself and her family safe.

Sustainable Development

Within this priority we are taking forward an important engagement project that intends to both strengthen our approach to managing our involvement processes, and also move towards more of a co-production type model of delivery. This will see residents being involved with shaping services much earlier than is usually the case, and in an ongoing manner. Developments here will lay the foundations for stronger involvement in general. A number of areas, driven by a desire to prevent further need, are planned that will require a collaborative approach, namely:

- Improving support for carers.
- Integration of health and social care.
- Tackling domestic abuse.

Case Study

Digital Library

The Library Service continued to provide a valued service during lockdown, despite the buildings being closed and the staff team being redeployed to our proactive calling work. Our Digital Library offer was heavily promoted through social media and other channels and 428 new members joined online since mid-March. The offer was strengthened by a £250k investment from WG into the all-Wales Borrowbox service of downloadable e-books and e-audiobooks to increase the range and volume of stock available to meet the surge in demand. Registered users in Denbighshire increased by 75% and loans by 85% (March to May). Denbighshire also invested in Pressreader, giving free digital access to over 3000

worldwide newspapers and magazines, and library members were also able to access Ancestry free from home.

The Bookstart team, working from home, produced a live bilingual rhymetime on Facebook every week, and recorded and published online rhyme and story videos. They were invited to record a video for Booktrust Cymru's website to encourage new parents to share songs, rhymes and books with their babies.

Equality and Diversity

Since the start of lockdown and up until August 16, 2020, the council, with the support of Denbighshire Leisure Ltd, had proactively contacted more than 9,250 shielded people and residents aged 70 or over who have been isolating to offer advice and support and ensure that they can access the supplies and services they need whilst remaining at home. This has included referrals to community groups, local charities and council services for tailored help, including grocery shopping, medication collection, telephone befriending and basic care needs assessments.

The feedback from residents has been very positive with many telling us how appreciative they were of the calls. Over 80 staff from across the council were involved, with many officers quickly adapting to working in a completely different way. Staff were thanked for their dedication and hard work during the process alongside our external partners, including Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC) and the British Red Cross.

Residents can still use the [community resource list](#) for contact details and web addresses of local shops willing to deliver supplies, and where to go for local and national help and support. Residents can also access information, advice and assistance, which includes our Telephone Befriending Service, by contacting Single Point of Access on 0300 456 100.

In line with WG guidance, Libraries have gradually reintroduced services through a phased approach to ensure the safety and confidence of customers and staff. In mid-June we introduced an Order and Collect Service, offering customers an opportunity to select and order their own books from the online catalogue, or ask staff to choose books for them. The books are then collected by appointment. The Home Library Service was also re-introduced, making deliveries direct to people's homes. 2,677 customers have used the

Order and Collect to date, and feedback demonstrates how it is valued by customers and the positive impact having access to library books has on people's well-being.

Children have been able to participate in the Summer Reading Challenge online and by collecting a challenge pack and books from the library. Families of young children can also collect a Bookstart pack from their local library as part of a national pilot scheme with Booktrust Cymru.

In late July / early August, after the fitting of safety screens on all our counters, we reintroduced access by appointment to public ICT facilities and printing, and to the One Stop Shop Service dealing with council enquiries and payments. To date, over 500 customers have used these services.

The council has been working to respond to the requirements of the Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 through its programme to modernise the way social services deliver. This work places greater emphasis on the outcomes of individuals, including outcome-focussed conversations. Children and adults receiving support and service provision are offered a "What Matters" conversation for individual support packages.

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales launched their strategy for "Making Wales the Best Place in the World to Grow Older" in 2019. We have examined the Strategy in detail to ensure that our work aligns with the three key priorities identified by the Commissioner, and we are confident that we will be delivering against the activities outlined, either through our Corporate Plan projects, or within our service provisions. Further, we have done considerable work to review our Ageing Well in Denbighshire Action Plan so as to respond to the Commissioner's strategy, and we were nearly there with our final document until Covid-19 struck. We now aim to have this finalised by the end of 2020.

Case Study

Click and collect

"I just wanted to say how wonderful it is that even though it is closed the library is doing an Order and Collect service. I've been so alone, my family live abroad and all I have are books. It's wonderful to see the friendly faces of the staff, but most of all the books. It's like having friends returning from a long trip, and the gift is the stories locked up inside them. The library is an essential service for a lonely man living in uncertain times."

“I just wanted to extend a big thanks of gratitude to the Library and their wonderful Click and Collect service, as someone who was self-isolating this has been a wonderful highlight to very long days. It's lovely that the Library is just a phone call away and they'll try their very best to get the books I would like to read and even throw in a book I would never think about reading - big thank you to whomever chooses the random crime book for me, you've never let me down yet.”

What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?

We will continue to deliver against the projects that support this priority throughout 2020 to 2021:

Involvement in shaping and improving services: We will continue to enhance use of the [County Conversation Portal](#) to ask for resident input, giving them the opportunity to get involved with as much as possible.

Supporting carers: We will continue our work to identify and support carers of all ages, increasing awareness that carers don't have to cope alone and that help is available. We will promote online training for carers, including webinars and courses from Promas and TIDE, and we aim to identify key themes of support for young carers.

Community Resource Teams: During 2020 to 2021 we will be progressing plans for another Community Resource hub in Prestatyn, working in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

Community Planning: We will be developing resources to support access to approximately £850k of all Wind Farm community grant funding by March 2021.

Reduce Domestic Abuse: We will work with our partners, including the North Wales Police, to develop a County-wide approach to reducing violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence against men and women. Thirteen strands of work have been identified for this project, ranging from training, awareness raising, improvement in processes, and work with victims and perpetrators. It is a significant undertaking and we will endeavour to progress these through 2020 to 2021.

Access to Information: We will continue to deliver on our Library Strategy 2019 to 22, which aims to ensure that ‘People can access the resources and information they need to

live well' and that 'People can access information and services locally'. We will also launch our new accessible website in September 2020.

In early September 2020, we will be able to offer library visits by appointment to enable customers to browse and select their own books, and to use library spaces for private study and Wi-Fi access.

Should Welsh Government introduce a second lockdown, the council will be in touch with residents who are advised by the Chief Medical Officer for Wales to shield again.

Dementia Friendly Council: We remain confident that in the next 12 months we will complete our action plan and maintain an annual recognition process. In partnership with the Alzheimer's Society, we will continue our programme of training for staff, including training Dementia Champions who will offer the resource within our organisation to train other colleagues. We also intend to set up a forum for individuals and their carers living with Dementia.

Rhyl Community Development: During 2020 to 2021 we will continue with a number of key engagement projects, and in particular seek to recruit 10 to 15 local people to act as Community Champions for West Rhyl, assisting in the monitoring of environmental crime, improving community safety, and be involved with creating community green spaces in the area. We will also launch a waste management campaign, and progress with our Diverted Giving pilot.

Environment: Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity

Measures: Good

Projects: Excellent

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Our measures framework for this priority is at the moment entirely concerned with annual data, and actually there is very little new data to report on. Three measures are derived from our Residents' Survey, which was not planned to take place this year; and two further measures, highlighted in the table below, are not yet ready to report on.

What we can say is that the council has continued to reduce carbon emissions from its estate, seeing a reduction of 15.69% in 2019 to 20, compared with emissions levels the corporate plan was developed. This was achieved by a reduction of 8,822.65 (tonnes) in our own buildings where we pay the bills and 1,908.17 (tonnes) in our fleet. This has exceeded our ambition of a 15 percent reduction by 2022.

Finally, the council's tree planting programme has continued, seeing 4,300 trees planted in 2019 to 2020. A total of 10,100 trees have now been planted through the project over three years. Volunteer planting activities have obviously been impacted by Covid-19, but Year 4 planting activities remain on track to be delivered between November 2020 to March 2021.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Carbon Emissions

Since the council's Climate and Ecological Change Emergency declaration, work has taken place to develop the following objectives for the council:

- For the council to become a net carbon zero organisation at the latest by 2030.
- For the council to become an ecologically positive organisation at the latest by 2030.

A very popular and well attended public workshop was held in February to capture residents' concerns and hopes for the future. These in turn were fed into workshops that have been held virtually during the pandemic with every service management team across the council, seeking to further draw out actions that the council can take forward in the next ten years. This work will be developed in the coming months for input and public consultation in the autumn, leading eventually to a Strategy and Action plan document for Scrutiny appraisal, and Cabinet and Council approval in early 2021.

Reducing Plastics

During 2019 to 2020 the council consulted with its staff about how to reduce the use of plastics in its civic offices. Some simple steps were agreed, which included the removal of all automated coffee machines. Coincidentally then, these machines were switched off during the pandemic because our offices were not in use, but we are now waiting for the contractor to return to normal operations to remove the machines. Water coolers, again, have been turned off and all plastic cups have long been removed.

The next phase of the project will consider plastic reduction by our school catering service. This work was placed on hold during the closure of schools, education and catering teams instead concentrating on providing free school meals to those eligible. As schools begin to return to some normality, we will again consider how to progress this project with them.

Tree Planting and Open Space

As we have seen from the data, work on our Tree Planting project has continued to progress well. In Rhyl, we were actually able to plant more trees than our initial target, contributing to the council's efforts to regenerate the town and increase the canopy there. In Denbigh, however, we fell slightly short of our target because of a lack of planting space. This, however, will not be a problem in Year 4, as the council has now purchased a piece of land adjacent to Denbigh allotments to provide much needed planting space. It is also worth noting that, prior to Covid-19, a record number of volunteers and community groups attended the volunteer planting days. It is always great to work with the community on such activities and support this important area of work.

In response to Covid-19 guidelines the car park at Glan Morfa was closed during the early stages of the pandemic to reduce the number of visitors travelling to the site by car.

However, the council left the site open for the benefit of residents in Rhyl. Similarly, Glan Morfa, Brickfields Pond and Rhyl Cut played an important role during the difficult lockdown period, ensuring residents had access to green space. To encourage and enable social distancing, signage was erected and the paths and access points were regularly maintained by Countryside Service staff.

Flooding

A significant two-year project to defend 1,650 properties in East Rhyl from flooding started in April 2020. The main contractor, Balfour Beatty, put in a range of additional measures adhering to the latest UK guidelines around Covid-19 to ensure that the work could continue. The Scheme represents a £27 million investment by Welsh Government and Denbighshire County Council to place 128,000 tonnes of rock armour in front of existing sea defences, as well as 600 metres of new sea defence wall and promenade.

Improving Biodiversity and Nature Corridor

Prior to the pandemic, this project was performing well. 2019 to 2020 was a successful survey year, seeing an increase in all aspects from 2018: the numbers of sand lizards recorded; total number of records taken; number of common lizards recorded; volunteer hours spent on the dunes; scheduled and unscheduled surveys undertaken; and the overall total number of surveys conducted on site. Also our work to grow native locally sourced wildflowers with the Woodland Skills Centre in Denbighshire has been used as a case study of good practice by Welsh Government.

Conservation and volunteering guest lectures at Glyndŵr University progressed well through 2019 to 2020, seeing an increase in the number of students applying for dissertation projects and volunteering opportunities. A day of Natterjack Toad pond restoration was also arranged for the students to participate in. We also began a new project to create a green / blue corridor linking and improving natural resources across the three counties of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Conwy, funded by a Welsh Government grant.

However, many of our activities have been or are still on hold because of Covid-19. The 2020 sand lizard survey rota was issued to volunteers and staff but then cancelled; and the Bee Friendly project was stopped while schools were closed. All group surveying has

been cancelled due to Covid-19, but in the meantime we have supplied students with historical data to ensure they were still able to complete their assignments and dissertations. Activities will hopefully resume soon, but only when it is safe to do so.

Moorland Management

In response to the Llantysilio fire in summer 2018, the council's Communities Scrutiny Committee produced a comprehensive report into all aspects of the fire. It found the need for better communication between all stakeholders, improved management of the moorland, and a proactive approach to prevent further wildfires. To achieve this, the Committee recommended the appointment of a Moorland Officer to coordinate activity and help landowners and graziers to manage the moorland to improve its general health. Working in partnership with Natural Resources Wales, funding for 3 years has been secured for this role, the post being advertised in the summer, 2020. Further funding has been secured through Natural Resources Wales for restoration works on Llantysilio Mountain.

Living Assets

This project seeks to develop a sustainable approach to the management of trees in our ownership, as well as promote the benefits of trees to residents. During 2019 to 2020 the council appointed a new Tree Officer to progress the project, which will also include responding to difficult challenges posed by the Ash Tree Dieback. Our delivery confidence for the work remains on target, though there was inevitable disruption resulting from lockdown measures. Nonetheless, progress has been made with our tree mapping and management software, which has started to be put to use; and work has begun on researching and developing a council Tree and Woodland strategy.

Energy Efficient Council Homes

During 2019 to 2020 we have carried out further energy assessment work and insulation improvements to help us reach our ambition that 70% of our council housing stock will achieve at least a 'C' energy rating by 2022. 50 properties have benefitted from the installation of cavity wall insulation, using Thermabead insulation; and as part of our Welsh Housing Quality Standards Maintenance Programme, a further 30 properties have benefitted from A rated windows. A further work programme has also been undertaken to

identify properties where only a small energy gain is required to reach a 'C' rating, which saw the energy efficiency of 21 additional properties successfully lifted.

A high proportion of the housing stock that is off the gas network will require innovative heating improvements in order to achieve our desired rating. We have therefore piloted the installation of Air Source Heat pumps, which has proved successful. Our aim is to roll this out to over 300 properties.

One aspect of our work is at risk due to a lack of clarity from Welsh Government on de-carbonisation targets in Wales. It is anticipated that the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) threshold will be raised above our current target, which will have consequences on the kind of improvements we make, and significantly add to the cost.

Tourism Strategy

We have published a new Tourism Strategy for 2019 to 2022, which supports this priority. [This can be viewed on our website.](#) At the heart of our strategy is a particular focus on delivering things sustainably, and working in partnership with others in the sector. The three key aims that we want to achieve for Tourism in Denbighshire are:

- People visit Denbighshire throughout the year
- People stay in Denbighshire longer
- People spend more money in the County

However, we are also very clear in our strategy of our responsibility to ensure that by increasing tourism in the County we must not jeopardise the assets that attract our visitors in the first place.

Annual or Biennial Measures

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
Percentage reduction - from a 31/03/17 baseline – in carbon emissions (tonnes) from council assets – Benchmarked Locally	13.69	15.69	Excellent

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
STEAM - Total Economic Impact of Tourism (£ million) – Benchmarked Locally	509.01	Data pending	Excellent
The percentage of existing and acquired council housing stock (1st April 2017 baseline) achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of C or above – Benchmarked Locally	33	Data pending	Priority for improvement
The cumulative number of trees planted to increase canopy cover in Rhyl and Denbigh – Benchmarked Locally	5800	4300	Excellent
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Countryside – Benchmarked Locally	87	Does not apply No Survey	Excellent
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Beaches – Benchmarked Locally	70	Does not apply No Survey	Good
How satisfied are people with their local open spaces? – Parks – Benchmarked Locally	64	Does not apply No Survey	Good

Our measure around the number of properties with a reduced risk of flooding (1,000s) will not be reported until the completion of identified flood schemes, starting in 2020.

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Our measure on the percentage of all new build council housing achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of A will not be reported until the completion of new builds in 2021.

Progress on projects

The following projects are on target:

- Climate and ecological change programme
- East Rhyl coastal defence
- Urban tree planting
- Protect and enhance Denbighshire's 'living assets'
- Moorland management and wildfire prevention

The following projects are experiencing obstacles:

- Improving biodiversity
- ENRaW nature corridor
- Reduce the council's use of plastics (phase 2)

The following project is at risk:

- Improving energy efficiency in council houses

Case studies

Little Tern Colony

The work of protecting the Little Tern colony at Gronant, the only colony of its kind in Wales, has carried on over recent months, despite the Covid-19 outbreak, with Denbighshire Countryside Service introducing safe working measures to protect the colony from human disturbance, predation and extreme weather events.

The colony is among only a few colonies implementing protection for the little terns this season, making our efforts more important than ever. It is of vital importance that we continue to protect the last little tern colony in Wales, despite these exceptional circumstances.

The work is carried out by wardens with support from volunteers, but due to the Covid-19 restrictions, staff from Denbighshire Countryside Services have taken over warden duties. To date, the counts of birds has been 300+, with 172 nests created and many pairs that lost their nests have now re-laid.

Waste and Recycling Parks

The online booking system developed as restrictions were lifted for the use of Denbighshire County Council's waste and recycling parks proved to be extremely popular by site users and staff. Many residents asked us to keep the system in place. It reduces any queueing of traffic, the visits to the waste and recycling parks are quicker and more efficient, and it is generally a safer way to operate the sites. For these reasons we have decided to run with this system indefinitely. We will monitor future performance of the new way of working to evaluate and implement any process modifications as required.

Changing Ranger Role

Our rangers faced some significant changes to their roles during the lockdown, especially when England started to relax their restrictions. We found our sites were getting busier and busier even though Wales was still in full lockdown. Rangers had to start patrolling Moel Famau on a regular basis, helping advise visitors of the lockdown regulations, and liaising with North Wales Police. On weekends in the early stages between 50 and 60 cars were turned away from Moel Famau each day, but towards the end of lockdown this increased to nearly 100. We are pleased now to have reopened our sites to welcome people back to enjoy our beautiful country parks.

Sustainable Development

Our Corporate Plan's focus on the preservation of the natural environment and maintenance of its biodiversity was as a result of our County Conversation engagement. As part of this exercise voices from young people in the community were heard and listened to. They were concerned about the future of the environment and wanted the council to more actively pursue change under this theme.

We are working closely with Natural Resources Wales to plant 18,000 trees by 2022, a long-term commitment to the environment, and to provide shaded community recreation spaces.

During 2019 to 2020 we have agreed important changes in our waste and recycling collections, which include:

- A new weekly collection for recyclables such as paper, glass, cans, and plastic.
- A new weekly collection for nappies and incontinence wear.
- A weekly collection for food waste.
- A new fortnightly collection for clothes and small electrical items.

The aim is to encourage more recycling on top of the council's current rates (64%) to meet the Welsh Government's 70% target by 2025, with an expectancy that the target will rise to 80% in future. The new facilities that are needed to support the service should be in place early 2021, with the aim of the whole County being moved across to the new service by July 2021.

In-keeping with the low carbon theme, we plan to reduce the level of our carbon emissions from our own assets and we'll ensure that all new-build council homes have an energy efficiency rating of 'A'. This demonstrates our approach to maximising benefits from projects, and integrating with our Housing Priority.

Equality and Diversity

In Denbighshire we have made huge progress to not only safeguard our astounding natural resources, but to also make it easier than ever for all people to experience them. The [Accessible Denbighshire webpages](#), for example, provide interactive maps that allow user to decide whether they feel the route is suited to their individual needs and ability. Numerous routes are available to explore, with a link to each site featured.

As lockdown restrictions were eased, we progressed a number of important community engagement activities. This included the induction of the Syrian families to the allotment site in Rhyl, supporting them to grow their own food and create their own patch of green. They now have free access to the site and we have made as much provision as possible for them to get off on the best foot, such as weeding the beds, filling with topsoil, providing

tools, seeds and assistance. This group will continue to be supported through monthly Zoom sessions and seasonal practical sessions.

Pebble snake art workshops took place in August 2020, another way of fostering community cohesion. This came about after the snake created by residents during lockdown around the Brickfields pond was removed to continue to allow safe access to the site, particularly for those with disabilities. The workshops have been a way of continuing to capture the community energy and enjoyment of residents in an art project that grew spontaneously during difficult times.

Case Study

Access to the Beach

The East Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme will protect 1,650 properties in East Rhyl and is funded through the Welsh Government, as well as part funding by Denbighshire County Council. Work started on site in April and is on target to be completed by December 2022.

Material including large rock will continue to be delivered to the site to enable the construction of the rock armour revetment, which will commence in October. The revetment is expected to take around eight months to build. Work is progressing well and by the end of August, preliminary works will start on forming the first of three permanent beach access points.

In response to requests from beach users, the contractor for the East Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme has been able to provide access to be the beach at weekends from Marine Drive, near Old Golf Road. A visitor centre has also been set up at the site compound and members of the public are welcome to drop by to discuss the scheme with the public liaison officer. Further information about the project can also be found on [this website](#).

What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?

We will continue to deliver against the projects that support this priority throughout 2020 to 2021:

Climate and Ecological Change Programme: We will consult upon and publish our Action Plan to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive organisation by 2030.

Tree Planting: We will continue with our ambitious programme to plant 18,000 trees by the end of 2022. Year 4 planting in Rhyl is on track to be delivered between November 2020 to March 2021. The target of 2,400 trees will actually be exceeded by 2,000 trees this year as additional planting opportunities and external funding has been secured. A community orchard will also be planted in Denbigh in November 2020 where the Vale of Clwyd and Denbigh Plum will feature strongly.

East Rhyl Coastal Defence: Our contractor will continue the work on this project, which is anticipated to take two years. By 2022, 500 properties will be protected.

Improving Biodiversity and Nature Corridor: We will manage a pilot of 21 sites, which amounts to 62 acres, in a more environmentally friendly way to create wildflower meadows. The pilot includes sites in Prestatyn, Rhyl, Corwen, Cynwyd, Denbigh, Henllan, Llanferres, Llanrhaedr, Pwllglas and Ruthin.

We will work with partners in Flintshire and Conwy to deliver year 2 of our nature corridor delivery plan, nurturing healthy and resilient ecosystems along a large habitat corridor that links some of the most deprived populations in Wales to the wider countryside.

Moorland Management: Aerial seeding of upland grass mix and heather will take place in the autumn, 2020. We will also begin restoration works on Llantysilio Mountain.

Living Assets: Our new tree officer will continue work to map trees in our ownership, progressing with the development of our Tree and Woodland Strategy. We will also aim to understand better the threat and liabilities arising from the Ash Tree Dieback.

Energy Efficient Council Homes: We will continue our programme of energy efficiency improvements to our council stock during 2020 to 2022, including the roll out of Air Source Heat Pumps to 300 properties.

Tourism Strategy: We will continue our Tourism Ambassador Scheme, which includes a website with training modules and resources on the area's natural and cultural assets. The Tourism Team have [a new video](#) highlighting the scheme. You can find details of the scheme [on our website](#).

Young People: A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so

Measures: Priority for improvement

Projects: Good

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Validated attainment data for 2019 to 2020 financial year (which relates to 2018 to 2019 academic year) shows that the percentage of children achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C (Level 2, Key Stage 4), including English or Welsh (1st language), Maths and English Literature, places Denbighshire at 50.9%, against the Wales average of 53.8%. Five out of eight secondary schools performed above the national average. The three schools that did not serve areas that have high levels of deprivation. We had hoped that we were starting to see the beginning of some stabilisation to what has been very volatile data in recent years; and based on Denbighshire's position this certainly seemed to be the case as our performance was more around where we would expect it to be (when compared to the Welsh position) for the cohort / Free School Meal profile of pupils in the County. Covid-19 has introduced a whole new world of volatility of course to pupil assessment, and there will be no published data for attainment this year, or next year. This poses a real challenge to the council in understanding how our schools are performing, but we will continue to work with our School Improvement partners in GwE to ensure that the very best outcomes are being achieved by our pupils.

The Welsh Government has replaced the indicator concerning the percentage of Yr11 pupils who achieved KS4 Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate at National Level (Level 2), and Local Authority data is no longer published. This has meant that we have had to again amend how we assess our performance. The new indicator now presents a local authority points score average, against which Denbighshire achieved 33.8 against the Wales average of 36.4 for 2019 to 2020 (financial year). This has improved from 32.4 the previous year and again appears consistent with our profile position against the rest of Wales.

Based on our last Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) survey, the percentage of pupils who respond positively against pupils' feelings about school shows good

consistency at 86%. The closure of schools due to Covid-19 meant that our end of year surveys could not be completed, however.

The last published data (which relates to 2018 to 2019 academic year) for primary school attendance increased from 94.5% to 94.9%. The Wales median was 94.7%. In Denbighshire there were 93,628 authorised absences (down from 98,933 for 2017 to 2018), against 42,931 unauthorised (up from 40,969). This represents a (-)2.3% decrease in absence from the previous year (136,559, down from 139,902).

Secondary school attendance fell slightly from 93.5% to 93.4%. The Wales median was 93.8%. In Denbighshire there were 89,682 authorised absences (up from 87,092 for the previous year), against 30,432 unauthorised (up from 28,403). This represents a 3.9% increase in absence from the previous year (120,114, up from 115,495). The council continues to work closely with schools to ensure that they are engaging with the council's fixed-penalty process and that the correct coding is applied to absences. The council has also put interventions in place where it has found school procedures around absence are not robust.

Currently 30 schools are providing education in buildings that have the lowest suitability and condition categories (C and D). The completion of Band A and the progression of Band B of the 21st Century Schools Programme will reduce this figure further.

Latest data released from the Child Measurement Programme for Wales reveals a continuing decline in the healthy weight of Denbighshire's 4-5 year olds (68%), placing us now in the 4th quartile (15% below the Wales median) and 2nd worst in Wales. 343 children were measured as overweight or obese.

The Denbighshire data for 18 to 24 year olds claiming work related benefits is an area of concern for us. Not only were we seeing a steady rise in claimants throughout 2019 to 2020, but most significantly now the impact of Covid-19 on the economy has been made clear, with April to June figures placing Denbighshire 4.1% behind the Wales average. Prior to the pandemic, Denbighshire was 2% behind the average. It is a situation that we will continue to monitor, but it underlines the importance of all our recovery efforts and support for businesses. Analysing the data for just 2019 to 20, the economically inactive estimate for our population remained relatively consistent, while the youth claimant count was rising and had been for long enough to argue that there was a trend. Therefore, we

cannot put the rise we were seeing down entirely to the impact of welfare reform, there appearing to be a worsening of the labour market for young people in Denbighshire immediately prior to Covid-19. This was an exaggerated example of the national trend where business confidence is the issue, considering as well the impact of Brexit of course.

Corporate Plan Programme Board: Project Update

Modernising Education Programme

Supporting young people is a priority for the council under our Corporate Plan and so far more than £90 million has been invested in Denbighshire's schools which has seen more than 3,500 pupils benefit from improved facilities.

Christ the Word Catholic School

The new school, which opened in September 2019, has replaced Ysgol Mair and Blessed Edward Jones Catholic high school and is part of the Diocese of Wrexham. It provides for 420 full time pupils aged 3-11 and 500 pupils aged 11-16, funded in partnership by Denbighshire County Council and the Welsh Government through its 21st Century Schools Programme. More than £9million has been spent with local businesses during the construction, more that 70 percent of which were within 30 miles of the site. External works at the new 3-16 Christ the Word Catholic School in Rhyl have now been completed and the full site was handed over to the school in July 2020.

Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd

The brand new £5.3million bilingual church school opposite Bron y Clwyd opened in February 2020. The project was jointly funded between Denbighshire County Council and Welsh Government as part of the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools programme, in partnership with the Diocese of St Asaph.

Welsh Language Centre

During 2019 to 2020 the council has progressed with work on a new Welsh Language Centre in St Asaph, following £1.3m of funding from the Welsh Government. Extensive refurbishment works have been undertaken to transform the former science block at Ysgol Glan Clwyd. The centre will provide Welsh language provision for all ages including, pre-school pupils, support for latecomers to Welsh Medium education in KS 2 and 3, a facility

for the development of Welsh Language resources, and a potential base for Welsh Language delivery partners. In addition, the building will provide a location for the delivery of sabbatical courses by Bangor University, which will boost the language skills of teachers. Our intention was to deliver this by September 2020, and despite significant disruption to works caused by Covid-19, this is still achievable.

Childcare Settings

The council also secured £2.8m for 7 Child Care Centre projects across the County. During 2019 to 2020 the council has been working to progress plans to extend the Oak Tree Centre in Rhyl, and to provide a childcare facility at Ysgol Twm o'r Nant. We are still at the early stages with this work, and there have of course been delays caused by Covid-19.

School Nutrition Project

Our school nutrition project had a great first year, employing a new School Nutrition Coordinator to engage with 9 schools initially, working in close partnership with Public Health Wales, BCUHB, and School Catering. Evaluations so far from staff, parents and pupils have been wholly positive of the programme. Some aspects of the project have been unable to continue during school closures, but our project group have met during the summer to consider alternatives ways of delivery that may ultimately make the project more sustainable in the longer term. How year 2 of the project is to be delivered is being worked through currently and will depend on guidance from Welsh Government and how well schools are able to accommodate the programme alongside Covid-19 safety measures.

Supporting for Parents

Positive progress has been made during 2019 to 2020 with the review of our Parenting Strategy for Denbighshire. The progression of the workstream has been impacted by Covid-19, but the work we did to implement the Solihull approach has been particularly beneficial during the lockdown period, seeing a strong uptake in our online course with over 500 parents accessing provision. We have also changed the way we deliver support, instead offering a telephone service in place of face-to-face parenting groups. It is another great example of flexibility being shown by our projects. In partnership with Betsi

Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) the Solihull course has been made available online for parents until November 2022.

Entrepreneur Space

During 2019 to 2020 the council has progressed with the conversion of the former Costigans pub in Rhyl to provide a digital skills and entrepreneurial hub for enterprising business start-ups, with the advice and networks needed to help them succeed in a growing digital sector. Despite delays caused by Covid-19, Capital works are nearing completion. It will be an exciting new space for our residents.

TechZone

We have effectively placed this project on hold until external funding can be secured. Nonetheless, we have continued to develop our business case for the project and guide the project through the authority's approval processes to help gain that external support.

Young Person Employment Bursary

Despite initial concerns about the slow take up of the bursary, the project was achieving its estimated outputs at less cost than originally anticipated during 2019 to 2020. We expected to help between 10 to 40 individuals with an initial budget of £20k; however, the bursary has approved its applicants using only half its allocated budget, which may potentially allow us to assist more individuals than anticipated. The Covid-19 pandemic has obviously affected the bursary project with fewer applications having been submitted during the lockdown period, and many education and training course providers not delivering. There is uncertainty at the moment what the future demand for the bursary will be, but the council remains committed to having the offer available, not least as a way to help stimulate recovery.

Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS)

As mentioned, our last PASS data continues to paint a positive picture of pupil feelings towards school, but also giving schools valued insight to the well-being of their pupils. Going forward this will be as important as ever, as children readjust to the new normal in schools after lockdown. As we learn more about how schools will operate going forward we will consider how the PASS survey might best be used. We have held discussions to

vary our contract subject to how and when schools will re-open to pupils, but above all we want to ensure that the survey will continue to be available to all schools during the current academic year.

Working Start

Prior to the lockdown, the project was delivering excellently against its outcomes, successfully recruiting and providing 16 paid placements, and 10 unpaid placements. 5 further placements were due to commence in March but were unfortunately placed on hold due to Covid-19.

We have now agreed a new, but ultimately more sustainable model of delivery for Working Start, which will build on the existing scheme and hopefully add value for participants and the council. Participants can expect a more inclusive package of support and training that enhances their employment perspectives post-placement by delivering pre-employment skills and accredited training alongside the work placement. We will also offer small businesses across the County the opportunity to join in with this scheme, providing a package of support where necessary to give them the opportunity to use a work placement to support business survival or growth at little or no risk to themselves.

Working Denbighshire Ready for Work

Working Denbighshire, in partnership with Careers Wales, held three well-attended and successful Ready for Work careers fairs; one in Denbigh, one in Prestatyn, and one in Llangollen. Over 70 employers and providers attend the events offering a widespread selection of sectors to help enrich the experience for students and stretch them beyond the school environment. The careers fairs this year were highly interactive with all exhibitors having an engaging element or activity included at their stand. On leaving the event each student was invited to feedback if they thought the event was 'very useful', 'useful' or 'not useful'. 75% of students found the event was 'Very Useful', 24% considered it to be 'useful' and only 1% deemed the event 'not useful'. Focus groups have been held with some of the students that attended the events with feedback consisting of quotes such as it 'opened a whole world of opportunities all in one room'.

Research is currently underway to explore platforms available to deliver the project virtually in future, and discussions with other organisations and employers to help inform

how the careers events can look to meet the 'new ways of working'. An options appraisal and remodelled plans will be submitted to our Corporate Plan Programme Board for consideration.

Community Benefits Hub

During 2019 to 2020 the council established a new Community Benefits Hub, which aims to maximise the impact of the £100 million that the council spends each year with 3rd party suppliers and contractors. Denbighshire wants to work with those 3rd party suppliers and contractors to bring wider social, economic and environmental benefits to our communities. The Community Benefit approach is becoming more and more common in public sector procurement and it can add value, and increase resources available to communities within Denbighshire. Community benefits can include: targeted job and training opportunities; help and support to local groups and organisations; real and measurable commitments to maximise access to opportunities for local labour, local sub-contractors and local supply chain; improvements to local area such as development; and maintenance of common community assets, general tidying up, planting of trees etc. Our Hub has been operational since March 2020.

Volunteering

We want to make it easier to attract and recruit volunteers. We now promote all volunteering opportunities through [a single centralised volunteering webpage](#) with a short URL: www.denbighhire.gov.uk/volunteering. A supporting policy and documentation are being developed with HR Direct. These will be made available on the webpage once consulted upon and adopted.

Annual or Biennial Measures

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	94.5	94.9	Acceptable
Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools – Benchmarked Nationally	93.5	93.4	Priority for improvement

Measure	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	Status
The percentage of children aged 4-5 years who are a healthy weight or underweight (reported one year in arrears) – Benchmarked Nationally	67.7	Data pending	Priority for improvement
Local Authority Points Score Average - KS4 Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator – Benchmarked Nationally	32.4	33.8	Priority for improvement
The percentage of children achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C (Level 2, Key Stage 4), including English or Welsh (1st language), Maths and English Literature, by the end of secondary school, against the percentage that achieved the expected standard at the end of primary school (Level 4, Key Stage 2) – Benchmarked Nationally	48.7	50.9	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are job opportunities for young people at the start of their career – Benchmarked Locally	19	Does not apply No survey	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are opportunities for young people to develop their skills – Benchmarked Locally	28	Does not apply No survey	Priority for improvement
The percentage of residents that are satisfied that there are leisure opportunities that appeal to young people – Benchmarked Locally	50	Does not apply No survey	Acceptable
The number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D – Benchmarked Locally	34	30	Priority for improvement

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Measure	Quarter 1 2019 to 2020	Quarter 2 2019 to 2020	Quarter 3 2019 to 2020	Quarter 4 2019 to 2020	Quarter 1 2020 to 2021	Status
Percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance – Benchmarked Nationally	6.1	6.2	6.5	6.7	13.1	Priority for improvement
The percentage of pupils (using Pupil Attitudes to Self and School - PASS) who respond positively against pupils' feelings about school – Benchmarked Locally	81.7	Does not apply Bi-annual	86.1	Does not apply Bi-annual	No data due to Covid-19	Good

Project Progress

The following projects are on target:

- Entrepreneur space, Rhyl
- Pupil Attitude to Self and School Survey
- School Nutrition Project
- Community Benefits Hub

The following projects are experiencing obstacles:

- Young Person Employment Bursary
- Working Denbighshire Ready for Work

- Modernising Education Programme
- Techzone
- Supporting Parents

The following project is at risk:

- The Denbighshire Working Start Scheme

Case studies

Dan's Story

Lockdown due to Covid-19 has been a very challenging time for many individuals and Dan was no exception. He has had support from a Communities for Work mentor for over a year, and during that time he has shown great determination and commitment, completing work placements, training courses and started volunteering. Volunteering increased Dan's skills, confidence and helped improve his mental health greatly. However, when lockdown was enforced, Dan struggled with his mental health as he could no longer volunteer and his interaction with people decreased as he lives on his own. His mentor continued to keep in regular contact with him over emails and phone calls and supported Dan to engage with tasks that could keep him occupied while also increasing his skills. A job opportunity then arose in the third sector and Dan's mentor informed him of this opportunity. Dan was very interested in the role as he had been wanting to pursue a career in helping people. He was supported by his mentor to complete the application and was successful in securing an interview. Dan was then supported by both his mentor and the Working Denbighshire Employment Co-ordinator with interview preparation through a number of video calls. Dan was successful at interview and he is now in full time employment; the first time in 9 years. Dan has shown great determination, and even though he has struggled during the very uncertain times, he has not let this stand in his way of reaching his goal of returning to employment.

Sustainable Development

There is a strong focus within this priority on the mental well-being and 'life skills' preparation of young people. This emphasis is as a direct result of involving young people with the County Conversation exercise, with a view to preventing circumstances that would compromise a young person's ability to thrive. Through our County Conversation with young people, we have also been able to better understand their aspirations for the future, and in particular the types of jobs young people will find rewarding, profitable and fulfilling. It is with this in mind that a number of projects in this priority aim to not only provide young people with qualifications, but to provide the jobs and skills needed for the next generation of work.

Our modernising education programme, Band A of which has just been completed, has evolved over the years but from it we have learned valuable lessons about involving pupils, parents, residents and staff in shaping the design of our schools, and as far as possible striving to compliment environmental standards that will ensure the longevity of our settings for generations to come.

The council has also placed significant investment into Rhyl, through a strategic programme of projects named the 'Rhyl Master Plan'. As part of this programme, the renovation of the Rhyl waterfront has received a £25m investment with the intention to provide a boost to the Rhyl economy and creation of over 250 jobs.

Equality and Diversity

In Denbighshire we know that young people need the best start in life to continue to grow be happy, healthy and prosperous. Through the Corporate Plan we have made provision to offer the same opportunities to all young people.

Further work has been done in 2019 to 2020 to embed and understand the output from the Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS) Survey, which has now been rolled out to all primary and secondary schools. This survey scores the attitude and behaviour of our young people against key well-being factors, benchmarked against other UK schools that also use the tool. At a school and pupil level the data can help reveal inequalities at an early stage because the data is broken down by gender, year, ethnicity, free school meal uptake, and pupils with English as an additional language. The project seeks to support

schools to consider areas for improvement, removing barriers to learning for our young people.

The 21st Century schools programme also considers key concerns in relation to the learning environment:

- Access – particularly for people with mobility impairments, a range of planning guidance and building regulation can be considered.
- Gendered facilities – the provision of appropriate facilities for trans pupils has been an issue in the past within the County and needs to be considered.
- Provision of facilities for religious worship.

To diversify the voices being heard in the running of our schools, the council developed a promotional campaign to encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds to become school governors.

Working Denbighshire has continued with its initiative to support people who don't speak English or Welsh as a first language. It aims to help them on their route to employment, cultural orientation, volunteering placements, and to help them integrate into their local community and reduce social isolation. The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses are being delivered in partnership with Adult Learning Wales.

Case Study

Julie's Story

Julie continuously applied for roles prior to lockdown and had attended numerous interviews. However, as lockdown began to see job interviews put on hold or cancelled, Julie missed out on several opportunities due to the uncertainty of the ever changing situation. However, this did not deter Julie and with telephone support from her mentor she continued to apply for roles within administration, particularly in the NHS as this is where her passion lay. With ongoing support and encouragement from her mentor, Julie secured an interview for a relief position within the NHS. Intense interview practice and research into the role then commenced with her mentor, meaning Julie headed into her interview

confident and enthusiastic. Julie received a call later that week saying that they did not want to offer her the relief position, instead wanting to offer her a full time permanent position! Julie was over the moon and could not believe they had offered her this opportunity during the Covid-19 uncertainty.

This was, however, not the end, as Julie had underlying health conditions, and due to Covid-19 her new manager had to complete checks with her specialists before she was able to start her position in the hospital. This took a lot longer than normal and meant Julie had to wait nearly 2 months before she was able to start her new role. Throughout this uncertainty she received support from her mentor who was on the end of the phone whenever help was needed. Julie is now thoroughly enjoying her new role and loves the challenge of her new position within the NHS.

What are we doing in 2020 to 2021?

We will continue to deliver against the projects that support this priority throughout 2020 to 2021.

Modernising Education: We will continue to deliver on the 21st Century Schools programme, modernising our school facilities to ensure that our children have a learning environment that supports their education. Specifically, this will involve work on developing Band B of the programme, focusing on Llangollen, Denbigh and Rhyl.

School Nutrition Project: As appropriate we will continue with the second year of the project, whilst also exploring virtual options for delivery. A further 10 schools will hopefully be recruited.

Support for Parents: During 2020 to 2021 we will finalise our Parenting Strategy, exploring our options for long-term delivery under Covid-19 restrictions.

Entrepreneur Space and TechZone: We will complete works on the Costigans site to deliver a new business space for residents. Pending funding, we will also progress with our business case for the Techzone, providing 'move-on' accommodation in St Asaph for growing businesses.

Young Person Employment Bursary: The council will continue to offer the bursary to help young people in employment progress their careers. We remain committed to this

offer especially during a time when economic recovery is so important. The Employment Bursary can help up to 80 individuals a year with funding of between £250 and £2,000 per person. [More information is available on our website.](#)

Pupil Attitude to Self and School: It remains as important as ever to us that schools have the right tools to assess the well-being of their pupils. Pending the way in which schools will operate from the autumn term, we will continue to explore options for primary and secondary schools to make valued use of the survey.

Working Start and Ready for Work: We will implement from October 2020 new models of delivery for both these projects so that the benefits of the work are not lost under Covid-19 restrictions.

Communities Benefit Hub: We will be offering information sessions from the beginning of September 2020 for Denbighshire staff to increase awareness of Community Benefits and the Hub's work. These will be targeted especially at those involved in commissioning goods, works or services.

Volunteering: By March 2021 we will develop a revised volunteering policy for the council that supports our ambitions as an authority for both staff well-being and development, but also the needs of the community and the environment.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is embedded in the way that we do things at Denbighshire County Council, and is a key consideration for our programme board approach to delivering our corporate priorities.

Our [Well-being Impact Assessment website](#), which is well-used by staff and referenced by councillors to better enable informed decision-making, checks the extent to which the Sustainable Development principles have been applied for any given project, as well as the likely impact (positive or otherwise) within the context of the seven well-being goals.

A process for considering and responding to Community Risk has been devised, by which County-wide risks are recorded and reflected in our Local Assessment of Well-being in order to enable us to identify priorities.

We have also recognised that our approach to engagement needed to shift, so that residents are involved in discussions about decisions that affect them much earlier on in the process than was previously the case. To facilitate this, a new [County Conversation Portal](#) has been launched to better enable us to organise our engagement activity, and to monitor the approach that is taken in order to enable us to look for opportunities to continuously improve.

Equality and Diversity

Through the projects that we deliver, our Corporate Plan commits the council to:

- Engage, where appropriate, with groups that represent people with protected characteristics.
- Consider limitations to physical access, in particular with new builds, but also with regard to access to information and services.
- Consider the appropriateness of the facilities that we have available within the council's estate for use by those people with protected characteristics.

- Engage, challenge and, where possible, remove barriers to opportunities (including work) for those with protected characteristics.
- Condemn hate related bullying and harassment.

Our project and programme management processes, which support the delivery of all projects in the Corporate Plan, enforce these principles; and in particular the council's approach to Well-being Impact Assessments of all projects, plans and policies requiring decision is well embedded and understood by staff and councillors.

Our Equality and Diversity pages on our website also celebrate diversity and promote equality in everything that we do to improve the quality of life for everyone living, working and visiting Denbighshire.

Other actions in support of our Public Sector Equality Duty include:

Training

We provide equality training for staff via an online equality e-learning module. This training is provided for all new employees, and is mandatory for all personnel.

Engagement

Our County Conversation Portal is used to find out what's most important to our communities and helps us to make sure we focus on the right areas. All the work undertaken previously on our County Conversation included contact with groups from protected characteristics.

The council is also a member of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (NWPSSEN), which is a valued forum for sharing best practice and learning around equality issues that the public sector is facing. NWPSSEN membership includes the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Government.

Equality Reporting Elsewhere

Each year we are required, as a Local Authority, to publish reports detailing our commitment and compliance with equality legislation, and to regularly report on pay systems and assess the equality of pay.

At Denbighshire County Council we support the principle of diversity and equality as we need people from diverse backgrounds to ensure that we are representative of the County. We are committed to providing equal pay for work of equal value and aim to provide an equitable pay structure.

We have produced the Public Sector Equality Duty report for 2018 to 2019 detailing our commitment and compliance with this legislation. We have also created a Gender Pay Report 2018 to 2019 reviewing the average earnings between men and women within the council. [Click here to view the most recent reports.](#)

Welsh Language

Denbighshire County Council is fully committed to responding positively to the Welsh language standards, and this has been reflected in our 5 year Welsh Language Strategy. That commitment has not changed and we continue to play our part towards national efforts to increase the number of Welsh speakers to a million by 2050.

The duties arising from the standards mean that the council should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than English, as well as promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language (making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in everyday life). The strategy will need to be reviewed in 2020 to 2021 so that it is operational by 2022, therefore our priority is to deliver a strategy for the next 10 years that will set an ambitious goal and targets to ensure Denbighshire is a County where Welsh culture and heritage is alive and the Welsh language thrives.

Each service within the council has a Welsh Language Champion who regularly monitors progress with the standards, shares best practice, and acts as a 'critical friend'. They carry out 'mystery shopper' checks and arrange awareness sessions and activity for colleagues and learners.

The council recently held its second staff Eisteddfod as it proved to be a very popular event last year. The event is part of the council's efforts to raise the profile and understanding of the language, and to celebrate the culture of Wales. It comes at a time when there is a lot of focus on the Welsh language and the Eisteddfod's return to Denbighshire in May 2021. The response and support received was overwhelming, with over 60 members of staff entering the competitions. Plans are already in the pipeline for 2021.

We want to support employees on their language journey. We encourage employees to practice, and we arrange various informal opportunities throughout the year including:

- Tea and Talk: Informal sessions to increase staff confidence in speaking Welsh.
- Staff Choir: Formed in 2018, Côr Sain y Sir has over 20 members ranging from Welsh learners to fluent speakers. They sing Welsh songs and perform in various events such as the council's carol service and community housing awards.
- Welsh Walking Club: Going on walks once a week during lunchtime in order to practice spoken Welsh.
- Organize various ways / activities of celebrating Wales' national events such as St Dwynwen's Day, St David's Day, Owain Glyndŵr, Shwmae Su'mae, Welsh language Music day, and many more.

All services are also required to produce an annual workforce plan which must consider the number of Welsh speakers employed within services. All Heads of Service are asked to consider whether they have enough Welsh speakers to provide a fully bilingual service to the public.

We have introduced a new framework for staff to self-assess their language skills based on the types of communication tasks (reading, writing, speaking and understanding) they could undertake through the medium of Welsh. This is an effective way of being able to monitor what level of skills are needed for the job, and what course employees need to move to the next level.

The council is an active partner of the Welsh language partnership. The forum is made up of a number of organisations, both local and national, working towards the promotion and strategic development of the Welsh language here in Denbighshire.

Our vision is for greater opportunities for the use of the Welsh language in the workplace, with more emphasis on including specific Welsh language requirements for new posts through:

- Supporting staff to further develop their skills in order to be able to work naturally bilingually, and to encourage and support staff without Welsh language skills to learn the language over a period of time.
- Adopting a recruitment policy that will enable the council to normalise the use of the Welsh language in its daily administration and the services it provides. As a priority, it will focus on the departments that offer a front-line service to customers.

We have developed a mandatory e-learning module which provides a background to the development of the Welsh language, and there is also an opportunity for employees with little or no Welsh Language skills to complete 10 hour online courses through the 'Work Welsh' scheme.

Project Register

Every six months the council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) receives an update on all corporate projects that are underway in Denbighshire. The Project Register (Appendix I) provides the most recent status information extracted from Project Highlight Reports, written by the Project Manager, and approved by the Project Executive.

Currently two projects on the register show a 'compromised' position:

- **Queen's Buildings, Rhyl:** The delivery confidence status remains as 'compromised' at this stage due to the funding shortfall to deliver Phase 1, and the extent of asbestos that needs to be removed prior to demolition.

- **Rhyl Town Centre Gateway Schemes 1 and 2 (123-129 High Street and 129-131 High Street):** The project is experiencing obstacles due to the tenders received exceeding the client budget.

Currently five projects on the register show an 'at risk' position:

- **The Denbighshire Working Start Scheme:** The established model for delivery of this project cannot operate under Covid-19 restrictions. A review has determined upon what we hope will be a more sustainable model of delivery for Working Start, building on the existing scheme and adding value for participants and the council.
- **Improving Energy Efficiency in Council Houses:** The pandemic has impacted upon the schedule of works for this project. The council is also seeking clarification from Welsh Government with regards to all-Wales targets for de-carbonisation, which will likely increase the required Energy Performance Certificate thresholds for our housing. Any increase above our existing ambition will influence the type and cost of improvements.
- **Marketing:** Delivery confidence is very low for most actions in the project at present due to the virus. However, work has continued on the draft marketing policy as business as usual activity becomes more possible for the project manager.
- **Remodelling Waste Service Operations:** Delivery of the new Depot has been delayed due to a number of challenges, including progress with the detailed design due to impact of Covid-19, and delays around completing on the purchase of the site, which in turn has restricted ability to progress works with utilities (again slowed due to Covid-19). In addition, complications of working in collaboration with four businesses to make progress in a coordinated manner through land purchase, design and planning has been challenging and generated significant workload.
- **Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project:** Covid-19 has and will continue to have an impact on this project directly in terms of timeline and issues, but also indirectly in terms of the financial and political landscape in which a match funding request to Denbighshire County Council in November will be made.

Risk Management

The council's Corporate Risk Register (Appendix II) enables us to manage the likelihood and impact of significant risks to our business and services. It evaluates the effect of any current actions that we are undertaking, and highlights areas where tighter control may be needed. The register is developed and owned by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Cabinet, and is formally reviewed twice yearly. Informal reviews can occur at any time as necessary, however. We also manage risk registers for our Corporate Plan programmes, projects and services.

During the year, we did not experience any unforeseen risks and none of our risks developed into an adverse issue. Our risk which is concerned with the council's ability to respond to such emergencies as a public health event (i.e. Covid-19) actually stood the test of the virus outbreak as we continued to maintain statutory services, and more as we responded to the crisis, for the benefit of our residents. The virus has also of course increased the likelihood of a number of our other risks occurring, specifically the risk of a downturn in the economy and increase financial liabilities. Our most recent Corporate Risk review (September 2020) reflects these increased pressures.

Three new risks were created this year:

- The risk that the council does not have the funds or resources to meet its statutory obligations under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- The risk of Ash Dieback Disease (ADB) in Denbighshire leading to significant health and safety issues that represent a potential risk to life.
- The risk that the council is unable to deliver the agenda of Council and external organisations within existing resources.

In our February 2020 review we adapted our approach to mitigating two of our risks:

- The risk that effective partnerships and interfaces between Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Denbighshire County Council do not

develop, leading to significant misalignment between the strategic and operational direction of both organisations. The likelihood of this risk occurring has been mitigated by the completion of our Denbigh Community Resource site, and plans for a further site in Prestatyn.

- The risk that even if the WG financial settlement is as anticipated, decisions that are necessary to identify and deliver the savings programme and enable a balanced budget are not taken or implemented quickly enough. In response to this risk, it was agreed that the council would review its Strategic Investment Group (SIG) process.

In September 2019 we introduced a new risk appetite approach, which was a natural step for the council to mature its application of risk management. At the end of its first year we reviewed our risk appetite statement and have consequently made some enhancements, including the addition of safeguarding as its own appetite classification, and, adhering to accessibility guidelines and responding to feedback from staff, we have made the scoring, escalation and appetite criteria more clear and easy to apply. You can read more about our risk management policy and appetite on our website.

External Regulators

The work of all councils in Wales is scrutinised by external regulators to ensure that we use public money efficiently and effectively to deliver benefits for our communities. Specific to Denbighshire County Council, seven reports were published by our regulators during 2019 to 2020:

Well-being of Future Generations Examination: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The council is taking promising action to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle when taking steps to reduce the risk of flooding, but needs to consider its next steps to further embrace the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Annual Improvement Report: 2018 to 2019

Based on, and limited to, the work carried out by Audit Wales and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to

continuous improvement, but, as will all councils in Wales, it faces challenges going forward.

Delivering with Less: Leisure Services

The council's continued investment in leisure facilities has secured good customer satisfaction, but later stages of its otherwise effective arrangements for considering alternative delivery models were rushed compromising governance.

Review of Corporate Arrangements for Safeguarding

The council has effective arrangements for safeguarding, but it needs to improve monitoring and performance reporting.

Financial Sustainability Assessment

Overall Audit Wales found that the council is in a relatively strong financial position, but needs to strengthen its Medium Term Financial Strategy and control some service overspending to support future financial sustainability.

Inspection of Older Adults Services

During August 2019 Care Inspectorate Wales and the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales undertook a joint review to explore how well the council promoted independence and prevents escalating needs for older adults. Our strengths and weaknesses against the principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act are published in this report.

Local Authority Annual Performance Review Letter 2019 to 2020

This annual letter from the Care Inspectorate Wales provides a summary of the council's strengths and weaknesses against the implementation of the principles behind the Social Services and Well-being Act.

There were no other local reports with recommendations for the council, published by the WAO, Estyn, or Care Inspectorate Wales in 2019 to 2020.

National Data Collections

Public Accountability Measures 2019 to 2020

The decision was made by WG Government and Data Cymru at an early stage of the pandemic to suspend national collection of the Public Accountability Measures (PAMS) to allow Local Authorities to better concentrate on responding to the pandemic. It is not yet clear what the process for the coming year will look like.

Code of Practice: Performance and improvement of Social Services in Wales

The Code of Practice in relation to the Performance and Improvement of Social Services in Wales came into force March 2020. Again, due to unprecedented challenges facing local authorities, the decision was made that there would be no requirement to submit data for 2019 to 2020. Further, accepting the extent of the disruption caused, which will impact on 2020 to 2021 data, it is not anticipated that there will be a requirement to submit data for those years either.

Appendix 1: Project Register (August 2020)

Project Name	Delivery Confidence
Young Person Employment Bursary	Experiencing obstacles
Working Denbighshire Ready for Work	Experiencing obstacles
The Denbighshire Working Start Scheme	At risk
Deliver a co-working space for new enterprises at the former Costigans building	On target
TechZone / ParthDechnoleg: Growth Sector Move-on Accommodation	Experiencing obstacles
Denbigh Extra Care Housing	Experiencing obstacles
East Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme	On target
New build- Christ the Word 3-16 Catholic school in Rhyl	Experiencing obstacles
Ruthin Review - New School for Llanfair DC	On target

Project Name	Delivery Confidence
Ruthin Extra Care Housing (Phase 2)	Experiencing obstacles
PLANT Project : Urban Tree Planting	On target
Improving biodiversity in Denbighshire	Experiencing obstacles
Monitoring and supporting positive pupil attitudes to self and school/well-being	On target
Additional Council Housing Developments	Experiencing obstacles
Target those most likely to be digitally excluded so they have the skills and means to use digital services	On target
Supporting Parents in Denbighshire	Experiencing obstacles
People are involved in shaping and improving services	Experiencing obstacles
Work with RSLs and the private sector to deliver additional affordable homes	On target
Bring 500 Empty Homes back into use	On target

Project Name	Delivery Confidence
Supporting Carers in Denbighshire	Experiencing obstacles
Make superfast broadband and mobile networks available to everyone	On target
Improve infrastructure to make it easier to stage events	Experiencing obstacles
Ensure Council Information and Services are Accessible Online	Experiencing obstacles
Improving Energy Efficiency in Council Houses	At risk
Community Resource Teams	On target
Community Planning - Windfarms	Experiencing obstacles
Community Benefits Hub	On target
Health and Well-being - Nutrition and Cooking Skills	On target
To maintain, enhance, protect and preserve Denbighshire's 'living assets' for future generations	On target

Project Name	Delivery Confidence
Working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council	On target
Develop options to reduce plastics use within Denbighshire County Council (Phase 1 and Phase 2)	Experiencing obstacles
Moorland Management and Wildfire Prevention Project	On target
Act to Reduce Domestic Abuse	On target
Marketing	At risk
Remodelling Waste Service Operations	At risk
Corporate Support Services Review	Experiencing obstacles
Implementation of an ADMC	On target
Queen's Buildings- Rhyl	Compromised
Rhyl Public Realm Strategy	Experiencing obstacles

Project Name	Delivery Confidence
Rhyl Town Centre Gateway Schemes 1 and 2 (123-129 High Street and 129-131 High Street)	Compromised
West Rhyl Neighbourhood Management	On target
Rhyl Town Centre Focussed Enforcement	Experiencing obstacles
Edward Henry Street	On target
Housing Renewals Theme Project	On target
Traffic modelling and design traffic improvement works	Experiencing obstacles
Victorian Post Office	On target
Centralised Mailroom Project	Experiencing obstacles
Commercialisation of the Digital Records Bureau	Experiencing obstacles
Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project	At risk

Project Name	Delivery Confidence
CRM	Experiencing obstacles
Working Denbighshire Strategy	On target
Welsh Language Centre	Experiencing obstacles
Oaktree Centre Extension	Experiencing obstacles
Childcare Facility at Ysgol Twm o'r Nant	None
Capita Regional MIS	Experiencing obstacles
Universal Credit in Denbighshire	On target
Former North Wales Hospital	Experiencing obstacles

Appendix 2: Corporate Risk Register (September 2020)

Risk Description	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk
The risk of a serious safeguarding error where the council has responsibility, resulting in serious harm or death	B2 Critical Risk, Likely / High Impact	D2 Major Risk, Unlikely / High Impact
The risk that the economic and financial environment worsens beyond current expectations, leading to additional demand on services and reduced income	B1 Critical Risk, Likely / Very High Impact	B2 Critical Risk, Likely / High Impact
The risk of an ineffective response to a serious event, such as severe weather, contamination, public safety (including cyber-attack), or a public health event (such as Covid-19).	A2 Critical Risk: Almost Certain / High impact	C3 Moderate risk: Possible / Medium Impact
The risk of a significantly negative report(s) from external regulators	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact	D3 Moderate Risk, Unlikely / Medium Impact
The risk of significant liabilities resulting from alternative models of service delivery	B2 Critical Risk, Likely / High Impact	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact
The risk of a health and safety incident resulting in serious injury or the loss of life. (Where Health & Safety is referred to, this incorporates fire safety)	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact	E2 Moderate Risk, Rare / High Impact

Risk Description	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk
The risk that the impact of welfare reform (Universal Credit) is more significant than anticipated by the council.	B2 Critical Risk, Likely / High Impact	D3 Moderate Risk, Unlikely / Medium Impact
The risk that programme and project benefits are not fully realised.	B2 Critical Risk, Likely / High Impact	D2 Major Risk, Unlikely / High Impact
The risk that effective partnerships and interfaces between Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Denbighshire County Council (DCC) do not develop, leading to significant misalignment between the strategic and operational direction of BCUHB and DCC.	A1 Critical Risk, Almost Certain / Very High Impact	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact
The risk that even if the settlement is as anticipated, decisions that are necessary to identify and deliver the savings programme and enable a balanced budget are not taken or implemented quickly enough	B1 Critical Risk, Likely / Very High Impact	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact
The risk that appropriate capacity and skills to sustain service and corporate performance is not available	C3 Moderate Risk, Possible / Medium Impact	D3 Moderate Risk, Unlikely / Medium Impact
The risk of fraud and corruption resulting in financial and reputational loss and possibly impacting on service delivery	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact	E2 Moderate Risk, Rare / High Impact

Risk Description	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk
The risk that the cost of care is outstripping the council's resource	B1 Critical Risk, Likely / Very High Impact	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact
The risk that demand for specialist care cannot be met locally	B2 Critical Risk, Likely / High Impact	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact
The risk that the return on investment that Denbighshire receives from the Regional Growth Deal is disproportionate	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact
The risk that any negative impacts of leaving the European Union cannot be mitigated by the council	B1 Critical Risk, Likely / Very High Impact	B1 Critical Risk, Likely / Very High Impact
The risk that partners don't have the resources, matching priorities or commitment to support delivery of shared plans and priorities	B1 Critical Risk, Likely / Very High Impact	C2 Major Risk, Possible / High Impact
The risk that the council does not have the funds or resources to meet its statutory obligations under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018	B2 – Critical risk: Likely / High Impact	D3 – Moderate Risk: Unlikely / Medium Impact

Risk Description	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk
The risk of Ash Dieback Disease (ADB) in Denbighshire leading to significant health and safety issues that represent a potential risk to life	A1 – Critical Risk: Almost Certain / Very High Impact	A2 – Critical Risk: Almost Certain / High Impact
The risk that the council is unable to deliver the agenda of Council and external organisations within existing resources	A3 – Major Risk: Almost Certain / Medium Impact	C4 – Moderate Risk: Possible / Low Impact
Failure to progress the replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) to adoption	A2 – Critical Risk: Almost Certain / High impact	A2 – Critical Risk: Almost Certain / High impact

Report to	County Council
Date of meeting	13 October 2020
Report author	Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group/Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Presented by	Councillor Graham Timms (Chair of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group)
Title	Annual Report of the Council's Scrutiny Committees 2019/2020

1. What is the report about?

The Scrutiny Committees' Annual Report to Council for 2019/20

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 To present to Council the Scrutiny Committees' annual report on their activities during 2019/20.
- 2.2 To comply with Section 7.4.4 of the Council's Constitution which stipulates that scrutiny committees must report annually to full Council on their work and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Council considers the Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committees for 2019/20 and comments accordingly.

4. Report details

- 4.1 The Constitution of Denbighshire County Council stipulates that the Authority's Scrutiny Committees will report annually on their activities during the year to County Council.
- 4.2 This year's Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1. It provides the reader with a brief introduction on what scrutiny is and how scrutiny operates, along with an overview of the work the committees and their members have undertaken during the course of the year. It also includes information on how residents can participate and contribute to the scrutiny process. Upon approval the report will be translated and be made available on the Council's website.
- 4.3 The report outlines Scrutiny's important role in relation to supporting the Council's work to deliver its corporate priorities and Corporate Plan, including its regular monitoring of the Plan's delivery
- 4.4 As in previous years during 2019/20 the Scrutiny Committees have undertaken a mix of pre-decision and post-decision scrutiny work, with individual committees focussing their work on a number of specific areas, such as corporate performance, the effectiveness of partnership arrangements in delivering services, and community and economic benefit. Details of the topics which have been examined by Scrutiny can be found in the sections on the individual committees in the attached report. The report also provides an overview of Scrutiny's work to support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and ultimately the realisation of its Corporate Plan. Scrutiny has also continued to participate in consultation exercises and invited a number of external or partner organisations to meet with the committees to discuss areas of common interest or concern.
- 4.5 Public engagement and encouraging residents to interact with Scrutiny is generally a challenge in Denbighshire, as it is elsewhere in Wales. However, two requests were received from residents or external organisations suggesting topics which may benefit from Scrutiny's attention, both of which are detailed in the report. These requests were made using the 'Scrutiny Request Form' which is available on the Council's website, a copy of which can be found in the Annual Report. Scrutiny will continue with this practice of encouraging the public to suggest areas or services which they think may benefit from scrutiny's consideration.

4.6 Whilst encouraging residents to participate in scrutiny on a regular basis can prove extremely difficult, if a controversial or local public interest topic appears on a scrutiny committee agenda the public are more than willing to engage with scrutiny and attend meetings. In 2019/20 proposed sites were put forward by the Council as potential locations for development into a transit site for the gypsy and traveller community for inclusion in the new Local Development Plan (LDP). These drew extensive public interest and opposition. A large number attended the meeting at which the matter was discussed and representatives from the public were given an opportunity to address the Committee.

4.7 When considering a request for a topic to be scrutinised, be the request from a councillor, an officer or a member of the public, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) applies the following criteria to determine whether the item merits scrutiny:

- is it a matter of public interest?
- does Scrutiny have the ability to influence or change things?
- does it relate to an underperforming service?
- does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area?
- is anyone else looking at it?

The attached report contains an illustration of the above process, which includes suggested alternative routes for consideration of a topic if the Group deems that it is not suitable for examination by a scrutiny committee.

4.8 Also included in the attached report is information on the work of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) of Conwy and Denbighshire councils established to examine the work of the Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board (PSB), as well as an update on the work of the various task and finish/working groups operating under the auspices of Denbighshire's Scrutiny Committees.

4.9 Scrutiny committees have continued with the practice of inviting partner organisations and other public sector bodies to meet with them to examine how services and outcomes to residents can be improved through effective partnership working. During the year representatives from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS), Natural Resources

Wales (NRW) and the North and Mid-Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) have attended Scrutiny Committee meetings for various discussions.

4.10 The COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions placed on all walks of life affected Scrutiny's work towards the end of the 2019/20 municipal year and well into the 2020/21 Council year, with meetings cancelled and all but urgent decisions placed on hold. Scrutiny will restart its business during the autumn of 2020 by initially examining the COVID-19 recovery plans of all the Council's services. This will enable committees to shape their future work programmes through the inclusion of an appropriate balance of post pandemic recovery work and the lessons learnt for future emergencies, with relevant subjects deferred from those meetings which were cancelled.

5. 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, residents' wishes and within budget.

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

6.1 The publication of the Annual Report forms part of the regular committee reports despatch to county councillors and other recipients, therefore there are no additional costs entailed with its publication. The Annual Report upon approval will be translated and made available on the Council's intranet and website.

6.2 Any costs incurred with respect of the work of task and finish groups will be met from within existing budgets

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

A Well-being Impact Assessment (WBIA) is not required for this report as no decision or change of policy is being sought. The Annual Report is presented solely to inform councillors and residents of the Scrutiny Committees' work during the preceding twelve months and as a means of outlining potential future areas of work.

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

Members of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) have been involved with the process of drafting the Annual Report and its proposed contents.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no significant financial implications resulting from this report. As mentioned in paragraph 6 above any costs relating to the production of the Report will be contained within existing budgets, as will any costs arising from the establishment of task and finish groups.

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 Committees' Annual Report.

11. Power to make the decision

Section 7.4.4 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must report annually to full Council on their workings with recommendations for their future work programme and any amended working methods if appropriate.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

2019 - 2020

CONTENTS

	Page
What is Scrutiny?	3
Scrutiny in Action	3
How does Scrutiny work in Denbighshire?	3 - 4
Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group	4 - 5
Scrutiny during 2019/20	6
Scrutiny and the Corporate Priorities 2019/20	6 -14
Performance Scrutiny Committee	15 - 16
Partnerships Scrutiny Committee	17 -18
Communities Scrutiny Committee	19 -20
Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board	21
Task and Finish Groups	23
Additional work	24
Audit Wales reports	25
Scrutiny Requests from Residents	26
How can residents participate in Scrutiny?	27 - 28
Scrutiny request form	29

What is scrutiny?

Scrutiny is a key component of the Council's political structure. Many of the Council's important decisions are taken by Cabinet, a group of eight councillors to whom the County Council has given its powers to take decisions relating to policies and procedures on its behalf.

The term 'scrutiny' derives from the Latin word 'scrutinium/scrutari' which means 'to search'. In the context of local government Scrutiny's role is to research and examine policies and decisions to assess whether they could be improved or strengthened to deliver better services for residents and visitors to Denbighshire. Scrutiny is often referred to as the Council's 'critical friend', its purpose is to provide constructive criticism in order to continually seek improvements to services, secure better decisions and realise better outcomes.

Scrutiny committees cannot take decisions, but they can influence policies, review decisions taken by Cabinet and Officers, make recommendations, and examine a range of topics that affect residents, local businesses and visitors to the county.

Scrutiny in Action

Scrutiny should at all times work in an impartial way. It should not be influenced by party politics, its focus should be on improving the lives of residents and on securing better outcomes for the county area.

Whilst Scrutiny Committees have an active role to play in developing policies and reviewing performance. They also have the responsibility of holding the Cabinet and other decision makers to account on the decisions they make.




If a Scrutiny Committee believes that an issue should be looked at in more depth before a decision is implemented, it can request a review under the "Call-In" procedure which will allow Scrutiny Committees to formulate alternative proposals.

How does scrutiny work in Denbighshire?

Scrutiny acts as a 'critical friend' to the Council's leadership, driving improvements not only to services delivered by the Council itself, but to services delivered in partnership with other public services in the area by enabling the concerns of the public to be heard.

The Council's scrutiny work is undertaken by three thematic, cross-cutting scrutiny Committees, meeting approximately every 7 weeks and comprising of 11 members from all political parties/groups on the Council.

The three committees in Denbighshire are:

-  Communities Scrutiny Committee
-  Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
-  Performance Scrutiny Committee

When examining education matters representatives appointed by the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church, along with representatives elected by parent governors, also serve on the committees. When dealing with education matters these representatives have full voting rights. All the parent governor representative posts on Scrutiny are currently vacant. If you are a parent governor at one of the Council's primary, secondary or special schools, and would be interested in representing your sector on Scrutiny please get in touch with us (contact details can be found in the 'How residents can participate in Scrutiny' section towards the end of this report).

Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the three scrutiny committees serve on the Council's Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) along with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee and the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee. This Group acts as a co-ordinating group for the committees' work. Requests for items to be considered by a scrutiny committee, be they from county councillors, Council officers, residents, businesses or the general public are examined by this Group to determine whether they meet the criteria for Scrutiny, or whether they would benefit from being considered by another forum or group. The flowchart on the following page illustrates the criteria and process for determining whether a topic is suitable for scrutiny.

During 2019/20 a total of 21 requests for items to be scrutinised were considered by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group. Of these 21 requests:

- ❖ 10 were submitted by county councillors
- ❖ 9 by officers
- ❖ 2 by residents/general public (a number of the requests submitted by county councillors were done so in response to concerns raised with them by their constituents)

The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group ensures that the scrutiny committees' work programmes are balanced and that subjects are not duplicated. It also has a role to play in supporting and strengthening the Council's scrutiny function through the identification of best practice and helping to implement any necessary changes to scrutiny practices.

Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny

Proposal Form/Request received

(careful consideration given to reasons for request)

Does it stand up to the PAPER test?

- **P**ublic interest – is the matter of concern to residents?
- **A**bility to have an impact – can Scrutiny influence and change things?
- **P**erformance – is it an underperforming area or service?
- **E**xtent – does it affect a large number of residents or a large geographic area?
- **R**eplication – is anyone else looking at it?

YES

NO

No further action required by scrutiny committee. Refer elsewhere or request information report?

- Determine the desired outcome(s)
- Decide on the scope and extent of the scrutiny work required and the most appropriate method to undertake it (i.e. committee report, task and finish group inquiry, or link member etc.)
- If task and finish route chosen, determine the timescale for any inquiry, who will be involved, research requirements, expert advice and witnesses required, reporting arrangements etc.

Scrutiny's work during 2019/20

As part of their work during the 2019/20 Council year the Council's three Scrutiny Committees have focussed on a number of subjects with a view to supporting the Council to deliver its corporate priorities. The Corporate Priorities are:

- 🌱 **Housing:** ensuring that everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs
- 🌱 **Connected Communities:** making sure communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links
- 🌱 **Resilient Communities:** making sure that the Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience
- 🌱 **Environment:** securing an attractive and protected environment which supports well-being and economic prosperity; and
- 🌱 **Young People:** creating a county where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so

By adopting this approach Scrutiny's objective is to improve services to residents and the quality of their daily lives.

Denbighshire County Council's services touch the lives of all of the county's residents, be they young or old, hence the reason why the scrutiny committees have during the course of the year examined the Council's performance in delivering its services. In addition, as service delivery models evolve to meet changing needs, Scrutiny has been involved with shaping new ways of delivering services for the future.

Scrutiny and the Council's Corporate Priorities during 2019/20

Below and on the following pages is an overview of how the Council's scrutiny committees have supported the authority's work and aspirations of delivering its corporate priorities during the year:

Housing: Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their need

Through its work over a number of years Scrutiny has strived to support the Council to deliver this particular priority. During 2019/20 it concluded the work it started some years previously on monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's regulatory work in ensuring that Caravan and Holiday Parks across the county complied with their planning and licensing conditions. Concerns had been raised that some owners may not have been fully complying with the conditions attached to their

planning and licensing permissions and may therefore be permitting people to reside in caravans on their sites on a permanent basis exposing them, particularly the more vulnerable to some significant risks through not properly meeting their housing needs. Through effective working over a number of years with park proprietors and managers, a level of mutual trust was forged between them and the Council which resulted in this situation improving. Now that Scrutiny is satisfied that the regulation of caravan and holiday parks is effectively managed it has agreed that future monitoring will be done by officers as part of their routine work.

Similarly, the number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) has been a long-standing problem in the county, particularly in its most deprived areas. Back in 2010 the Council introduced an Additional Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation in specific areas of Rhyl. This scheme complemented the mandatory HMO licensing scheme. The purpose of the additional scheme was to ensure that a large number of houses in multiple occupation complied with specific requirements before they could be licensed for habitation. This ensured that individuals and families were provided with safe, comfortable accommodation that met their needs. Due to the success of this scheme in Rhyl it was extended for a further 5-year period from 2015 onwards. In 2020 the Council was keen to continue its operation in Rhyl, but based on its success there to extend it to other towns in the county, namely Prestatyn, Denbigh and Llangollen. Both North Wales Police and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service were supportive of the proposals and scrutiny was consulted on them in early 2020. Scrutiny was generally in favour of the types of houses to be included in the revised scheme and of its extension to other towns in the county and recommended that its contents should be consulted upon before being presented to Cabinet for approval.

Whilst the Council strives to make sure that all residents live in houses that meet their needs, sadly not everybody in the county has a roof over their head. The Council has a duty to ensure it safeguards all vulnerable people, be they homeless or at risk of losing their home. Amid concerns that some individuals and families found themselves being temporarily housed in hotels or in bed and breakfast accommodation Scrutiny examined the Council's procedures and its capacity to safeguard and meet the needs of the homeless. In acknowledging the complexities involved with homelessness it endorsed the Council's decision to adopt a corporate approach towards homelessness and to include addressing the issue of homelessness in its Housing Strategy. Scrutiny will continue to monitor the development and approval of the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy during the forthcoming year.

There is a big difference between allocating houses to individuals and families and actually meeting their needs, ensuring that they live in accommodation that they can happily refer to as their home. During the year Scrutiny met with representatives from the Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) sector in Denbighshire to examine the

effectiveness of the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) application process in meeting people's needs and securing a suitable home for them and their families. The SARTH process aims to help people to secure a home via one single application that is shared with a number of housing providers at the same time, saving time and stress for the applicant.

A home is much more than a property to live in, a home needs to meet and suit the person's way of life. Finding a suitable location to meet the needs of the gypsy and traveller community, without having a detrimental affect on their lives and on the lives of other residents is another matter which Scrutiny has examined during recent months, specifically potential sites for inclusion in the draft Local Development Plan (LDP) for development as a transit site. A number of sites were proposed for inclusion in the draft LDP but Scrutiny asked for consultation to be undertaken with the gypsy and traveller community on the suitability of these sites to meet their needs prior to Cabinet considering their inclusion in the draft LDP. Scrutiny also asked Cabinet to write in the strongest possible terms to the Welsh Government seeking clarity on why local authorities could not work together to develop an agreed number of transit sites in North Wales rather than each county council being obliged to provide one in their area, as having six transit sites in the region seemed disproportionate in comparison to the number of illegal encampments experienced annually in the region.

Connected Communities: Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, on line and through good transport links

Keeping communities, businesses and people connected with one another is crucial in order to support social interaction, encourage economic growth and build strong local resilience networks. Communities are connected on a number of different levels, by roads and transport links, links between various individuals, groups and businesses that live and operate within the communities, as well as by communication links. Connectivity is one of the 21st Century's 'buzz words'. Therefore, securing the availability of effective digital platforms as well as fit for purpose physical infrastructures forms a crucial part of ensuring that communities are connected. Elected members and residents have had concerns for a number of years about the availability of good, reliable, and fast broadband services across the county. The Council regards the availability of fast, effective broadband as a crucial component in order to deliver economic growth and prosperity to the area and its residents, and as an essential tool to assist the county's pupils and students in their studies to ensure they realise their full potential. Whilst acknowledging that the quality and availability of fast broadband across the county had improved in recent years Scrutiny felt that more still needs to be done by central government to ensure that every household and business in the county can access effective broadband services if they want them. At present they felt that some areas of the county, mainly in rural areas, were being left behind and as a result businesses were at a

disadvantage when competing on the open market, as were pupils who are working towards qualifications that will shape their future career prospects. Scrutiny wrote to the First Minister of Wales and other Welsh Government Ministers outlining their concerns and seeking them to address this inequality urgently as the availability of reliable broadband should be viewed as an everyday necessity in 21st Century Wales, similar to having access to water and electricity. The letter was also copied to WG Commissioners as it was felt that the continued lack of reliable broadband for all undermined the principles of equality for all, and the goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Scrutiny was extremely pleased that the County's Library Service continued its strong performance against the national performance targets. It was also encouraged, having examined the delivery of the Service's local Library Strategy, to see that the county's libraries were at the heart of their communities helping to deliver a range of Council and public services which residents wanted in their own communities. In future years, it is hoped that the county's libraries will work closely with the new Joint Archives Service with Flintshire County Council to deliver a comprehensive archives service electronically to residents and visitors alike. Following scrutiny of the joint service's proposal to secure funding to build a bespoke archives hub in Mold, and an examination of the services that would be delivered in libraries and other outlets in both counties, Scrutiny supported the proposal's objectives. During the forthcoming year scrutiny will continue to monitor the Service's development.

As mentioned the Joint Archives Service aims to deliver excellent services to residents and visitors alike. Once tourists enter the area Scrutiny is keen that they are enticed off the major trunk roads to explore all four corners of the county and the multitude of attractions and activities on offer in Denbighshire. With this in mind it has requested a working group of officers and members to develop a tourism signage strategy for the county, one that will supplement the tourist information signs already situated on the trunk roads, and via a series of well-designed signs guide them through the county and its tourism offer. This should help boost the county's economy. Scrutiny will in forthcoming months be keeping a close eye on the strategy's development.

Resilient Communities: the Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience

Cuts to local authority funding has meant that the Council in recent years has had to adapt and devise alternative ways to deliver its services. The aim of this approach is to build-up resilience within local communities to support their residents, with a view to only relying on public services for major intervention work at a time of crisis. The resilience of our local communities was tested and came to the fore during the recent Coronavirus pandemic crisis. Lessons learnt from the approach taken towards handling that crisis will undoubtedly be examined by Scrutiny in the months and years that lie ahead, but during 2019/20 scrutiny committees examined various aspects of the Council's efforts to build communities' resilience to deal with day to day and longer term challenges.

As part of this work it has continued to meet on a regular basis with representatives from the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) in order to ensure that joint and collaborative working between the Health Board and the Council delivers joined-up health and social care services, and that the services provided by both organisations complement and support each other's' efforts to improve the health and well-being of residents. Scrutiny has continued to monitor the Health Board's progress in delivering major capital projects in the county, such as the new North Denbighshire Community Hospital to be built in Rhyl and the Board's future plans for Denbigh Infirmary and other community based services in the county, as it sees these projects as key developments for delivering joint services. It has also examined the Health Board's plans to improve the delivery of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and its proposals for Neurodevelopment Services in Denbighshire.

Community safety and safeguarding vulnerable residents form part of the Council's statutory responsibilities, consequently Scrutiny has a role in examining the authority's performance in fulfilling those roles. For this purpose, during the year, it examined the performance and priorities of the Joint Conwy and Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership and Denbighshire's own performance in safeguarding vulnerable adults and in delivering services to those residents who had, or were at risk of becoming homeless. It also examined proposals to change the county's approach towards administering 'No Cold Calling Zones' in the county. As part of its work in examining services' work in evolving and developing to meet future needs and delivering the type of services residents want to receive Scrutiny has made recommendations for changes to the delivery of work opportunities services for people with learning disabilities. It has examined proposals to secure the future of Cefndy Healthcare, the effectiveness of the services now delivered from Hafan Deg in Rhyl, along with the overall performance of the Social Care Service and the areas identified for improvement in the future.

Cuts to funding in recent years has left the Council with fewer staff to undertake work in non-frontline services. The work carried out by non-frontline workers in the past did however indirectly improve the quality of life for a number of residents and businesses. Planning and licensing enforcement work is one such area. To compensate for the loss of personnel innovative methods of working with partners in the private and public sector had to be devised in order to make sure that planning and licensing conditions were not being flouted. For that purpose a Planning Compliance Charter was drawn up whereby City, Town and Community Councils could help the county council to oversee and manage non-compliance matters in their local area. The objective of this Charter is to facilitate early intervention in non-compliance matters in order to reduce the need wherever possible to escalate any contraventions to formal enforcement level. A similar approach has already been adopted in relation to the regulation of holiday and caravan parks, with park operators and managers working with the Council to make sure that they were all operating within the conditions granted to them. Scrutiny has been widely involved with the development of both these approaches, and in ensuring that they work effectively.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a formal arrangement, established through a ballot of eligible business premises, whereby businesses get together to decide what additional improvements they would like to make to the area where they operate their businesses in order to improve footfall and build-up resilience. If a BID is established the businesses within that area decide how they are going to manage and deliver any improvements and what they are prepared to pay to make it happen. Following a request from a local business person Scrutiny examined the process that required to be followed for establishing a BID, with particular focus on the process followed in an area of Rhyl where a BID was established some years ago and the lessons learnt from that process. It concluded that generally applications for BID ballots should be encouraged and supported. Scrutiny suggested that interested parties should be encouraged to contact the Rhyl BID Board to seek advice and guidance on how to effectively communicate with the local business community, how to engage them in the process of establishing a Business Improvement District, and on ways of conveying to them the importance of exercising their votes.

Environment: attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity

Denbighshire is a predominantly rural county which boasts a wealth of varied tourist attractions, ranging from coastal resorts to historic market towns. These more urban areas are surrounded by extensive areas of open countryside, whose economic mainstay is agriculture, supplemented by a growing rural tourist trade. Protecting the environment county-wide is not only key to securing the county's economic prosperity but also it helps to sustain and improve the well-being of the area's

residents. The importance of open spaces and footpaths as a means of supporting health and well-being came to the fore during the recent Coronavirus pandemic.

During the year Scrutiny met with representatives from North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency and the Council's Highways Service to examine their highways grass verge maintenance and pesticide application policies. The purpose of meeting with them on a joint basis was to ensure that both organisations' policies supported and complemented each other's environmental priorities and objectives.

Communities Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20 published its findings following its inquiry into the Llantysilio Mountain Fire in the summer of 2018 and its impact on the local economy and environment. The link below will take you to the Committee's full report, including the conclusions drawn and the associated recommendations:

<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/your-council/about-the-council/Communities-Scrutiny-Committee-Llantysilio-Mountain-Fire-Report.pdf>

The Committee's objective in undertaking the review was to establish what lessons could be learnt from the response and management of the fire and what steps should be taken to avoid or reduce the risk of similar severe wildfires occurring in future. The fire badly damaged the mountain's biodiversity and impacted greatly on the local agricultural industry, residents and businesses. Recognising the extent of its impact the Committee formulated a series of recommendations with a view to mitigating the risk of similar incidents happening in future. A number of the recommendations were reliant on the willingness of partners to work together to deliver them. One particular recommendation was to establish an Upland/Moorland Management Officer post. Scrutiny was firmly of the view that this officer would be in a position to lead and effectively co-ordinate with the various agencies, landowners, farmers, graziers and local communities on land management activities and plans, which would help support the development of the habitat, ecosystems and economies of upland areas and reduce the risk of wildfires. Despite the delay caused by the COVID-19 crisis, it is extremely pleasing to know that work is now well underway to appoint an officer to this role, and that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have offered to part fund the post for at least a three-year period. As the environment affects all residents, businesses and organisations in the area Scrutiny was pleased to be offered the opportunity of contributing to North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's consultation on the development of its Environmental Strategy.

During recent years concerns have escalated globally on the environmental impact of discarded plastics, and how it was finding its way into the world's oceans. Reducing the use of plastics is now a priority for a number of countries and for governments at all levels. Through its Use of Plastics Task and Finish Group Denbighshire County Council has also been grappling with this topic and attempting to reduce its use of plastics in areas which are not currently being looked at by either the Welsh or UK

Governments. In the first instance the Task and Finish Group decided to examine ways on how the Council itself could reduce the use of plastics in its civic offices and it recommended that the Authority should no longer purchase plastic document wallets, plastic cups, stirrers, milk jiggers etc. It even went further and decided that all refreshment vending machines should be removed. These steps were approved by County Council in early 2020 and will be implemented in the spring of 2020. Permission was given for the Task and Finish Group to continue its work for a further 12 months to examine ways of reducing the use of plastics in school catering and procurement. Due to the Council having to divert resources to respond to the Coronavirus pandemic and having to comply with strict guidelines in relation to health, safety and hygiene the Task and Finish Group's work in relation to school catering and procurement will not be able to be progressed as quickly as originally anticipated.

The Council's approach to dealing with its recyclable household waste is due to change within the next few years. As part of the work to prepare for the changes to the service Scrutiny has been actively involved in examining proposals for the new waste and recycling model, which will see the Council expanding its range of waste and recycling collection services. Proposals relating to the development of a new depot to deal with the waste and the communication strategy with residents about the changes ahead have also been examined.

Young people: a place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so

Young people are Denbighshire's future therefore ensuring that they receive the right type of quality education and training opportunities to realise their full potential has again formed a key part of Scrutiny's work during the year. As in previous years Scrutiny examined pupils' performance in external examinations and teacher assessments. Although this year it was extremely difficult to compare Denbighshire pupils' attainment in comparison to peers in other local education authority areas as the WG no longer publishes a comprehensive list of data which the Education Service can use to compare pupils' attainment with those in other parts of Wales. Nevertheless, Scrutiny was satisfied that the Council's Education Service and the regional school improvement service GwE were able to identify emerging trends that required to be addressed in all education key stages. Effective schools depend on effective leadership and management. Scrutiny wanted assurances that school governing bodies in the county were fulfilling their duties to fill vacant school governor roles and were complying with the statutory expectations in relation to policies, finance and procedures. Following its examination of the effectiveness of school governing bodies Scrutiny acknowledged that the local education authority was only able to influence and guide governing bodies, and that ultimately the responsibilities lie with the governing bodies themselves. Nevertheless, it

recommended that a number of steps should be taken in order to strengthen school governing bodies across the county to ensure that they do comply with mandatory requirements and support their schools and the pupils to realise their full potential.

An increasing amount of education delivery in the 21st Century is delivered using on-line technology. Whilst the county's schools have access to appropriate technology and effective broadband connections to deliver education packages, some pupils are disadvantaged when undertaking extended studies, research or project work at home due to poor broadband connections, particularly in some of the county's more rural areas. Scrutiny was firmly of the view that this was an equality issue which had the potential to disadvantage pupils in rural areas from realising their full educational potential. This disparity was highlighted in a letter from the Scrutiny to the Welsh Government and to the Children and Future Generations Commissioners.

Ever increasing budgetary pressures necessitated the Council to consider whether its post 16 Learner Transport Policy represented effective use of taxpayers' money on a service that was not statutory. As this was a complex area Scrutiny established a working group to examine various aspects of transport to post 16 education and to determine whether any elements of the current service could be withdrawn. As the working group commenced its work the WG announced a national review of transport to post 16 education, therefore the working group recommended that no changes should be made to the current provision until the outcome of the WG's review was published. Scrutiny also emphasised that any future consideration of this matter should have regard to the fact that post-16 education was an investment in the future of the county's students and the area's future prosperity.

A brief overview of the work undertaken by each committee during the course of the year is summarised on the following pages.

Performance Scrutiny Committee



Cllr. Huw LI Jones (**Chair**)



Cllr. Hugh Irving (**Vice-Chair**)

Since the beginning of this current Council's term of office in 2017 the Chair of this committee was Councillor Huw Jones. A truly compassionate person, and a fair chair who ensured that every viewpoint was heard during all discussions. It was with great sadness that Committee members learned of his passing in early 2020. In addition to being the Committee's Chair he was also the Chair of the Task and Finish Group that was devising sustainable ways of delivering adult social care services for the future. As a former Cabinet member, and before that a Scrutiny Vice-Chair, Huw had a wealth of experience of all aspects of decision making which he brought with him to the Committee which helped to ensure that all recommendations and decisions were based on sound evidence. While his legacy will last, his enthusiasm, passion and wisdom will be greatly missed.

Performance Scrutiny Committee has an important part to play in making sure that the Council delivers quality services to residents and in supporting the Council to achieve its ambition of delivering the corporate priorities laid out in the Corporate Plan 2017-22. Its regular monitoring of the Council's progress in delivering its corporate priorities will ensure that the Council's aspiration of realising its Corporate Plan will be achieved. This coupled with its work in monitoring services' compliance with the Council's corporate complaints policy, which aims to make sure that any complaints received are dealt with appropriately and on time, helps the Council to deliver services of the highest quality to residents.

In recent years' local authorities have been expected to adapt the way they deliver services to meet the requirements of the 21st Century and to meet the changing expectations of all residents, old and young alike. With a view to responding to these challenges this Committee has examined the findings and recommendations of the Adult In-house Social Care Task and Finish Group and the Use of Plastics Task and Finish Group. As a result plans are in the pipeline that will see work

opportunities services for people with learning disabilities delivered in a more rewarding and sustainable way for the future, and the Council will aim to reduce its use of single use plastics by incorporating this objective into the Environment priority of its Corporate Plan for 2017-22.

The Coronavirus pandemic and the national lockdown affected the Committee's business towards the end of the municipal year, in the same way as it affected everybody's daily lives. Like all Council Committees Performance Scrutiny Committee will resume its work as soon as it is safe to do so in the new municipal year.

The following link will take you to information about the Committee, its agendas and reports on the Council's website:

<https://moderngov.denbighshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=269&LLL=0>

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Partnerships Scrutiny Committee



Cllr. Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones (**Chair**)



Cllr. Emrys Wynne (**Vice-Chair**)

This Committee's remit is to examine the effectiveness of services provided by the Council either in collaboration, or in partnership, with other public sector organisations in meeting residents' needs. Scrutinising the Health Board's delivery of services to residents, and its proposed future models for delivering healthcare services to local residents has been a key feature of the Committee's work during the year, as well as examining the effectiveness of the interfaces that exist between the Council and the Health Board for delivering integrated health and social care services.

The availability of suitable quality housing has also featured on the Committee's work programme during the year in the form of proposals to extend the licensing scheme for Houses of Multiple Occupation to other areas of Denbighshire and the effectiveness of the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) work with registered social landlords in meeting residents' needs for quality housing. As the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee community safety is a key feature of the Committee's work. As part of its duty to fulfil this role it scrutinised the Community Safety Partnership's (CSP) performance in delivering its priorities during 2018/19 and examined its priorities for 2019/20. The Committee was consulted on proposals to adopt a different approach towards administering and introducing 'No Cold Calling Zones' in the county.

On a regional basis the Committee participated on the Council's behalf in North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's consultation on its Environmental Strategy.

It also examined the Council's Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan which led it to invite representatives from the Council's Highways Service and the North and Mid-Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) to a meeting to discuss their verge cutting and

pesticide applications policies to make sure they supported the Council's aims and its corporate priority relating to the environment.

The following link will take you to information about the Committee, its agendas and reports on the Council's website:

<https://moderngov.denbighshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=268&LLL=0>

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Communities Scrutiny Committee



Cllr. Huw Williams (**Chair**)



Cllr. Graham Timms (**Vice-Chair**)

This Committee's role is to examine matters that directly affect local communities and residents' daily lives. These may be matters within the Council's direct control or aspects of day to day life which the Council may be able to influence.

During 2019/20 the Committee focussed some of its work on ensuring that regulatory practices used by the Council to investigate and deal with matters that often cause concern to residents or impact on their quality of life were examined i.e. the draft Charter between the County Council and city, town and community councils in relation to Planning Compliance, the effectiveness of Holiday and Caravan Park management and enforcement procedures, and Council's action plan for managing the nuisance caused by seagulls across the county.

Following publication of its findings into the Llantysilio Mountain Fire of 2018 and its impact on the area the Committee continued its work on monitoring the implementation of the recommendations it made following its inquiry.

Acutely aware of the important role that small and rural businesses in the county have on the local economy the Committee examined proposals to develop a tourism signage strategy that will attempt to entice tourists off the main trunk roads to all corners of the county to explore its attractions and sample what Denbighshire has to offer. Coupled with this strategy is the Council's Car Park management plan which aims to modernise county owned car parks and develop them into important hubs to support local businesses and act as tourist gateways to the area.

The availability of reliable broadband connections for all residents was also a feature of the Committee's work during the year which culminated in the Committee writing to Welsh Government (WG) Ministers and a number of Commissioners drawing their attention to the inequalities and disadvantages residents in a number of rural areas

encountered in attempting to live their daily lives without effective broadband connections. The Committee felt that in 21st Century Wales effective broadband connection should be regarded as a basic utility such as electricity or water, this was the basis of the Committee's correspondence with WG Ministers and the Commissioners. It was therefore extremely pleasing to hear this view echoed by the Future Generations Commissioner in June 2020 when referring to people's experiences of attempting to continue with their daily and business lives whilst dealing with the restrictions placed on them as part of the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following link will take you to information about the Committee, its agendas and reports on the Council's website:

<https://moderngov.denbighshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=271&LLL=0>

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Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board

Mention was made in last year's report to the decision taken by both Conwy County Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council to establish a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the purpose of fulfilling their statutory duty of scrutinising the Joint Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board (PSB). This Joint Committee comprises 16 members, 8 from each Council reflecting the political balance of their respective authorities. Whilst the Joint Committee met during the year to agree a programme of work, all subsequent meetings had to either be postponed or cancelled for various reasons, including the COVID-19 crisis. It is anticipated that the Committee will be in a position to recommence its work during the autumn of 2020.



Cllr. Brian Cossey (**Chair**)



Cllr. Graham Timms (**Vice-Chair**)

Membership

Conwy County Borough Council

Cllr. Geoffrey David Corry
Cllr. Brian Cossey (Chair)
Cllr. Chris Hughes
Cllr. Ifor Lloyd
Cllr. Elizabeth Roberts
Cllr. Harry Saville
Cllr. Nigel Smith
Cllr. Joan Vaughan

Denbighshire County Council

Cllr. Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones
Cllr. Rachel Flynn
Cllr. Hugh Irving
Cllr. Melvyn Mile
Cllr. Arwel Roberts
Cllr. Peter Scott
Cllr. Graham Timms (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. David G Williams

The following link will take you to information about the Joint Committee, its agendas and reports on the Council's website:

<https://moderngov.denbighshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=540&LLL=0>

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Task and Finish Groups

Scrutiny continued its use of Task and Finish Groups to undertake detailed policy development work on its behalf during 2019/20. The well-established group examining potential future delivery models for **Adult Social Care Services** continued its work to find sustainable long-term delivery solutions for various aspects of adult social care services that will provide quality social care services for adults which are stimulating, motivational and rewarding in line with the WG's future vision for adult social care services. During 2019/20 this Task and Finish Group formulated recommendations on potential ways for delivering sustainable and stimulating work opportunities services for people with learning disabilities in future.

Concerns on the damage caused to the environment by the human race's **Use of Plastics**, specifically single use plastic and the methods used for its disposal has gained momentum globally in recent years. During 2019/20 this Task and Finish Group continued its work and formulated recommendations in relation to reducing the use of plastics in the Council's own office buildings. County Council endorsed the Group's recommendations and as a result disposable drinks cups, stirrers etc. will no longer be used in the offices and the Council will not be purchasing any more plastic document wallets. County Council also agreed to the Task and Finish Group's request that it be permitted to continue its work for a further twelve-months as it wished to explore how to reduce single-use plastic usage in the Council's school catering services and in the Council's procurement of goods. As this work was about to start the COVID-19 crisis struck and the country went into lockdown. Consequently, this aspect of the Group's work is yet to commence.

As reported last year Communities Scrutiny Committee established a working group of elected and co-opted education members and officers from the Council's Education Service, Transport Department and other associated services to examine **Denbighshire's Learner Transport Policy**. The focus of the Working Group's review was to provide clarity around the Council's annual learner transport budget and the cost of transporting pupils/students to non-statutory education provision. It was also asked to assess the potential impact and risks of withdrawing free learner transport to non-statutory education. As this working group was about to commence its work the Welsh Government announced its intention to undertake a national review of transport to post 16 education. The working group recommended that no changes should be made to the current provision until the outcome of the Welsh Government's review was published. It also emphasised that any future consideration of this particular aspect of school transport should have regard to the fact that post-16 education was an investment in the county's pupils and students as well as in the area's future prosperity.

Additional work

As in previous years Scrutiny Committee members have continued with their scrutiny roles outside of the formal committee meeting arena. They have represented their committee at the various Service Challenge meetings and the Council's Strategic Investment Group (SIG) etc. Under the standing business item on all Scrutiny Committee meeting agendas representatives report back to their committees on the discussions, recommendations and decisions taken at the meetings they attend.

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Audit Wales reports

During the course of a year Audit Wales (formerly the Wales Audit Office (WAO)) publishes a number of reports focussing on how local authorities are delivering services and adapting to new national directives or requirements. Scrutiny has agreed to consider the findings of these reports and Denbighshire's response to any recommendations made by the auditors. During 2019/20 Audit Wales focussed its work on public organisations' integration of the aims and objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 into their service delivery planning. The Act places a duty on local authorities and other public organisations to ensure that projects are developed and services delivered in accordance with the sustainable development principle and the five well-being goals defined in the Act.

In early 2020 Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the findings of two of these Audit Wales reports. One on the Council's approach to applying the Act's principles in relation to its flood risk management activities and the other examining whether the Council was taking into account the Act's requirements as part of its work in remodelling its household waste collection service. This latter report focussed on whether the Council's proposals would support the Act's well-being goals and the Council's own priority of delivering an attractive and protected environment. Having considered both reports and the Council's response to Audit Wales' recommendations the Committee was satisfied that constructive efforts were being made to deliver all work and projects in line with the sustainable delivery principle and well-being goals of the Act.

Scrutiny Requests from Residents

For a number of years Denbighshire's scrutiny committees has operated an established mechanism that enables residents to draw matters of concern to Scrutiny's attention. This is facilitated through the completion of a Scrutiny request form, available on the Council's website or from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

Completed scrutiny request forms are presented to the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group, in the same way as requests received from councillors and officers, for consideration and determination on whether the subject merits examination by one of the Scrutiny Committees, or whether greater benefits could be achieved if the matter was examined by another forum.

During 2019/20 two requests were received from members of the public for Scrutiny to examine a matter. Following consideration by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group one request proceeded to be examined by Communities Scrutiny Committee. This request related to the process followed to establish Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the county. Scrutiny concluded that the Council should support the establishment of Business Improvement Districts in the county should any town, rural area or business group wish to progress one, and that lessons learnt from previous BID application processes should be shared with any prospective new BID applicants in order to support them with the process.

The second application for scrutiny was received from an organisation which was encountering obstacles in attempting to secure access to a historical site in the county. As this site was located on private land with no public access rights the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group decided that the matter would not benefit from being scrutinised by a Committee. Nevertheless, they did offer advice to the organisation about potential alternative routes to follow in order to try and resolve the problem. The organisation concerned wrote back to the Group to thank them for considering their request and for the useful advice provided, which they intended to pursue.

The Council's scrutiny committees are keen for residents to actively engage with their work on a regular basis. You can either do this by attending meetings either in person, or remotely via the Council's website, to listen to the debates and/or by suggesting topics or areas that may benefit from being examined in detail by the committees. Details of how to suggest topics for scrutiny can be found on the following pages:

How can residents participate in Scrutiny?

Would you like scrutiny to look at a particular matter?

You can raise a matter for consideration by one of Denbighshire County Council's scrutiny committees by filling out the Scrutiny Request Form (overleaf). The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the three scrutiny committees meet periodically to decide how to allocate the work of the scrutiny committees and will consider if any matter raised should be examined in detail by one of the committees, or if another course of action should be pursued. This can range from a referral to the service responsible, to full scrutiny of the matter by one of the scrutiny committees, or even the establishment of a specialist 'task and finish group' to investigate and report on a particular matter.

Would you like to attend a meeting of a scrutiny committee?

Denbighshire County Council's scrutiny committee meetings are generally open to the public, and residents of Denbighshire and the general public are encouraged to attend. A list of upcoming scrutiny committee meetings and the matters to be discussed are available on the 'Scrutiny' page of the Council's website.

If you wish to take part in the discussion on a particular matter you will require the permission of the Chair of the committee (further details below).

Occasionally some items being discussed by a committee will contain confidential information and cannot be discussed in the usual public forum. Any such items (referred to as 'Part Two (II)') will be clearly identified when the meeting papers are published, and the Chair of the committee meeting discussing a 'Part II' item will make it clear that the meeting should continue without the press and public in attendance in order to avoid divulging confidential information.

Would you like to speak to a committee on an item being discussed?

Members of the public are very welcome to attend scrutiny committee meetings but will require the permission of the Chair of the committee if they wish to speak or make representations at a committee meeting. If you wish to submit evidence to a committee, or address members on your experience in relation to a subject under discussion, please contact the Scrutiny Co-ordinator in advance of the meeting so that this can be arranged and any paperwork can be circulated to members of the committee.

Occasionally scrutiny committees may wish to 'co-opt' an individual with particular experience or expertise to become a temporary member of the committee or ask them to contribute to an inquiry as an expert witness.

Keeping up to speed with decisions made by Denbighshire's scrutiny committees

You can keep track of what is being discussed at each scrutiny committee meeting, as well as any other public Council meeting, by visiting the 'meetings' page of the Council's website. The latest 'work programme' for each of the scrutiny committees is available with the meeting papers for each meeting and the confirmed agenda for each meeting will usually be available 5 - 7 days before the meeting is due to take place.

The minutes of previous scrutiny meetings and a record of the decisions made are also available on the Council's website.

Further advice or information is available by contacting the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Rhian Evans on rhian.evans@denbighshire.gov.uk (01824 712554) or the Democratic Services Officer, Karen Evans, on karen.a.evans@denbighshire.gov.uk (01824 712575).

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SCRUTINY REQUEST FORM

Is there something you would like scrutiny to have a look at?

Please give a brief description of the topic you would like to be considered by one of the Scrutiny Committees and why you think it should be considered

Would you like to attend a meeting of a Scrutiny Committee?

YES/NO

It would be useful if you could give us the following details so that we may respond to your request

Your name:
Address:

Postcode:
Email:
Telephone number:

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR, LEGAL, HR AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES, COUNTY HALL, WYNNSTAY ROAD, RUTHIN LL15 1YN or e-mail it to rhian.evans@denbighshire.gov.uk

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Report to	Council
Date of meeting	13 October 2020
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Richard Mainon / Democratic Services Manager
Report author	Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager
Title	Annual Review of Political Balance and Appointment of Scrutiny Chairs

1. What is the report about?

This report contains information and requests decisions on committee-related issues.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 The new municipal year has been delayed this year because of the cancellation of meeting as a result of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. The Annual Meeting of Council is being held in October instead of in May. It is appropriate for Council to consider changes in political balance in accordance with statutory requirements and to be aware of Scrutiny chairing arrangements.

2.2 The Council currently has 46 elected members with a vacancy for the Corwen ward, following the death in February of Councillor Huw Jones. The Local Government (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections) (Wales) Regulations 2020 postpone by-elections of councillors until the period 1 February 2021 and 16 April 2021.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 That Council re-appoints the chair and membership of the Democratic Services Committee for the 2020 / 2021 municipal year;

3.2 That Council considers the political balance arrangements for the allocation of committee seats.

4. Report details

COVID-19 and the Annual Meeting of Council

4.1 The Welsh Government introduced the Local Authorities (Coronavirus)(Meetings)(Wales) Regulations 2020 in April 2020. The measures the Welsh Government put in place to combat COVID-19 included changes to allow entirely remote committee meetings to ensure meetings and business could continue in an environment which was safe for elected members, officers and the public.

4.2 The Regulations provided greater flexibility to local authorities to hold their annual meetings, provided that an annual meeting was held at some point in 2020. The Council meeting on the 13th October will be the Annual Meeting of Council.

Annual review of political balance

4.3 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and supporting Regulations make provision for political balance in the membership of the Council to be reflected in the membership of the Council's committees (though Cabinet is not covered by this requirement in the Act).

4.4 The members of the Council are divided into different political groups, a group being two or more councillors who sign a notification to the authority declaring that they wish to be recorded as being a member of a particular group. The Council has an obligation to ensure that the number of seats on certain committees (these are identified by statute) are allocated to each political group in the same proportion as the number of members within a group to the membership of the Council. For example, if Group A's membership represents a third of the members of the Council, then Group A would be allocated a third of the seats on the committees that have to be politically balanced. This requirement can be set aside but only if no member of the Council votes against doing so.

4.5 The Council is required to consider at least annually how the membership of its committees relates to the size of the groups. The political balance figures and membership of the committees at the time this report was written are shown in appendixes 1 and 2 respectively.

Democratic Services Committee

4.6 Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires the Council to appoint a committee to review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge democratic services functions, and to make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.

4.7 The members of the Democratic Services Committee must be appointed by full Council. There are to be no co-opted members. Under the Measure there may be no more than one member of the Cabinet on the Committee (who cannot be the Leader), but Council in May 2012 decided that the membership would be 11 councillors and would not include members of the Cabinet.

4.8 The Committee must be politically balanced and Council must appoint its chair who must not be a member of any of the political groups represented on the Cabinet. For Denbighshire, this means that the chair will be a member of the Labour or Plaid Cymru groups. The existing chair is Councillor Alan James who will need to step down from his role on the committee after he is elected Chair of Council at the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2021.

4.9 The existing membership of the Democratic Services Committee is shown in appendix 2.

Appointment of Chairs of Scrutiny Committees

4.10 According to the principles for allocating Scrutiny chairs in the 2011 Local Government (Wales) Measure the Groups represented in the Cabinet (Independents and Conservatives) will be entitled to 1 of the 3 scrutiny chairs, and it will be for those groups to decide amongst themselves which of their eligible members will be a chair. The Labour and Plaid Cymru Groups are entitled to appoint 1 scrutiny chair each.

4.11 Neither the Measure nor the associated statutory guidance make provisions for changing or re-appointing scrutiny chairs, except where the political make-up of Cabinet changes or where a scrutiny chair is vacated for some reason. The appointment of chairs for the new municipal year is therefore a matter for the political groups to consider and to report any changes.

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

Political balance arrangements are central to the democratic and committee systems which are essential elements of the Council's governance arrangements, including the Council's corporate priorities.

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

There are no identified costs arising from the recommendations in this report to undertake an annual review of the allocation of committee seats according to political balance requirements.

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

A Well-being Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

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

The Democratic Services Committee will have considered a similar report at its meeting on the 2 October and relevant comments will be reported to full Council. The political groups are consulted on committee membership and political balance matters whenever issues arise, for example to fill vacancies on committees.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no additional costs arising from the recommendations in this report.

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

Failure to review the membership of committees, fill vacancies etc., would be detrimental to the Council's governance arrangements and contrary to statutory requirements.

11. Power to make the decision

Local Government and Housing Act 1989; Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011; Section 111 Local Government Act 1972

Political Balance Position

Updated 18 September 2020

The tables below summarise the position for each of the committees. The third column headed *Political Balance* shows the actual number of seats each Group is entitled to have on the committee.

Changes to committee memberships can occur at any time and the Groups are encouraged to ensure that each committee has a full contingent of members throughout the year. A general review of the political balance of the committees is undertaken annually to re-balance committees for the start of the new municipal year in May.

Cabinet	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	0	N/A
Independent	4	N/A
Conservative	4	N/A
Plaid Cymru	0	N/A
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Council's Constitution had offered seats on Cabinet to every political group with 5 or more members, with seats allocated in proportion to the size of the group. In February 2019 Council amended the Constitution by removing the requirement for Cabinet to be politically balanced, allowing the Leader to appoint Cabinet members without applying the rules of political balance.</p> <p>Action: None</p>		

Corporate Governance & Audit Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	2	1 or 2
Independent	1	1 or 2
Conservative	2	2
Plaid Cymru	1	1
<p>Comments: The membership of the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee is 6 councillors politically balanced plus a lay member.</p> <p>The constitutional requirement for the Vice Chair of Council to sit on the Corporate Governance committee and the restriction prohibiting Corporate Governance Committee members from being members of a Scrutiny Committee were removed with the adoption of the new Council constitution.</p> <p>Members of the committee may not be Chair of Council or a Cabinet member.</p> <p>Currently, the Labour and Independent Groups have the same number of members with 11 in each Group.</p> <p>Action: None required but see the comment above regarding the Labour and Independent Groups.</p>		

Communities Scrutiny Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	3	3
Independent	2	3
Conservative	4	3
Plaid Cymru	2	2
Comments: Actions: Independent Group to nominate 1 member following which the Conservative Group to withdraw 1 member.		

Partnerships Scrutiny Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	3	3
Independent	2	3
Conservative	4	3
Plaid Cymru	2	2
Comments: Actions: : Independent Group to nominate 1 member following which the Conservative Group to withdraw 1 member		

Performance Scrutiny Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	3	3
Independent	2	3
Conservative	4	3
Plaid Cymru	2	2
Comments: Action: Independent Group to appoint 1 member. Following which the Conservative Group to withdraw 1 member.		

Planning Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	4	5
Independent	5	5
Conservative	7	7
Plaid Cymru	4	4
<p>Comments: Welsh Government Regulations in 2017 mean that two members representing the same ward cannot both sit on the Planning Committee at the same time. Council agreed in May 2017 for Group Leaders to be given the responsibility for resolving multi-member ward nominations and if there is a failure to agree a single nomination none of the nominations would be accepted onto the Committee.</p> <p>Actions: The Labour Group to nominate 1 additional member. For multi-member ward councillors this is to be in consultation with the other groups to comply with the 2017 Regulations.</p>		

Licensing Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	3	3
Independent	3	3
Conservative	3	3
Plaid Cymru	2	2
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Actions: None.</p>		

Democratic Services Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	3	3
Independent	1	3
Conservative	4	3
Plaid Cymru	2	2
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Actions: Independent Group to nominate 2 members, following which the Conservative Group to withdraw 1 member.</p>		

Welsh Language Steering Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	2	3
Independent	2	3
Conservative	3	3
Plaid Cymru	2	2

Comments: This Committee was established by full Council on the 6 December 2016.

The membership of this committee is 11 councillors, politically balanced, and where possible to include the lead Cabinet member with responsibility for Welsh language issues (the lead member will count towards the political balance calculation). The aim of the Committee is to provide a public forum and steer to support the Welsh language strategy in Denbighshire.

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts is the lead member for the Welsh Language and a member of the committee.

Actions: Labour Group and Independent Group to appoint 1 member each.

Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee Relations	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	2	1 or 2
Independent	1	1 or 2
Conservative	2	2
Plaid Cymru	1	1

Comments: This is an internal consultative forum of employer and trade union representatives on staffing and health and safety issues. Council on the 28th March 2019 abolished LJCC and the Corporate Health, Safety & Welfare Committee replacing it with the JCC for HSER.

The employer-side membership is 6 elected councillor members appointed on a politically balanced basis, including at least one Cabinet Member (preferably with responsibility for HR and / or health and safety matters), plus two Officers. These Officers to be the Chief Executive or Corporate Director and the Head of HR.

Currently, the Labour and Independent Groups have the same number of members with 11 in each Group.

Action: No further action required but see the comment above regarding the Labour and Independent Groups.

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	2	2
Independent	0	2
Conservative	2	3
Plaid Cymru	1	1
<p>Comments: This committee is a statutory committee advising on RE provision in schools.</p> <p>Action: Independent Group to appoint 2 members. Conservative Group to appoint 1 member.</p>		

Conwy & Denbighshire Public Services Board Joint Scrutiny Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	2	2
Independent	2	2
Conservative	3	3
Plaid Cymru	1	1
<p>Comments: This formal joint Scrutiny committee with Conwy establish in October 2018 has 16 non-Cabinet members with 8 members from each council.</p> <p>Action: None.</p>		

Appeals and complaints Committee	Current Membership	Political Balance
Labour	3	3
Independent	2	3
Conservative	3	3
Plaid Cymru	2	2
<p>Comments: This appeal 'committee' is a pool of members which could be called upon in exceptional circumstances where it was felt that a panel involving members would be appropriate, for example in relation to appeals relating to schools.</p> <p>Actions: None.</p>		

POLITICAL GROUPS AND GROUP LEADERS - FEBRUARY 2019

Labour (11)	Independent (11)	Conservative (15)	Plaid Cymru (9)	Non-aligned (0)
Blakeley, Brian	Evans, Hugh	Davies, Gareth	Ap Gwynfor, Mabon	
Butterfield, Joan (Group Leader)	Evans, Peter	Davies, Ann	Davies, Meirick Lloyd	
Chamberlain-Jones, Jeanette	Feeley, Bobby	Flynn, Tony	Kensler, Gwyneth	
Chard, Ellie	Hilditch-Roberts, Huw	Flynn, Rachel	Penlington, Paul	
James, Alan	Lloyd-Williams, Geraint	Holland, Martyn (Group Leader)	Roberts, Arwel	
Jones, Pat	Mile, Melvyn	Irving, Hugh	Swingler, Glenn	
Mellor, Barry	Parry, Merfyn	Jones, Brian	Thomas, Rhys (Group Leader)	
Murray, Bob	Welch, Joe (Group Leader)	Jones, Tina	Williams, Eryl	
Prendergast, Peter	Williams, David	Mainon, Richard	Wynne, Emrys	
Timms, Graham	Williams, Huw	Marston, Christine		
Williams, Cheryl	Young, Mark	Sampson, Anton		
		Scott, Peter		
		Thomas, Tony		
		Thomas, Andrew		
		Thompson-Hill, Julian		

Report to	Council
Date of meeting	13 October 2020
Lead Member	Councillor Richard Mainon, Lead Member for Corporate Services and Strategic Direction
Report author	Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager Kath Jones, Committee Administrator
Title	Committee Timetable 2021

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report contains the draft committee timetable for 2021.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. It is necessary for Council to approve a timetable for 2021 to enable meeting venues and resources to be confirmed, to publicise the timetable and to populate the members' diaries.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 That Council approves the committee timetable for 2021 as attached in appendix 1.

4. Report details

4.1. The timetable for the following year would normally have been approved earlier to maintain an 18 month timetable. This has been delayed because of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic which resulted in the postponement of Council meetings.

4.2. The draft timetable for 2021 is attached as appendix 1 and also contains a committee-by-committee explanation of the factors behind the identification of suitable dates for each meeting.

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

- 5.1. The approval of a committee timetable is central to the functioning of the democratic and committee systems which are essential elements of the Council's governance arrangements and contribute to the Council's corporate priorities.

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

- 6.1. The costs of maintaining a committee system are covered within existing budgets but the Council in 2015 made a commitment through its Freedoms and Flexibilities process to reduce the number of committee meetings being held at that time to save the associated costs. Services throughout the Council may contribute to the meetings included in the timetable, usually by contributing information, reports and officer time.

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

- 7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
- 7.2. The annual timetable of meetings is an established process and meets the aims of well-being and equality legislation. The principal 'service users' are the members of the committees and supporting officers although the press and public will also be able to attend most meetings or view webcast meetings online. The level of interest or engagement of individuals or groups is likely in large part to depend on the topic under consideration.

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

- 8.1. The Democratic Services Committee is being consulted on the issues raised in this report and any recommendations will be reported to Council. Officers supporting the work of the different committees have been consulted on the committee timetable to identify viable dates for meetings

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. There are no additional costs arising from the recommendations in this report.

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

- 10.1 Failure to confirm the timetable would be detrimental to the Council's governance arrangements.

11. Power to make the decision

- 11.1 Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972

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COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2021

Appendix 1

Committee	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
COUNTY COUNCIL 10 a.m.	26	23		13	18 ANNUAL COUNCIL		6	SUMMER RECESS	7	12		7	
COUNCIL BRIEFING 2 p.m.			15			7					8		
CABINET 10 a.m.	19	16	23	27	25	29	27			21	19	23	14
CABINET BRIEFING 1 p.m.	11	1	1	12	10	14	12			6	4	1	6
PLANNING 9.30 a.m.	13	10	10	14	12	16	14			8	6	10	15
PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY 9.30 a.m.	28		18	29		10	15			30		25	
COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY 9.30 a.m.	21		11		13		1			9	21		9
PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY 9.30 a.m.		11		15	20		8			16		4	16
CONWY & DENBIGHSHIRE JOINT PSB SCRUTINY 10 a.m.	22			26									
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 9.30 a.m.	27		17	28		9	28			22		24	
LICENSING 9.30 a.m.			3			23				15			8
SACRE 10 a.m.		2				24					20		

Committee	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
STANDARDS 10 a.m.			5			11			17			3	
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES 10 a.m.			12							1			
JCC FOR HEALTH & SAFETY & EMPLOYEE RELATIONS 10 a.m.		5			14		16					12	
WELSH LANGUAGE STEERING COMMITTEE 10 a.m.			16				13					9	
ASSET MANAGEMENT GROUP 9.30 a.m.	15		4		5		22		23		18		
AONB JOINT COMMITTEE 10 a.m.			19 (FCC)			25 (DCC)					5 (WCBC)		
CORPORATE PARENTING FORUM 10 a.m.	29			23			9			15			
PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD	25 (2pm) informal meeting		16 (2pm)										
SCRUTINY CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS GROUP 2.00 p.m.	21		11	29			1		9		25		
CORPORATE PLAN BOARD 9.30 a.m.	20			21			7			27			

Committee	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
MEMBER AREA GROUPS												
DENBIGH TUES 2 p.m.	12		9		11		20			5		21
RHYL MON 2 p.m.		15		19		21			20		15	
PRESTATYN & MELIDEN TUE 6 p.m.		9		20		15			14		16	
ELWY THUR 9.30 a.m.	14		25		27		29			7		2
RUTHIN MON 2 p.m.		22		26		28			27		22	
DEE VALLEY MON 2 p.m.	18		8		17		26			11		13

OTHER MEETINGS IN 2021

Committee	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CONWY & DENBIGHSHIRE JOINT ADOPTION PANEL												
FOSTERING PANEL	27	24	24	28	19	23	28	25	22	27	24	15
AONB PARTNERSHIP 10 a.m.		19			21					15		

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DRAFT SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2021 COUNCIL MEETINGS

KEY

	WEEKEND OR BANK HOLIDAY
	SCHOOL HOLIDAY

DUE TO SPACE THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE SCHEDULE – PSB, MAGS, CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS GROUP, ADOPTION PANEL, FOSTERING PANEL, AONB JC/PARTNERSHIP

2021	M	T	W	T	F		M	T	W	T	F		M	T	W	T	F		M	T														
JAN					1		4	5	6	7	8		11 CABINET BRIEFING	12	13 PLANNING	14	15 AMG		18	19 CABINET	20 CORPORATE PLAN BOARD	21 COMMUNITIES	22 PSB JOSG		25	26 COUNCIL	27 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	28 PERFORMANCE	29 CORPORATE PARENTING		M	T		
FEB	1 CABINET BRIEFING	2 SACRE	3	4	5 JCC H&S ANDER		8	9	10 PLANNING	11 PARTNERSHIPS	12		15	16 CABINET	17	18	19		22	23 COUNCIL	24	25	26											
Page 2 of 5	1 CABINET BRIEFING	2	3 LICENSING	4 AMG	5 STANDARDS		8	9	10 PLANNING	11 COMMUNITIES	12 DEMOCRATIC SERVICES		15 COUNCIL BRIEFING	16 WELSH LANGUAGE	17 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	18 PERFORMANCE	19		22	23 CABINET	24	25	26 PSB JOSG		29	30	31							
APR				1	2		5	6	7	8	9		12 CABINET BRIEFING	13 COUNCIL	14 PLANNING	15 PARTNERSHIPS	16		19	20	21 CORPORATE PLAN BOARD	22	23 CORPORATE PARENTING		26	27 CABINET	28 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	29 PERFORMANCE	30					
MAY							3	4	5 AMG	6 ELECTIONS	7		10 CABINET BRIEFING	11	12 PLANNING	13 COMMUNITIES	14 JCC H&S ANDER		17	18 COUNCIL	19	20 PARTNERSHIPS	21	24	25 CABINET	26	27	28	31					
JUNE		1	2	3	4		7 COUNCIL BRIEFING	8	9 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	10 PERFORMANCE	11 STANDARDS		14 CABINET BRIEFING	15	16 PLANNING	17	18		21	22	23 LICENSING	24 SACRE	25		28	29 CABINET	30							

CYCLE OF MEETINGS – 2021

Meetings scheduled so as to avoid school holidays for formal meetings where possible and week of the Royal Welsh Show (19 – 22 July) and Royal Welsh Winter Fair (29 - 30 Nov)

COUNCIL – 8 MEETINGS [meets at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesdays]

26 Jan – needs to meet before end Jan to approve Council Tax Reduction Scheme

23 Feb – needs to meet before end of Feb to approve Council Tax Levels

13 April – delayed a week to avoid Easter Holidays (29 March – 9 April)

18 May – ANNUAL COUNCIL

6 July

7 September

12 Oct

7 December – a week later than usual to avoid clash with Royal Welsh Winter Fair (29 - 30 Nov)

COUNCIL BRIEFINGS [meets at 2.00 p.m. on Mondays]

To be scheduled for the 3 months there are no council meetings – Mondays 2.00 p.m.

15 March

7 June

8 Nov

CABINET – MONTHLY [meets at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesdays]

Where possible to be scheduled near the end of the month with 4 weeks between meetings.

19 Jan – to schedule a week later would clash with Council

16 February (in half term holidays, cannot schedule a week later as would clash with Council and scheduling a week earlier would leave 3 weeks between January and February meetings and also present difficulties for finance report)

23 March – brought forward a week to avoid Easter Holidays (29 March – 9 April) but still leaves 4 weeks between meetings

27 April

25 May

29 June

27 July – falls in school holiday time but the week before is also school holidays and the week of the Royal Welsh Show. To bring forward two weeks to 13 July would leave 2 weeks between June and July meetings and 10 weeks until the next meeting scheduled for 21 September

21 September – could be moved to 28 September but would leave only 3 weeks between September and October meeting which had been brought forward to avoid half term and would leave only 3 weeks between the September and October meetings

19 October – brought forward a week to avoid half term

23 November

14 December – week earlier than usual due to Christmas period and to avoid school holidays but leaves only 3 weeks between November and December meetings – could be moved to 21 December in school holiday period

CABINET BRIEFINGS – MONTHLY [meets at 1.00 p.m. on Mondays between Cabinet meetings to complement the cycle of Cabinet meetings]

11 January

1 February

1 March

12 April

10 May

14 June

12 July

6 September

4 October

1 November

6 December

PLANNING COMMITTEE – MONTHLY [meets at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesdays]

13 January

10 February

10 March

14 April but falls on the same week as Council – could move a week earlier but would fall within Easter Holidays (29 March – 9 April)

12 May

16 June

14 July (a week later (21st) would fall in Royal Welsh Show week which we've been asked to avoid and Corporate Governance and Audit Committee needs to meet the following Wednesday (28th) to sign off the statement of accounts)

8 September (there are 8 weeks between Planning Committee meetings in July (14 July) and September (8 September) due to August recess. There may be potential to hold Planning Committee a week earlier on 1 September if Planning Officers could support that date.

6 October

10 November

15 December

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 7 MEETINGS A YEAR [usually meets at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesdays]

The draft statement of accounts need to be prepared by 31 May 2021 and then considered by CGC. The statement of accounts needs to be signed off by 31 July 2021 and therefore CGC needs to meet as close as possible to that date.

27 January – need to meet late Jan due to Treasury Management report timescale

17 March

28 April

9 June (draft accounts have to be prepared by 31 May)

28 July – in school holiday time but CGC need to consider the statement of accounts before sign off by 31 July and as close to that date as possible

22 September

24 November

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – meet 7 times a year each on Thursdays

Performance Scrutiny – needs to consider school exams end of Sept/beginning Oct and end of Jan/beginning of Feb

28 January

18 March

29 April

10 June

15 July – this meeting should ideally be held on 29 July but it is in school holiday period

30 September

25 November

Communities Scrutiny Committee

21 January

11 March

13 May

1 July

9 September

21 October

9 December

Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

11 Feb

15 April (moved 2 weeks later to avoid Easter Holidays 29 Mar – 9 April)

20 May

8 July

16 Sept

4 Nov

16 Dec

Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee – to meet quarterly following PSB meetings

Dates agreed for 2021 so far – 22 January (Friday) (10 am Conwy) and 26 March (Friday) (10 am Ruthin)

Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group (usually meet in the afternoon following a scrutiny committee approximately every 7 weeks)

21 January (after Communities), 11 March (after Communities), 29 April (after Performance), 1 July (after Communities), 9 September (after Communities) and 25 November (after Performance)

LICENSING COMMITTEE – meets on a quarterly basis (usually Wednesday)

3 March (Wed)

23 June (Wed)

15 Sept (Wed)

8 Dec (Wed)

STANDARDS – meets quarterly on Fridays

5 March

11 June

17 Sept

3 Dec

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – meets twice a year on Fridays

12 March

1 Oct

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR HEALTH & SAFETY AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS – meets quarterly on a Friday

5 Feb

14 May (7 May is day after election so difficult for staffing)

16 July

12 Nov (5 Nov requested for AONB JC)

SACRE – meets once in each school term (3 times a year) on different days in the same academic year

2 Feb (Tuesday)

24 June (Thursday)

20 Oct (Wednesday)

WELSH LANGUAGE STEERING COMMITTEE – meets 3 times a year

16 Mar (Tue)

13 July (Tue)

9 Nov (Tue)

CORPORATE PARENTING FORUM – meets quarterly

29 Jan (Fri)

23 April (Fri)

9 July (Fri)

15 Oct (Fri)

ASSET MANAGEMENT GROUP

Meets at least 6 times a year at such venues, dates and times as determined by the group – tends to meet every other month on a Thursday in Caledfryn (when room-based meetings are held).

15 Jan (Friday) (offered 7 Jan but too early in the month and all remaining Thursdays in January taken up with other meetings – officer preference was for Friday instead)

4 Mar

5 May (Wednesday) (elections on 6 May and other Thursdays in the month also taken up with other meetings so officer preference was for Wednesday)

22 July

23 Sept

18 Nov

AONB Joint Committee – set by the Board and included in the schedule

Fri 19 March (FCC to host), Fri 25 June (DCC to host) and Fri 5 November (WCBC to host)

PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

Set by the Board – dates agreed up to 22 March 2021 included in the schedule

25 Jan (2pm – Russell House, Rhyl) (informal workshop) and 22 March (2pm – Coed Pella, Colwyn Bay)

CONWY & DENBIGHSHIRE JOINT ADOPTION PANEL

Set by the Panel. Dates have been requested.

FOSTERING PANEL

Set by the Panel and included in the schedule as follows

27 Jan, 24 Feb, 24 Mar, 28 Apr, 19 May, 23 Jun, 28 July, 25 Aug, 22 Sept, 27 Oct, 24 Nov and 15 Dec

CORPORATE PLAN BOARD – meet quarterly – Jan / April / July / Oct 9.30 a.m. start

20 Jan (Wed)

21 April (Wed)

7 July (Wed)

27 Oct (Wed) (school holidays?)

MEMBER AREA GROUPS (MAG) –

Meet every other month.

DEE VALLEY MAG

Meet on a Monday at 2.00 p.m. every other month

For 2021 will meet – Jan, March, May, July, Oct, Dec

Propose – 18 Jan, 8 March, 17 May, 26 July, 11 Oct, 13 Dec

DENBIGH MAG

Meet any day between Tue – Fri at 2.00 p.m. every other month

For 2021 will meet – Jan, Mar, May, Oct, Dec

Propose Tuesdays – 12 Jan, 9 Mar, 11 May, 20 July (in school holidays and Royal Welsh week but no other Tuesdays available in July), 5 Oct, 21 Dec (Council and Cabinet on preceding weeks, last Tuesday before then 30 Nov a possibility but it is in Royal Welsh Winter Fair week)

ELWY MAG

Meet on Thurs at 9.30 a.m. every other month (avoid 2nd & last Thurs of the month where possible).

For 2021 will meet – Jan, Mar, May, July, Oct, Dec

Propose Thursdays – 14 Jan, 25 Mar, 27 May, 29 July, 7 Oct, 2 Dec

PRESTATYN

Meet on Tue at 6.00 p.m. every other month

For 2021 will meet – Feb, Apr, June, Sept, Nov

Propose Tue – 9 Feb, 20 Apr, 15 June, 14 Sept, 16 Nov

RHYL

Meet on Mon at 2.00 pm every other month – note that Rhyl Town Council hold committee meetings 2nd and 4th Monday of a month between 4 – 6 p.m. and the Rhyl MAG meetings will avoid clashes if possible.

For 2021 will meet – Feb, April, June, Sept, Nov

Propose – 15 Feb, 19 April, 21 June, 20 Sept, 15 Nov

RUTHIN

Meet on Mon at (2.00 pm) every other month

For 2021 – Feb, April, June, Sept, Nov

Propose – 24 Feb, 26 April, 28 June, 27 Sept, 22 Nov

Agenda Item 11

Notice of Motion put forward by Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts for consideration by Full Council:

'That this Council supports the following petition lodged on the parliamentary petition website:

For the first year, young drivers must have a black box fitted before they can drive. Furthermore, they should only be able to carry one passenger, who must be an experienced driver. These changes should significantly decrease the amount of young road crash fatalities by encouraging safer driving.'

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Notice of Motion put forward by the Independent Group for consideration by Full Council:

That Denbighshire County Council:

- (i) acknowledges the efforts that this council has made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy;
- (ii) further recognises:
 - that very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,
 - that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would enable and empower new local businesses, or councils, to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local customers, and
 - that revenues received by new local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions;
- (iii) accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, supported by 187 MPs which, if made law, would establish a Right to Local Supply which would promote local renewable electricity supply companies and co-operatives by making the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate to the size of the supply operation; and
- (iv) further resolves to:
 - inform the local media of this decision,
 - write to local MPs, asking them to support the Bill, and
 - write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at [8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN](#) or info@powerforpeople.org.uk) expressing its support.

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Agenda Item 13

Notice of Motion put forward by Councillor Paul Penlington for consideration by Full Council:

“In line with the authority’s commitment to protecting our natural environment, from today, all council building developments will incorporate hedgehog highways and ensure they are protected.

To be achieved through; only using native hedging as boundaries wherever practicable and only using native plants in any landscaping. Any necessary solid wall or fencing boundaries will incorporate ground level hedgehog tunnels.

Further to that the authority will actively encourage private developers to adopt the same practice.”

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COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Meeting	Item (Description / Title)		Purpose of Report	Council Decision Required (yes/no)	Lead member and Contact Officer
8 December 2020	1	North Wales Economic Ambition Board Growth Deal: Governance Agreement for relevant partners	To agree the Governance Agreement 2	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Graham Boase
	2	Approval of revised Housing and Homelessness Strategy		Yes	Councillors Tony Thomas and Bobby Feeley/ Angela Loftus

FUTURE ITEMS

Annual Report of the Standards Committee	To consider the Annual Report	Chair of the Standards Committee / Gary Williams	TBC
Annual Report of the Corporate Governance Committee	To consider the Annual Report	Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee / Gary Williams	TBC

Note for Officers – Full Council Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>December 2020</i>	24 November 2020				

Updated 10/09/2020 SP

Council Forward Work Programme.doc

