

To: Members of the Performance  
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 8 July 2021

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 15 JULY 2021 BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**.

Yours sincerely

G. Williams  
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

## **AGENDA**

### **1 APOLOGIES**

### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

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

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

### **4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 16)**

To receive the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 10 June 2021 (copy attached).

### **5 DRAFT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORTS 2019 - 2020 & 2020 - 2021 (Pages 17 - 100)**

To consider a report by the Principal Manager, Community Support Services (copy attached) presenting the draft annual reports for scrutiny prior to their submission to the Care Inspectorate Wales.

**6 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 101 - 122)**

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

**7 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

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

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Councillors**

Arwel Roberts (Chair)

Hugh Irving (Vice-Chair)

Ellie Chard

Pete Prendergast

Martyn Holland

Peter Scott

Geraint Lloyd-Williams

Andrew Thomas

Bob Murray

David Williams

Paul Penlington

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### 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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## PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held by video conference on Thursday 10 June 2021 at 10.00 am.

### PRESENT

Councillors Ellie Chard, Martyn Holland, Hugh Irving, Bob Murray, Paul Penlington, Arwel Roberts (Chair), Pete Prendergast, Peter Scott and Andrew Thomas

Co-opted Education Member Kathleen Jones attended for Agenda Items 6 & 7

Cabinet Members – Councillors Huw Hilditch-Roberts (Lead Member for Education, Children’s Services and Public Engagement) and Julian Thompson-Hill (Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets) attended for items relating to their portfolios.

Observers – Councillors Meirick Davies, Gwyneth Kensler and Graham Timms

### ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director Communities (NS); Head of Customers, Communications and Marketing (LG); Interim Head of Education (GD); Principal Education Manager (MG); Inclusion Officer – ALN Implementation (JE); Inclusion Officer (JB); Strategic Planning Team Manager (KN); Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader (IM); Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Committee Officers (KEJ & SJ/SW [Webcaster])

**GwE Representatives** – Mair Herbert and Jacqueline Chan attended for Agenda Item 6

### 1 APOLOGIES

Councillor David Williams and Co-opted Education Member Neil Roberts

### 2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Nominations were sought for the office of Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2021/22 municipal year. Councillor Arwel Roberts nominated Councillor Hugh Irving for the position of Committee Vice-Chair. Councillor Bob Murray seconded Councillor Irving’s nomination. No other nominations were received and the Committee unanimously –

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Hugh Irving as its Vice-Chair for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Councillor Irving thanked Committee members for their continued support.

### 3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The following members declared a personal interest in agenda items 6 & 7 –

Councillor Ellie Chard – School Governor Ysgol Tir Morfa  
Councillor Meirick Davies – School Governor Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog  
Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts – Parent & School Governor Ysgol Pen Barras  
Councillor Hugh Irving – School Governor Prestatyn High School  
Councillor Arwel Roberts – School Governor Ysgol y Castell  
Councillor Peter Scott – School Governor St. Asaph VP Infants School

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

No urgent matters had been raised.

#### **5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 18 March 2021 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 be received and approved as a correct record.

No matters were raised in relation to the content of the minutes.

#### **6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DONALDSON REPORT 'SUCCESSFUL FUTURES' - CURRICULUM FOR WALES**

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts (Lead Member for Education, Children's Services and Public Engagement) and the Interim Head of Education together with GwE Representatives Mair Herbert and Jacqueline Chan. GwE as the Regional School Improvement Service was leading on the development and supporting schools in the implementation of the new curriculum for Wales following the publication of the Donaldson Report 'Successful Futures'.

Councillor Hilditch-Roberts introduced the report (previously circulated) on how the regional consortium, in partnership with the local authority, were supporting schools in the implementation of the new curriculum, detailing the significant work undertaken in order to provide assurance to the Committee in that regard. He referred to the new curriculum as a positive way forward for teaching and the four main aims to help children and young people to be: ambitious and capable learners, enterprising and creative, ethical and informed citizens and healthy and confident. The impact of Covid 19 on schools and their preparation for implementing the new curriculum was highlighted together with work ongoing at various levels from individual schools, school clusters, across county, the region and nationally in order to share best practice. The Interim Head of Education added that the focus of the new curriculum was for each child to learn in the way that was right for them. The improvement and support offer for schools was aimed at supporting all practitioners with a focus on key themes around leadership, planning, vision, pedagogy and professional learning. Consultative workshops had been held to ensure the best offer was provided to schools with an excellent response and positive feedback from head teachers in both primary and secondary sectors keen to work together and ensure consistency. The work carried out by GwE was key to ensuring schools were ready for implementation of the new curriculum in September 2022.

The efforts to support schools had been detailed in the report and included –

- working with other regional consortia to develop a national professional learning offer that integrated all aspects of the wider reform
- a planned sequence of professional learning and training across the region with cluster-based sessions available for schools
- facilitating sessions for schools within a cluster to work collaboratively to strategically plan for implementation of the curriculum with activities to support those preparations having been identified within School Development Plans
- provided examples of planned activities to further prepare for the new curriculum including developing a shared vision; collaborating on common approaches to teaching and learning and within a specific Area of Learning and Experience
- additional support from GwE would be available for schools to access at both cluster and individual level including tailored bespoke support where needed
- further support included a series of ‘Think-Pieces’ written by GwE as part of the weekly reform sessions with Professor Donaldson covering key aspects of the curriculum reform journey being made available to schools
- in readiness for September 2022 work was ongoing with partners to develop a wide range of qualitative indicators to allow schools to reflect on how they were implementing the four aims of the new curriculum
- prior to lockdown over 90% of schools indicated they were either partly on track or better in their knowledge and understanding of the new framework; nearly all schools indicated they were partly on track or better with their engagement and participation in cluster work for preparing for the new curriculum. Work had continued since then to ensure progress to implementation remained on track.

During the ensuing debate the Lead Member, Interim Head of Service and GwE Representatives responded to members’ comments and questions as follows –

- the important work and responsibilities of school governors was acknowledged. In terms of pressures assurances were given that support was provided as appropriate with regular meetings to discuss any issues or concerns and there was an excellent relationship between the schools, local authority and GwE. The approach taken ensured that issues were identified and dealt with at an early stage thereby preventing an escalation of the problem
- there were six school clusters in Denbighshire (Prestatyn, Rhyl, Denbigh, Ruthin, Llangollen and Glan Clwyd) who worked together and it was reiterated that additional help was available to schools who worked within a cluster
- two schools had come out of special measures during the pandemic and the additional pressure on those schools to progress against Estyn recommendations was recognised. In addition to the general support offer agreed with schools in the implementation of the new curriculum, further bespoke support was provided to individual schools who required it
- despite the absence of legislative controls for elected home education there was a rigorous process in place to support pupils who were home schooled; however the implementation of the new curriculum could not be enforced with parents/carers choosing their own curriculum when educating at home

- religious education (RE) sat within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience in the new curriculum which included religion, value and ethics, and assurances were provided that RE must be included and was very much safeguarded
- as part of the preparation schools should work together to ensure that there was an alignment in the transitions across the 3 – 16 year age group continuum and a continuation of learning with clarity on particular areas of learning within the age groups to ensure no repetition and progression of learners
- the planned sequence and timeline of professional learning and training available had been detailed within the report
- schools would trial their own curriculum and support would be provided in the evaluation of that and any adjustments required prior to formal implementation of the new curriculum in September 2022
- confirmed Qualification Wales was undertaking a consultation on reforming GCSEs to bring some of the elements and spirit of the new curriculum into those assessments; there had been no communicated changes to A/AS Level suites
- there were 27 'What Matters' statements across the curriculum which were statutory and would be an integral part of the framework and inform its delivery
- Modern Foreign Languages sat within the Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience and there was confidence that modern languages would be better regarded and allowed for in terms of curriculum time
- agreed it was a worthwhile suggestion from Councillor Graham Timms to provide a bank of local information on climate change for schools to access, and reported on the digital platforms already used both internally by the local authority via the hwb and externally on GwE's website as a means of working collaboratively and sharing resources for the benefit of all authorities
- in response to concerns raised regarding the inappropriate use of mobile phones reported in some schools in England officers provided assurances that no significant concerns had been raised locally however, the use of social media platforms was an area of concern within the sector which would continue to be closely monitored.

At the end of debate the Chair conveyed his thanks for the comprehensive report and to those who had responded to the issues raised. The Committee –

**RESOLVED:** *subject to the above observations to –*

- (a) *receive the information provided in the report and its associated appendices, along with that delivered during the course of the discussion, on the work undertaken to date by GwE in partnership with the Local Authority to support schools with the implementation of the New Curriculum for Wales following the publication of the Donaldson Report 'Successful Futures', and*
- (b) *request that a further progress report be presented to the Committee during the Spring of 2022 detailing the readiness of all educational establishments and staff to deliver the new curriculum from September 2022 onwards.*

## 7 ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS TRANSFORMATION UPDATE JUNE 2021

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Lead Member for Education, Children's Services and Public Engagement introduced the report (previously circulated) detailing progress made to ensure the local authority and schools were ready to meet their statutory requirements under the upcoming Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) (ALNET) Act 2018.

The ALNET Act 2018, supported by regulations and an Additional Learning Needs Code, would replace the current Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002). The Act replaced the terms 'special educational needs' (SEN) and 'learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities' (LDD) with the new term 'additional learning needs' (ALN). The Act created a single system with a single statutory plan, the Individual Development Plan (IDP) which would replace existing plans such as Individual Education Plans, Statements of SEN and Learning and Skills Plans.

Councillor Hilditch-Roberts highlighted the additional work created by the introduction of the new Act with no extra funding being made available for its implementation. He commended the response and commitment from staff and stakeholders in progressing the necessary requirements and putting children first, which again reflected the positive approach and way of working in Denbighshire. It was explained that the ALN transformation programme created a unified system for supporting learners from 0 to 25 years with ALN in order to deliver a fully inclusive education system in Wales delivered through five key themes. The new ALN system was expected to go live in September 2021.

The Committee was guided through the report and actions taken in order to meet the new statutory requirements which included, in brief –

- Regional – Denbighshire continued to work collaboratively across the region and had produced an update report showing how Denbighshire was working towards implementation of the ALN reforms. There were various regional working groups with Denbighshire leading on the Educated Other Than at School (EOTAS) and Looked After Children (LAC) working groups
- Training – staff had been offered Person Centred Practice training, half termly meetings/workshops with school representatives had taken place, and regional training provided by the North Wales ALN Transformation Team. There was also access to training for elected members and other stakeholders
- Budgets – School ALN funding was now fully delegated to schools, working towards a 3 year rolling average to allow schools to plan more effectively
- IT System – Denbighshire, Flintshire, Conwy and Wrexham joined to procure a new IT system (ECLIPSE) to manage the new ALN processes effectively
- Learner Support – The Team Around the School had been established to continue to meet the current requirements of the statutory assessment process and the Act in relation to early intervention, prevention and identification of ALN
- Provision – work was ongoing with schools to map out their provision, including interventions and strategies used to support learners with and without ALN. This would provide a clear understanding for determining need and provision
- Individual Development Plan (IDP) – the IDP had been trialled in a small selection of schools in preparation for the new legislation; the single plan would ensure consistency and continuity and safeguard provision and rights

- Documentation – a ‘Learner Profile’ was being developed to capture the support, progress and targets of learners in need of targeted support that may not be defined as ALN and work with schools was ongoing to create an ALN/Inclusion protocol for schools to adopt
- School Readiness – schools had been supported with the new compulsory ALN Coordinator role and guidance provided. Schools had also completed the GwE milestones (guide targets to meet the required ALN reforms) and support was offered to schools where requested
- Financial Implications – the local authority continued to utilise the Regional ALN Transformation grant to support them and schools in preparation for the ALN reform and schools also used ALN Transformation cluster funding.

The Interim Head of Education also drew the Committee’s attention to the self-assessment for assessing the extent to which the local authority was prepared with a clear RAG (Red/Amber/Green) system to show the level of compliance.

The Lead Member, Interim Head of Children’s Services, Principal Education Manager and the Inclusion Officer responded to members’ questions as follows –

- there were fewer resources available to undertake assessments through the medium of Welsh which was a national issue and not just confined to the area of additional learning needs; the need to address the issue continued to be raised with the Welsh Government on a regular basis
- school ALN funding had been fully delegated to schools working towards a three year rolling average and costed provision maps were being developed to inform that process which would be moderated once a year to provide flexibility; a transitional fund had also been created against which funding requests could be made in the event of a sudden influx of children requiring support and to ensure that all children had the support they needed
- it could be difficult to identify home educated children with ALN given that the local authority did not have any responsibility in providing provision however there was a monitoring process in place and work was ongoing with the Regional Transformation Lead and regional partners in terms of the impact of the new Act and ALN Code of practice in that regard. Support continued as appropriate for children with ALN who transferred from school to be home educated and under the new Code of Practice parents, young people and health professionals could approach the local authority if they believed a child might have ALN whereupon an assessment could be offered
- some discussion focused on the implications of the extended age range of pupils from 0 – 25 years and the work going on in that regard to ensure the relevant settings were ready to meet the new requirements; post 16 education implementation had been postponed to September 2022 which allowed more time for local authorities and further education colleges to progress the necessary changes and work continued both locally and regionally in that regard. Assurances were also provided that practitioners from Community Support Services covering the adult social care aspect had also been involved in the work around ALN reform from the outset and work was also ongoing with specialised adult education colleges
- the extended age range resulted in an increased workload for Educational Psychologists (EP). The current staff capacity was an area of risk with a vacant

post that was proving difficult to fill due to the national shortage of EPs and the need for an additional EP to undertake the work required as a result of the ALN reforms. There was also a national shortage of Health Psychologists and the wait for a formal diagnosis presented difficulties in fully understanding a child's needs which then required a greater input from EP in those cases

- whilst there were different support systems and documentation relating to ALN in different areas of the UK there were robust procedures in place to convert the information and data provided with the child into the version used locally
- there were very close working relationships with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to ensure a clear and coordinated approach to providing support within the context of mental wellbeing and mental health however waiting lists for the service had increased and would result in some delays in terms of diagnosis for some children
- reported upon the availability of report appendices 2 and 3 in Welsh when finalised and confirmed that training and resources produced by the local authority for Welsh medium schools would be available bilingually however the council had no control over material produced by external stakeholders.

In bringing the debate to a close the Chair thanked everyone for their contributions.

The Committee –

**RESOLVED** that –

- (a) subject to the above comments and observations to endorse the work undertaken thus far to ensure that the Local Authority and its schools are ready to meet the statutory requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018 that come into force in September 2021;*
- (b) as part of its consideration it had read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 5), and*
- (c) a report be presented to the Committee during the Spring of 2022 detailing the Council's compliance with the statutory requirements set out in the Additional Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018.*

At this juncture (11.45 am) the committee adjourned for a refreshment break.

## **8 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2020 TO 2021**

Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets introduced the report (previously circulated) which provided a quarterly and end of year analysis of the progress in delivery of the Corporate Plan and highlighted specific projects and actions for delivery in 2021 to 2022. Feedback was sought on the draft Annual Performance Review 2020 to 2021 prior to approval of the final document by Council in July.

The Committee was guided through the report which had expanded to combine a number of previously separate reports into one document, meeting the Council's

requirements under a number of pieces of legislation including the new Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The report provided a retrospective evaluation of the Council's success in delivering against its plans during 2020 to 2021 and looked ahead to what could be delivered in 2021 to 2022. It included a narrative on progress in delivering corporate priorities, including the current status and programme success. The Project Register and Corporate Risk Register had also been included within the document.

The Strategic Planning Team Manager provided a brief update against priorities –

- **Housing** – progress was good although numbers on the SARTH waiting list had increased with work ongoing to understand the reasoning behind the increase and explore potential solutions to managing the waiting list. The Council was largely on track to deliver the 1000 extra homes committed by March 2022 although there may be some slippage regarding council housing due to Covid
- **Connected Communities** – this area was currently a priority for improvement largely due to road conditions and broadband infrastructure. However projects were in place to address broadband infrastructure which were progressing well. The events infrastructure project would be delivered in the next financial year
- **Resilient Communities** – a number of key projects had been completed and overall good progress was being made against this priority
- **Environment** – there had been a significant development in terms of adoption of a Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and good progress was being made. Delivery against the timetable in terms of the energy efficiency of council homes remained challenging due to Covid restrictions although the work was still in the pipeline and there was a plan in place for its delivery
- **Young People** – the impact of Covid had been significant and was still ongoing and therefore it was difficult to draw conclusions about the impact on children's education and their potential attainment in the future. The level of youth unemployment had also grown exponentially due to Covid and an area of concern however there were numerous interventions in place to address it.

The Lead Member explained the performance measuring definitions where there was comparable data with other local authorities. Assurances were provided that whilst there were areas of priority for improvement it did not necessarily mean that performance levels were poor but that Denbighshire's performance was below the median level in relation to the other local authorities in Wales.

The Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader provided an overview of the new corporate health section of the report in order to satisfy the need to self-assess under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. It focused on seven key governance areas and provided a wider picture about the context in which the Council was operating when delivering its performance objectives. It also sought to draw out any key actions to improve performance going forward.

During the ensuing debate members took the opportunity to raise questions and discussed various aspects of the report with the Lead Member and officers present. Main discussion points focused on the following –

- the Council's final position on service and corporate budgets for 2020/21 was an underspend of £9.457m. This included a schools underspend of £7.058 largely due to school closures during lockdown and some late grant funding received from the Welsh Government. The remaining balance largely related to delayed expenditure by services as a result of the pandemic
- the report included a high level summary of spend and the outturn position and impact on services was further explained. The Lead Member agreed to provide Councillor Paul Penlington with a detailed cost breakdown relating to Highways, Facilities & Environmental Services and Education & Children's Services outside of the meeting. With regard to the improved school position, assurances were given that schools would retain that underspend
- elaborated on the situation of Denbighshire Leisure Limited (DLL) which had been set up as a stand-alone company on 1 April 2020 and subsequent impact of the pandemic on trade – practically all of the loss of income that otherwise had been anticipated coming into DLL had been claimed back from Welsh Government as part of their funding package
- Councillor Martyn Holland advised that the report had also been considered by the Governance and Audit Committee and provided an opportunity to identify any areas which may warrant further response or scrutiny. He highlighted (1) the proposed removal of measures relating to C roads and unclassified roads from the framework, and (2) the unsuccessful procurement relating to Ruthin Extra Care Housing due to the high specification as potential issues
- the 20% affordable housing requirement for the development on land adjacent to Ysgol Pendref in Denbigh (which was double the 10% affordable housing stipulation in the Local Development Plan) had been based on market testing
- confirmed the reference to the 'number of Welsh books borrowed per capita' (Library Services, page 46) referred to books published in the Welsh Language
- the Chair highlighted that only 42% of residents felt satisfied with the availability of housing in their area and that the number of people on the SARTH waiting list had also increased. The Head of Customers, Communications and Marketing confirmed it was an area of concern that was being explored further and welcomed the opportunity to report back to a future scrutiny meeting thereon
- it was expected that the performance data due in June relating to various measures would be available in time to be included within the final document for submission to Council in July
- confirmed there was no additional cost associated with the creation of the report except in terms of officer time as part of the usual process
- in terms of housing need the location for council homes was largely driven by the Local Development Plan and needs assessment for housing with social housing being built where demand was highest – unfortunately it was not possible to meet all the demand in the county
- with regard to the tree planting programme for disadvantaged communities, a community orchard had been developed in Denbigh and there were plans to develop it further. There had been a challenge in Upper Denbigh to find suitable land on which to plant more trees which Countryside Services had tried to address by adapting outdoor spaces for further planting opportunities and therefore work was ongoing to address the challenges encountered.

At the conclusion of the discussion it was –

**RESOLVED** that, subject to the comments outlined above, to endorse the information on the Council's performance during 2020/21 and the projects it aimed to deliver during 2021/22 as detailed in the Annual Performance Review report.

## **9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

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

Discussion focused on the following –

- the request to reschedule the Draft Sustainable Travel Plan from July to November was agreed and that the July meeting proceed with the Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019/20 & 2020/21 as the main business item
- members were asked to submit any proposal forms regarding topics for scrutiny (including those identified earlier in the meeting during consideration of the Annual Performance Report) by the end of next week for submission to the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chairs Group on 1 July
- reaffirmed progress reports be submitted to the Committee in March 2022 as agreed earlier in the meeting in relation to the Curriculum for Wales and Additional Learning Needs Transformation
- referred to the Committee's information brief which included a report overview of compliments, suggestions and complaints received under the Council's customer feedback policy 'Your Voice' during Quarter 4 2020/21 – it was requested that examples of complaints as well as compliments be provided in future information reports to the Committee
- the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group had considered the merits and practicalities of pre-meeting briefings. It had been decided that the Chair and Vice-Chair of each Committee should determine, on a meeting by meeting basis, whether a pre-meeting for Committee members was merited. If individual Committee members felt it would be beneficial to hold a pre-briefing for a particular meeting they should approach the Chair or Vice-Chair with a request.

**RESOLVED** that, subject to the amendments agreed above, the Committee's forward work programme as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

## **10 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

The Chair advised members that he had recently represented the Committee at the following groups/forums –

- the Service Challenge meeting for Legal, HR and Democratic Services. This had been an extremely positive meeting which had highlighted how all the departments within this support service had adapted during the Covid-19 crisis to deliver their services in new innovative ways whilst also supporting the frontline services to deliver theirs
- Strategic Investment Group (SIG) at which a number of capital investment projects had been discussed

- a meeting with Estyn, which the Chair of Communities Scrutiny Committee also attended. The Regulator was examining the effectiveness of the County's Education Service and the Council's scrutiny processes.

Councillor Ellie Chard confirmed that she would be representing the Committee at the Service Challenge for Education and Children's Services on 19 July.

***RESOLVED*** that the verbal report be received and noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.50 pm.

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<b>Report to</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> July 2021</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	<b>Bobby Feeley / Huw Hilditch-Roberts / Nicola Stubbins</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Ann Lloyd, Principal Manager, Community Support Services</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Draft Director of Social Services Annual Reports 2019 - 2020 &amp; 2020 - 2021</b>

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

- 1.1. Every Statutory Director of Social Services in Wales is required to produce an annual report which summarises their view of the effectiveness of the authority's social care services and priorities for improvement.
- 1.2. The draft annual reports for 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 2021 are attached at Appendices 1 & 2. The reports are intended to provide the public with an honest picture of services in Denbighshire and to demonstrate a clear understanding of the strengths and challenges faced.

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

- 2.1. To enable Members to scrutinise the draft annual reports prior to them being submitted to the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

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

- 3.1. That Members consider whether the reports provide a clear account of performance in 2019 – 2020 and in 2020 – 2021
- 3.2 That Members consider whether the report raises any performance issues / concerns that require further scrutiny.

## 4. Report details

4.1. Overall both reports show that Denbighshire County Council continue to provide good quality social services for children, adults and carers, and that we achieved some excellent performance in areas that are important to our citizens at a time when we were also dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic.

### **2019 – 2020 Annual Report**

4.2. In March 2020 Welsh Government suspended the requirement to produce an annual report due to the Covid 19 pandemic. However, they have since advised that all Local Authorities in Wales are required to publish their reports.

4.3. During 2019 / 2020 we continued to make good progress in transforming our social services and the integration of health and social care in line with the Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014. This was against a backdrop of continuing financial pressures due to reducing public sector funding and increased cost pressures as well as increased demand for services.

4.4. **Highlights and Key Achievements** include:-

- the roll-out of Pre-paid cards to citizens in receipt of Direct Payments
- Edge of Care Services were strengthened to provide intensive interventions for those families with complex safeguarding issues and family dynamics.
- The development of Community Resource Teams saw integration within Rhyl and Ruthin and progress made to secure accommodation in Denbigh and Prestatyn
- Within Mental Health Services we saw the development of the Learning Partnership
- In day and work opportunity services we began to implement the findings of the review that had been concluded
- We achieved a 23% increase in the completion of Adult Protection enquiries within statutory timescales
- The Moving with Dignity project was launched and staff training implemented
- Within the Complex Disability Service, the Hwb Siarad team now work together to ensure more complex Information Advice and Assistance, signposting or short term work is allocated and completed in a timely way.

- Plans were put in place for all children deemed as vulnerable to have contact over the 'lockdown' period that resulted in school closure, utilising staff from across Education and Children's Services and school staff.
- 4 Carer Assessors were recruited – one for each Community Resource Team
- The Dementia Friendly Council Project received recognition from the Alzheimer's Society

4.5. **Areas of work we need to focus on**, moving into 2020 – 2021 we will be undertaking further work on a range of areas including:-

- Ensuring Information, Advice and Assistance to support carers is available digitally as well as through other channels
- Developing a new integrated Early Years' Service and Pathway
- Introducing a peripatetic multi-agency team across Denbighshire and Conwy to work with families who are at risk of having children placed into long-term residential care
- Ensuring Safeguarding is embedded in everyone's practice, which includes lessons learned from Safeguarding audits of Adult Practice Reviews
- Implementing the Moving with Dignity Programme
- Reviewing the provision of childcare and respite for parents with children with additional and complex needs.
- Developing an improved and expanded Edge of Care Service, focused on supporting children to remain at home or return home as part of the strategy to reduce the number of Looked After Children
- Continue to develop work on Assistive Technologies

#### **2020 – 2021 Annual Report**

4.6. Throughout 2020 / 20201 the focus was on ensuring we kept our citizens safe and supported throughout the Covid 19 lockdowns and many of our plans had to be put on hold. However, the pandemic meant we had to be creative and innovative to meet the needs of our citizens and has allowed us to accelerate the use of digital and assistive technology. During this year staff worked extremely hard and were stretched to breaking point to provide services to our citizens, especially within our care settings.

#### 4.7. **Highlights and Key Achievements** in 2020 – 2021 including:-

- Volunteers were recruited to support those citizens with lower level support needs during the pandemic
- Creating our Pre-School Outreach Team and Team around the Setting
- Complex Disability Service using various pieces of digital and assistive technology to reduce social isolation and keep citizens with learning disabilities engaged in services (albeit virtually).
- Primary Care services getting much more involved with Community Resource Teams across Denbighshire through virtual meetings
- Close working between a range of partners to ensure vulnerable children were supported during school closures as a result of the Covid 19 lockdown
- Safeguarding referrals within Children's Services have continued to be actioned within 24 hours despite the ongoing Covid 19 challenges
- The use of assistive technology within our care settings such as the Paro Seal and Pepper Robotics
- Bwthyn y Ddôl multi-agency team was established and work progresses on the development of the assessment centre.
- Dementia Social Care Practitioners are established in each of the Community Resource Teams
- Innovative solutions such as Push to Talk and Bridging the Gap were put in place for Carers

#### 4.8. **Areas of work we need to focus on** in 2021 – 2022 includes:

- Moving with Dignity Programme was progressed in this year, but not as much as we planned, and this will gather momentum in the coming year.
- Reviewing opportunities for alternative services, sharing information from the Micro-Enterprises/Community Catalyst project, with carers and carers organisations
- Joining the Welsh Government's Early Integration Transformation Programme as a pathfinder authority, in partnership with Conwy County Borough Council.
- Ensuring effective implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards
- Sustaining and expanding the successful Volunteering Project that was set up in response to Covid 19. Embedding lessons learned and processes adopted to work with volunteers to improve and extend social care services.
- Developing our use of assistive technologies further to create independence

- Continuing our work to develop services for carers
- Continuing with the Bwthyn y Ddôl development and the multi-disciplinary approach to children on the edge of care
- Working with partners to focus on recruitment for care and career pathways for young people into social care.

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

5.1. The report specifically relates to our contribution to delivery on the following Corporate priorities:-

- Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs
- The Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience.

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

6.1. The development and publication of the annual reports does not cost anything other than officer time, and does not impact on other services. The future plans and actions identified for Community Support Services and Education & Children's Services within the report will be delivered within existing budgets, or through partnership funding, such as ICF (Integrated Care Fund).

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

7.1. The annual reports themselves do not require a Well-being Impact Assessment because they provide a retrospective evaluation of performance and the publication of the report has no potential impact on future generations. However, Well-being Impact Assessments will be undertaken in relation to any future plans or development of services which have been mentioned in these annual reports, as and when required.

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

8.1. Feedback from service users and carers about our services form part of our existing quality assurance process and as such has contributed considerably to the development of both annual reports.

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

9.1. The cost implications of any emerging issues in the annual reports must be considered within the context of the council's wider budget position and Medium Term Financial Plan.

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

10.1. There is a detailed risk register for both Community Support Services and Education and Children's Services. As these are reports about Social Services in Denbighshire, any risks associated with the issues covered in this report (and actions to mitigate and manage them) are captured in the service risk registers.

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

11.1. Statutory guidance (including the requirement to publish an annual report) is issued within the Code of Practice on the Role of the Director of Social Services under Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

11.2. Scrutiny's powers are laid out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 whilst Section 7.4.2 of the Council's Constitution sets out Scrutiny's role in relation to performance monitoring and policy objectives.

# **Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020**

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# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

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# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

## 1. Introduction

Denbighshire County Council's Director of Social Services Annual Report demonstrates how we have promoted well-being and accounted for the delivery of well-being standards under the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016. Within the report we will clearly lay out the improvement journey we have taken in providing services to those citizens who have accessed information, advice and assistance and those individuals and carers who receive care and support across Denbighshire.

The report will provide an evaluation of Denbighshire County Council's performance in delivering social services functions over the last year. In producing this report, we have engaged with a range of key stakeholders including citizens who have shared their experiences of receiving care and support from our Social Services and partners who have been working with us.

We will explain how we have achieved the Welsh Government's 6 quality standards for well-being outcomes:

1. Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve
2. Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health, and emotional well-being
3. Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs
4. Supporting people to develop safely and to maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships
5. Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society
6. Protecting and safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

## 2. Director's Summary of Performance

I am pleased to present Denbighshire's Social Services Annual Report 2019-20. The purpose of the report is to give a fair assessment of what we set out to do this year, what we actually have done and achieved and what we still have to do.

Little did we know when we started this year, that we would see major disruption towards the end of the year as the Covid-19 pandemic started to affect us all in March 2020.

However, we achieved a lot during 2019-20 with 2 of our Community Resource Teams really embedding seamless health and social care services in Rhyl and Ruthin. The other 2 Community Resource Teams planned for Denbigh and Prestatyn are at different stages of development but the willingness for health and social care colleagues to work together is driving this on.

We have seen a significant improvement in adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescales, which is testimony to the efforts the whole service has put in to achieve this increased performance. The development of the Education Safeguarding Forum also provides a platform for Education and key Children's Services practitioners to meet on a termly basis to discuss and share safeguarding practice issues.

Whilst we have plans to continue developing our services, our priority for the coming year will be to keep all of our citizens safe and continue to provide services to the most vulnerable in our communities. Projects that we will be focussing on include:

- To ensure information, advice and assistance to support Carers is available digitally as well as through other channels.
- Improve access, skills and confidence of vulnerable citizens who could benefit from digital technology based care and support solutions.
- Introduce a peripatetic multi-agency team across Denbighshire and Conwy to work with children and families who are at risk of having children placed in long-term residential care.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

- To ensure the Safeguarding theme is embedded in everyone's practice, which includes embedding any lessons learnt from Safeguarding audits and / or Adult Practice Reviews.
- Implement the Moving with Dignity Programme
- Further develop and review services that meet the needs of Denbighshire carers, working with partners and carers to identify / reduce gaps in support

## **Nicola Stubbins**

Corporate Director for Communities and Statutory Director for Social Services

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# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

## 3. How people help us to shape our services

During 2019-20 we maintained high levels of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we were delivering services that supported the needs of our citizens. We take many different approaches, from ensuring the citizen is fully engaged when agreeing care and support needs, through to them helping us recruit our staff and providing feedback, either through our compliments and complaints procedures or through general discussion with a wide range of staff and elected members. However, during the last quarter of the year when the spread of Coronavirus was starting to impact, the ways in which we could engage became very limited but we continued to keep the citizen at the heart of our services.

Our Single Point of Access handled over 15,000 enquiries during the year, with 70% of those receiving information, advice and assistance or being referred for some level of care and support. 1850 citizens went onto receive an assessment that led to a care and support plan being developed with the citizen.

During 2019-20 our team have attended 344 Talking Points and supported over 3000 Citizens. By providing Information, Advice and Assistance:

- Information to 2,875
- Information and Advice to 1,347
- Assistance to 826

100% of all feedback received from citizens attending Talking Points was positive and complimentary.

During 2019-20, 234 citizens made contact with Customer Connections of which 23% raised concerns or a complaint and 180 citizens complimented or thanked either Children's or Adult Social Services teams. Examples of contact received include:

- Following discharge from hospital a citizen complained that they had not had a Key-safe fitted. This was because the complainant had not signed the form for the process.
- Complaint that a Social Worker had not carried out a Section 47 safeguarding process correctly in going to the school and speaking to the complainant's daughter about alleged abuse - he was unhappy with the result of the process

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

- “Thank you to all staff at Llys Awelon. Thank you so much for your kindness towards Mum whilst she lived at Awelon. Moving to Llys Awelon was the making of her and she couldn't have done without the fantastic care she received.”
- “The support I have received has been above and beyond. They have always gone out of their way to help and advise with any issues or difficulties and are always approachable, nothing is ever too much trouble and they always make time to listen. Working so closely with this team has been an absolute pleasure and this has in turn been beneficial for the young person we have then supported to move on.”

Following evaluation of the complaints received during 2018 / 19 we implemented Conflict Management / Complaints Training across Community Support Services. As a result, the numbers of complaints have dropped and there appears to be a greater awareness amongst customer facing staff of how to deal with complaints correctly.

Wherever possible we will invite citizens to participate in the recruitment of Social Services Staff. For example, when recruiting Housing First staff we ensured that someone with Lived Experience of Homelessness was an integral part of the assessment centre and fed into the recruitment decision. Also within our care homes when recruiting the new Team Manager residents interviewed the applicants and provided feedback, which helped with the decision making process of appointing the candidate.

Below are various ways in which we have engaged citizens to help shape our individual services within both Community Support Services and Children's and Education Services.

## Older People

Llys Awelon Extra Care Housing Development, Ruthin - There is continual engagement with existing tenants regarding the changes on site and the impact this may have on their environment and services / meals. This is done through our partners Grwp Cynefin and our Denbighshire County Council Carer Team. There will be more formal engagement meetings with tenants and their families during 2020-21.

Age Connects run regular meetings with older people across Denbighshire.



# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

In many of these meetings participants have engaged in discussion around local issues and new developments and services, as well as local and national consultation and engagement events, such as Action on Elder Abuse Cymru and Denbighshire's engagement on Vision Support / RNIB Living with Sight Loss.

## Carers

A Carer's survey was carried out through the County Conversation Engagement portal during the year to understand how informal carers accessed information, the difficulties they have in undertaking their caring role and what advice and information did they feel was missing. The number of respondents was lower than we had anticipated but we were able to gather very useful data which has helped us progress our work to support Carers in Denbighshire.

### Quotes from carers:

- I have found out just how little information is given to you when you become a carer and while you are working there is little time to search for it.
- Respite for unpaid carers is so valuable. It keeps me going in my caring role and the staff are so supportive of both of us.

As a result of the survey we also consulted with individuals and carer groups to develop a Carer's Information Booklet which was launched during Carer's Week in June 2019.

## Learning Disabilities

A review of day and work opportunities was undertaken at the end of 2019 which took into account the views of all key stakeholders. This included citizens already participating in day and work opportunities, their parents/carers, the staff employed in those services and members of the Complex Disability Team. Over 150 individuals participated in the review, detailing what was working well within the service and giving their thoughts and ideas of how it can be improved. Following this review, recommendations have been put forward to modernise the service to allow it to meet the needs of people with Learning Disabilities to promote their independence.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

As part of the review we held an event in November 2019 which was co-produced and co-presented with citizens involved in Day and Work Opportunities. 35 citizens attended and participated on the day.

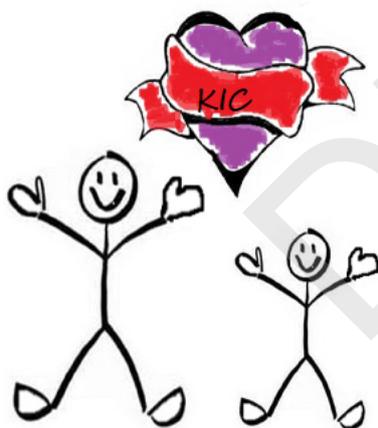
This has influenced the Project Search pilot and many of the participants told us what they really wanted was paid work.

## Quotes from participants in Work Opportunities:

- I like to work for McDonalds and get a proper wage.
- I enjoy working with the team, some of the tasks are really enjoyable, work that requires design and editing.

## Children's Services

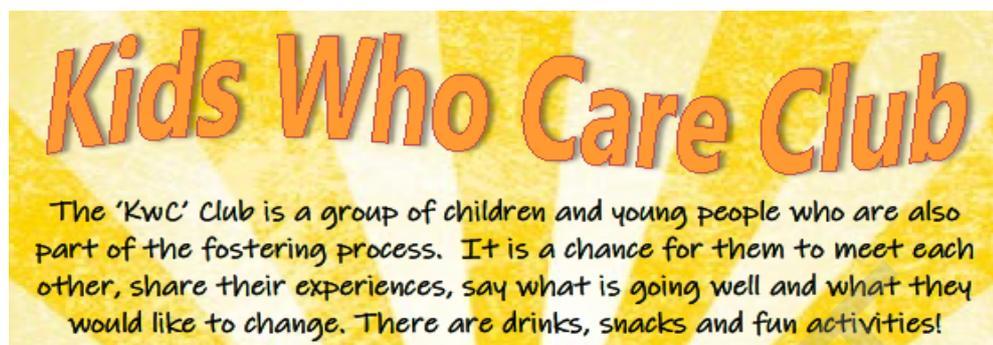
The Kids in Care (KIC) forum established for Denbighshire's Looked After Young People (aged 8 to 15) continues to meet.



This is a forum that enables children looked after to meet each other, share their experiences, say what is going well and what they would like to change. We regularly consult with this key engagement group to shape our services. They have influenced a range of our processes, the structure and content of key documentation and contributed to the training given to our Foster Carers. The young people came up with their own logo and the club's name and on an annual basis publish a newsletter of their activities.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

This year the service also established the KWC (Kids who Care) forum. This forum is an opportunity for birth children within fostering families to meet, share their experiences and gain peer support. We recognise the impact that fostering can have on families and want to offer children who foster the best support and training possible, we believe that this group will help shape the future support and preparation offered to children who foster.



The Quarterly Assurance Framework report continues to be produced and its findings presented to senior managers within Education and Children's Services. This report brings together citizen feedback from multiple sources including End of Placement reports from children, parents and foster carers, Have your Say surveys, Foster Carer self-assessments, Young Carers and Care Leavers.

## **4. Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help**

### **a) Quality standard 1: Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve**

#### **This is what we said we would do**

- Look at innovative ways to ensure our citizens know who to contact about their care and how to contact Single Point of Access (SPoA).
- We will continue to adapt and improve SPoA in line with the development of Community Resource Teams and to ensure we have a well-trained and competent team to deliver good quality Information, Advice and Assistance to the citizens of Denbighshire.
- To conclude our review of the roll out of Support Budgets, developing processes and guidance from lessons learned; embedding a positive risk taking approach; and work closely with our partners and providers to ensure that our citizens have full choice and control over their care and support needs.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

- Children Services will continue with their implementation of revised practice and processes in line with Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014. During the next 12 months' focus will be given on identified training needs including; collaborative conversations and assessing eligible needs being the priority for 2019.
- In addition, Children's Services are currently reviewing a range of operational functions to ensure value for money and leaner systems. These individual projects have their own terms of reference and are chaired by officers from across the service.

## This is what we have done and achieved

- 71% of adults who received support from the information, advice and assistance service have not contacted the service again during the year. This has increased from 69% in 2018/19
- 80% of assessments were completed for children within statutory services, which is slightly down on the previous year.

We introduced an innovative way to promote SPOA and Talking Points, through the Talking Point prescription pad produced in consultation with GPs. GPs simply rip off a slip containing details of the local Talking Point and SPOA contact number and give it to the citizen during surgery. The pads were distributed but we have been unable to evaluate the impact owing the measures we have introduced due to Covid-19.



To ensure we upskilled the team in line with the implementation and development of Community Resource Teams, a weekly training session called Power Hour was introduced. Topics covered during these sessions are wide and varied and incorporate different learning techniques including The Stages of Change and Health Beliefs Model.

## Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

Different agencies including Third Sector Organisations, a range of teams and staff roles have delivered the Power Hour sessions often in informal ways such as through quizzes, games and relaxation techniques to help maintain well-being. One staff member quoted; "The power hours with quizzes are light-hearted and fun!"

During the year we continued to engage with a wide range of stakeholders including staff, citizens and their families / carers to develop the business case to roll out Support Budgets in the most appropriate way. A decision was taken to implement Prepaid Cards from March 2020 as the best solution that would:

- Remove barriers for people accepting direct payments and this is supportive of Community Support Services strategic objectives in relation to direct payments.
- Improve access, skills and confidence of vulnerable citizens who could benefit from digital technology based care and support solutions
- Ensure resources relating to financial assessment are available and accessible on-line.
- Aid the implementation and roll out of Support Budgets across all operational teams to give citizens more choice and control over the planning and delivery of their care and support.
- Ensure information, advice and assistance to support Carers is available digitally as well as through other channels.
- Strengthen the 'Information, Advice & Assistance' offer throughout the citizen's journey, enabling citizens to develop resilience and maintain independence.

Edge of Care Service was strengthened with the utilisation of Integrated Care Fund (ICF) funding. This enabled the recruitment of additional therapeutic workers to support intensive interventions for those families with complex safeguarding issues and family dynamics. A referral pathway was developed that gave practitioners ease of access to the service in a crisis situation, alongside referrals for planned pieces of work.

In March 2020 when the Covid-19 lockdown was introduced all service delivery was subject to risk assessment with in person meetings continuing for those at highest risk. The workforce adapted to 'compulsory' home working very quickly. The use of virtual means of contact allowed for statutory meetings to continue. This was not without some problems in the first few weeks due to the different IT platforms used across the region and the inability of some staff to host their own virtual meetings. However, it should be noted that attendance at Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Looked After Statutory Reviews and Fostering Panel has been excellent.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

## This is what we still have to do

To ensure information, advice and assistance to support Carers is available digitally as well as through other channels.
Improve access, skills and confidence of vulnerable citizens who could benefit from digital technology based care and support solutions.
To strengthen the 'Information, Advice & Assistance' offer throughout the citizen's journey, enabling citizens to develop resilience and maintain independence.
To develop a new integrated Early Years' Service and Pathway.

## b) Working with people and partners to protect people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

### This is what we said we would do

- We will continue to develop and implement our Community Resource Teams, learning from our established teams in Rhyl and Ruthin and introducing new teams in Denbigh and Prestatyn. Developing a more seamless health and social care service within Denbighshire should help us to reduce the number of delayed transfers of care from hospital.
- Within our Mental Health service, we will be developing a learning programme with a recovery and well-being approach where sessions are held in appropriate and accessible settings in the community as a means of efficiently and economically delivering low level services. The Denbighshire Learning Partnership has been established to support this development and we are currently exploring areas of good practice through the North Wales Learning for Well-being Network.
- We will implement the findings of the Learning Disability Day Services & Work Opportunities review.
- We will continue to work in partnership with our citizens to ensure they are involved in decisions about their care and support at every opportunity.

### This is what we have done and achieved

The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons was 2.27 per 1,000 of the population aged 75 or over – this has increased from 1.95 in 2018/19.
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## Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

The average age of adults entering residential care homes (Excluding nursing) was 81 years – this has dropped from 83 years in 2018/19.

100% of looked after children were registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement.

During 2019 - 20 we have made great strides in implementing and developing our Community Resource Teams (CRT) across Denbighshire. One social care staff member commented; “It is nice having health staff co-located in the same office. Joint discussions are being held; much quicker and efficient face to face conversations.”

We are seeing a more joined up approach at various levels across the Health and Social Care sector within Denbighshire, from setting strategic direction to operational delivery of services. For example; the Dementia Social Care Practitioners have regular meetings with the Older People’s Mental Health Team to review citizens and discuss new referrals. Also the Occupational Therapists from Health and Social Care hold Complex Moving and Handling Meetings.

We implemented tri-partite meetings at citizens’ homes when domiciliary care was being commissioned, to ensure that the care and support plan was person-centred and captured the individual needs of the citizen. Social Workers or Occupational Therapists and Social Care Practitioners would meet with the domiciliary care provider, the citizen and their carers in their own homes to ensure that the assessment and resulting care and support were effectively communicated and agreed.



## Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

The Ruthin CRT members of staff had a Team Building Day in Woodland Skills Centre. Primary purpose of this was for relationship building with a total of 24 CRT staff attending, this included representation from Social Care, Therapies, District Nurses, Health Care Workers, Administration and Older People's Mental Health team. At the end of the session lots of feedback had been gathered on the positives, the challenges and their thoughts and ideas on how the CRT can be further developed.

Work continues to source suitable premises in Prestatyn and an area of Denbigh Hospital has been identified for the Denbigh CRT. It is anticipated Denbigh CRT will move into their offices during the coming months.

In the meanwhile, the teams are carrying on working together to provide seamless health and social care in these areas, learning from the established teams in Rhyl and Ruthin.

As part of the development and implementation of a learning programme with a recovery and well-being approach in our mental health services The Denbighshire Learning Partnership held some taster sessions and fun activities aimed at promoting good mental health and wellbeing.

A mapping exercise was also carried out to identify activities organised and held by various stakeholders and following this a short programme of events was developed and run between November 2019 and January 2020.

The structure of The Learning Partnership developed slowly throughout the year, with feedback from the taster sessions helping inform discussions and shaping of the service.

Ty Mor Mental Health Service staff were delivering the 5 Ways to Well-being sessions and Recovery Workshop. The aim of these session was to introduce the attendees to strategies that they could use to increase their sense of well-being, confidence, self-esteem, to reduce isolation and to set future goals that they could work towards.



# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

Links were established with Bangor University, resulting in 2 students volunteering for the Council and delivering 2 groups per week to citizens who attended the centre. As they were volunteers we were able to deliver the courses to our citizens at no extra cost to the service.

Day Services and Work Opportunities – we began to implement the findings of the review, identifying alternative locations for some services and engaging with providers through a meet the buyer event. Work will progress in 2020-21 to complete the findings of the review.

Our Children's Service invested in Collaborative Conversations training for all staff across social care with senior managers also undertaking the training, and attending facilitated workshops to look at how to embed this model across the service.

In a rapid response to the Covid-19 lockdown we undertook risk assessments of all open cases and made plans about continued contact. Face to face visits have continued for the highest risk cases with staff adhering to appropriate health and safety advice. All statutory processes have continued by use of technology with excellent attendance at Looked After Children reviews, Fostering Panel, Adoption Panel, Case Conferences and Core Groups.

In looking at the issue of no children being seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after, we identified the following contributions to problems in this area:

- Continued poor, or non-attendance of some families – we will continue to encourage and support families in this regard
- Families reported difficulties in the identification of and registration with dentists – again we will endeavour to support individuals with this issue
- Some local dental practices reported recruitment problems which led to cancelled appointments
- Appointments in March 2020 were cancelled due to Covid-19, which is also likely to impact on 2020-21 performance.

## **This is what we still have to do**

To progress developments to establish 4 co-located & integrated Community Resource Teams across Denbighshire to ensure citizens receive a seamless and responsive service.
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To continue to develop and review services that meet the needs of carers across county through ongoing dialogue and consultation with partners and through carer fora.
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# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

Introduce a peripatetic multi-agency team across Denbighshire and Conwy to work with children and families who are at risk of having children placed in long-term residential care.

## c) Protecting and safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm

### This is what we said we would do

- Given the revised National Guidance the Head of Service Group are developing a Multi-Agency Policy and Practice Guide, to compliment the National Guidance and support its application across North Wales. This will include an information sharing protocol, agreed distinction between children being reported as missing and a child being reported as absent, and clarity on the shared purpose of Return Home Interviews and appropriate multi-agency response.
- Audits identified that we need to continue to improve quality of care planning including child protection plans. We will continue to develop workers' standard of analysis and subsequent identified outcomes through both training and embedding the new reporting formats that assist in the focus on outcomes.
- During the next 12 months we will be introducing at least one safeguarding reflective practice from every practitioner in Adult Services.
- We will be evaluating implementation of the Self Neglect and Hoarding Protocols

### This is what we have done and achieved

91% of adult protection enquiries were completed within statutory timescales – this is an increase of 23% compared to 2018/19.

4.7% of children on our child protection register were re-registrations, which is an increase on the previous year.

The average length of time that children were on the child protection register during the year was 311 days – increased from 253 days in the previous year.

Exploitation is a key priority for Denbighshire's Education & Children's Services and features across practice from initial referral through to assessment and coordinated support for children and families. To review those high risk cases a monthly Multi-Agency Exploitation Panel is held where those most vulnerable children and young people are considered. The meetings are well attended across a number of agencies and professionals and share good practice, local intelligence and monitor high risk children and young people.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

Safeguarding in schools has included a review of the new policy and procedures and ensuring that Safeguarding Leads in all schools are confident in their role. This has included a comprehensive training package across the schools for Head Teachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads facilitated by Barnardo's Safeguarding Trainers. The development of the Education Safeguarding Forum also provides a forum for Education and key Children's Services practitioners to meet on a termly basis to discuss and share safeguarding practice issues.

During 2019/20 we introduced practice whereby professionals within our Operational Services Teams in Adult Social Services were required to complete 2 reflective practices pieces over the year, with at least one of them having a safeguarding focus. Here are how the teams performed, work will continue to ensure we achieve 100% within all teams:

- Safeguarding – achieved 100%
- Reviewing Team – achieved 100%
- South Locality – achieved 100%
- North Locality – achieved 65%
- Complex Disabilities – achieved 90%

The evaluation process of the implementation of the Self Neglect & Hoarding Protocol was undertaken by the safeguarding team. There was evidence that practitioners across the locality teams had some knowledge of this protocol, confidence in its use was further enhanced with the direct support from the Safeguarding team. Practitioners found this document useful and there is evidence that this protocol had been used to support some citizens in Denbighshire.

## **This is what we still have to do**

Ensure all practitioners are meeting the 7-day deadline for completion of safeguarding enquiries.
To ensure the Safeguarding theme is embedded in everyone's practice, which includes embedding any lessons learnt from Safeguarding audits and / or Adult Practice Reviews.
Embed revised All Wales Safeguarding Procedures across Children's Services.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019 - 2020

## d) Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

### This is what we said we would do

- The Reassessment Project continues, we have appointed an experienced Occupational Therapist to take the project to the next stage which is a review of citizen's who have complex needs and packages, with a view to see if we can reduce dependency on care and support with specialist equipment, thus promoting independence, dignity and delivering on what matters.
- We want to see our Community hubs in Complex Disability mature and deliver the best possible outcomes for the citizens. We want to see our Community Navigator service develop, a Community Navigator is integral to each Community Resource Team. We want to see more examples of citizens being connected with their local communities and more examples of exciting joint initiatives with libraries, Arts and Schools.
- This year we will be acting on the findings of the Talking Points Pause and Review in making our 8 Talking Points across Denbighshire even better for the citizens of Denbighshire. We want our Communities to 'own' Talking Points. Together with partners we want to see the set -up of more Well Being Information points at the heart of communities and the identification of champions in post offices, hospitals etc.
- Work with Supporting People commissioned projects to establish better mechanisms and support offers to encourage and allow young people in supported housing to take up employment.
- The review of work and day opportunity services (Learning Disability services) is due to be completed by June 2019.
- We will continue to investigate options for Lifespan services for people with learning disabilities. We have bid for funding to allow an Occupational Therapist to join the Community Living Cluster to work with individuals who are transitioning from youth services to carry out assessments and early planning to secure more sustainable activities and accommodation.
- To develop a toolkit to allow the Work Start Scheme to be replicated to a further 14 individuals in 2019-20.

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- To review and enhance access for Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers in Denbighshire with the opportunity to participate in a local authority work placement and/or traineeship scheme.
- To develop a 2 or 3-day residential placement for a total of 40 LAC which will involve Life Skills e.g. cooking, budgeting and finances, employment, mental well-being and social interaction skills.
- To demonstrate an increase in the number of young people leaving care who have been supported into employment, education or training.

## **This is what we have done and achieved**

11% of looked after children experienced one or more changes in school during periods of being looked after that were not due to transitional arrangements. This is increased on the 2018-19 figure but still below the almost 14% figure for 2017-18.

Since January 2019, an Occupational Therapist has been in post to work on Right-Sized Care and Support (known as the Moving with Dignity project) within the Adult Social Services Review Team. The Occupational Therapist is moving forward with practical plans to implement changes to the way Denbighshire residents are assessed for and receive moving and handling support.

For the first 12 months the project has been tasked with scoping the issue, researching best practice, and identifying ways of providing effective training and reaching the right staffing groups (including Local Authority, NHS colleagues and Independent Providers).

The training and implementation programme will begin during 2020 - 21.

The benefits of the project can be briefly summarised as follows:

- It could free up capacity within care agencies to pick up more clients if there are fewer double-handed care packages needed as it is the double packages that are harder to commission.
- This potentially has the benefit of speeding up the hospital discharge process and throughput.
- It could reduce the need to deploy enhanced care staff and District Nurses to support citizens whose care needs cannot be met by outside providers

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- It could have a positive impact on the well-being and sense of control of citizens and their carers, increasing resilience and engagement.
- A common approach for all citizens, regardless of their source of care & support funding would streamline processes and reduce stresses on Community staff.
- A shared approach and common knowledge base would enhance the services we provide to our citizens and promote continuity throughout the citizen's journey if their care and support needs move from social towards more health focussed.
- Common core knowledge of equipment and processes across all community staff groups will enhance continuity of care and support and co-working.

Within our Complex Disability Service, we have established an intake element to the team which allows for all assessments to be carried out in a timely and multi-disciplinary way. Any immediate support or advice is offered at this first contact. The Hwb Siarad team now work together to ensure more complex Information Advice and Assistance, signposting or short term work is allocated and completed in a timely way. This approach also enables the staff to ensure all reviews are actioned without need for unnecessary waiting lists. Processes are still new and developing and the planned co-production work around groups and development of community resources and resilience has been slowed down as a result of Covid-19, but plans are afoot to revisit this work as part of Covid-19 recovery.

To help us to move to Lifespan services for those with complex disabilities, the team initially scoped the services of other authorities in Wales to identify good practice and gauge the developments of teams adapting to meet the needs of the Additional Learning Needs Bill. Currently we are evaluating the information gathered and reviewing the 0-18 and 18 plus team separation within Denbighshire County Council.

A project has been set up to enable citizens to have the right level of supported accommodation as early as possible in any major transition of their lives, whether this is moving out of the family home or re-assessing whether residential accommodation, especially if out of county, is still required. This project involves developing new models of integrated and collaborative service delivery which promotes progression from existing settings.

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There is also a focus of preventative working through specialist input at the planning stage. Working with families at the earliest opportunity allows us to promote more local, cost effective and person centred supported living placements as an alternative to short term out of county residential options.

This also gives us the opportunity to increase investment in social value models of delivering care, moving away from the residential model of support towards proportionate delivery of support in community settings using community resources.

We have continued to work with our Supporting People providers to establish better mechanisms/support offers to encourage and allow young people in supported housing to take up employment.

This is what has been achieved up to now:

- We have continued to work with our commissioned providers to develop more outcome focussed ways of working, and employment/training/education are key outcome areas for the young people in our supported housing.
- Partnership working with organisations like Prince's Trust, and our Working Denbighshire Team, has been very beneficial in opening up more work opportunities for young people in our supported housing projects.
- We work with projects wherever possible to try to come up with individual solutions, but we are continually up against a fundamental barrier here. Supported housing projects that charge rents at rates equal to / much closer to the Local Housing Allowance rate significantly reduce this barrier. There are however very few examples of projects such as this. We will need to continue to explore opportunities for more provision like this, which will be financially viable for providers.
- Providers will often work with young people who secure employment to try to move them onto independent accommodation (with floating support as needed) as soon as it is viable, but there are significant barriers here too. Many young people are priced out of the rental market (despite earning a wage) or excluded by other landlord or letting agent policies, particularly around age.
- Work has continued around building relationships with landlords, and our Single Access Route to Housing gives priority to individuals moving on from supported housing – however, social housing stock remains extremely low across the board.

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We remain in an extremely difficult position because of the reality of supported housing rents alongside national policy on housing benefit entitlement. It unfortunately remains the case that young people in employment in our supported housing in many cases stand to see very little financial benefit in earning their own wages. In some cases, young people will actually be financially worse off, and may accrue arrears. Work is ongoing to develop innovative solutions to this situation.

As a result of the Covid-19 lockdown, the use of technology to interact has been welcomed by young people and is in some cases a preferred form of communication.

In readiness for a possible nationwide school closure, schools were requested to provide details of pupils that they considered to be vulnerable. This list was considered by staff from across Education and Children's Services. All names were cross referenced on Children's Services client database and relevant information noted.

Plans were put in place for all the identified children to have contact over the lockdown period that resulted in school closure, utilising staff from across Education and Children's Services and school staff. An escalation procedure was also agreed should contact with vulnerable children prove problematic.

A pathway was agreed across Education and Children's Services that ensured that open cases were allocated places at school hubs and vulnerable children were appropriately assessed to ensure that places were available to those most in need.

## **This is what we still have to do**

To build on existing and develop links with DWP, Working Denbighshire and other potential employers to create opportunities for work experience for younger homeless people.
--

Improve access, skills and confidence of vulnerable citizens who could benefit from digital technology based care and support solutions.
--

Implement the Moving with Dignity Programme.
--

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## e) Supporting people to develop safely and to maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

### This is what we said we would do

- We will learn from the experiences of our local carers by making information more accessible and ensure we have 1 Carer Assessor in each Community Resource Team to continue building on the links between Health and Social Care and break down barriers for carers.
- We will continue to implement and widen delivery of our Supporting Parent project to offer the 'Solihull Understanding Comes Before Change' approach to promote positive parenting to all parents in Denbighshire.
- Increase capacity (in house and third sector) for preventative services to support greater number of carers coming forward for support as a direct result of the Supporting Carers in Denbighshire Project.
- To implement and embed recommendations and actions from the Welsh Government's Measuring the Mountain Initiative.

### This is what we have done and achieved.

8% of looked after children returned home from care during the year, which is an increase on previous years.

The percentage of looked after children on 31st March who have had three or more placements during the year remained at 10%, which is the same as last year.

During this year we recruited 4 carer assessors who have now become established within each of our Community Resource Teams and they continue to build strong relationships with all staff within these teams.

They are now also an integral part of the regular Peer Forums where the teams together agree strategies for care and support plans and determine need and levels of support.

We continue to have Guest Flats available within the Extra Care Housing Facilities for carer respite. The take up of this facility varies across the year and is regularly promoted to operational teams to encourage its use.

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We started to develop a new initiative called STAHS (Stay at Home Service) to reduce the need for hospital admission but this has currently been put on hold because of Covid-19.

Towards the end of 2019-20 we have had to become much more reliant on technology and virtual meetings to engage with Looked After Children and Care Leavers. We have utilised grant funding where appropriate to provide suitable technology solutions. As a result of this approach we have seen positive engagement of foster carers and in many cases improved relationships between birth parents and carers.

We have also introduced a messaging system as a means of peer support.

Within Denbighshire we reviewed the recommendations coming out of the Welsh Government's Measuring the Mountain Initiative and we invited citizens to join our Community Support Services Advisory Panel. 10 citizens showed an interest in forming the Advisory Panel and work continues to engage with them and agree how the Panel should work.

## **This is what we still have to do**

Review the provision of childcare and respite for parents with children with additional and complex needs, and grow that provision within existing childcare settings.
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Development of an improved and expanded Edge of Care Service, focussed on supporting children to remain at home or return home as part of the strategy to safely reduce the number of looked after children.
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Further develop and review services that meet the needs of Denbighshire carers, working with partners and carers to identify / reduce gaps in support.
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## **f) Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs**

### **This is what we said we would do**

- Embed the role of Dementia Social Care Practitioner within each of the 4 Community Resource Teams and look to see how these roles can support the development of dementia friendly communities and organisations in Denbighshire.

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- Actively work towards a Dementia Friendly Denbighshire County Council
- Continue to develop Talking Points as 'safe places' based on feedback from the recent Pause and Review.
- Continue to work with both Registered Social Landlords and Private Rented Sector Landlords to identify suitable accommodation for supported housing projects - this would include those young people with complex mental health needs.
- Aim to develop a programme of work, including a DVD presentation developed by young people for use in schools, identifying the issues and challenges of homelessness for the individual, and the impact on the emotional health of the young person.
- Continue to work towards increasing numbers of foster carers in an extremely competitive market.

## **This is what we have done and achieved**

50% of all care leavers were in education, training or employment at 12 months after leaving care and this increased to 62% at 24 months after leaving care.

15% of all care leavers have experienced homelessness during the year, which is a similar figure to last year.

## **Dementia Friendly Council (DFC) Project**

The DFC Project Team, made up of a range of staff across the Local Authority, successfully secured recognition from the Alzheimer's Society in working towards becoming a dementia friendly organisation. We committed to:

- complete our Action Plan for activities and maintain an annual recognition process.
- invite individuals living with dementia, and their carers, to our forum.
- share good practice with all council services.
- link colleagues to appropriate training (e.g. Dementia Friends awareness training).

We have already raised awareness of Dementia throughout the Council, and our activities in the future will continue to educate personnel about this disease.

Staff and councillor Dementia awareness / Friends training has been provided.

We will continue to host free training from the Alzheimer's Society and will seek to train up Dementia Champions who will then train colleagues within our organisations.

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## Dementia Social Care Practitioners

To develop our 4 Community Resource Teams (CRT), we added 2 specialist Dementia Support Workers to each. These workers linked with the Older People Community Mental Health Team, existing mental health workers and the Third Sector to increase the level of professional support for citizens living with dementia and their Carers.

Comments from CRT staff regarding the work of Dementia Support Workers:

- Some of the innovative and creative ideas that are being utilised or discussed have been fab! I love that we are utilising places like Bodfari Woodland Skills and Loggerheads as resources rather relying on formal day care services – it is massive progress for us as a service but so beneficial to the person we are working with!
- Dementia Support Workers have made a very positive impact – not only to the Team and CRT but most importantly to the citizens they are working with who are living with Dementia.
- They have the time to research new equipment, resources, services that are out there to support our citizens living with Dementia and already have introduced Dementia Dolls, Dogs etc. into our Community Equipment Service which have had great success with some of our citizens.

Providing flexible outreach support in the form of a 'team around the individual', the long term outcome is for citizens living with dementia and their carers to be supported by a team that is knowledgeable and has specialist skills in dementia. The result being that citizens living with dementia will maintain their independence and remain at home for longer.

## Supported Housing

Work continued with Private Rented Sector Landlords and Registered Social Landlords to identify opportunities to increase the provision of supported housing across the county. During 2019-20 the Regional Transformation Project sought legal advice that will now allow sub-regional accommodation planning for people with Learning Disabilities & complex needs. This will allow us to start working with citizens living out of the area to return back to the local area and planning for those coming out of Children's Services transitioning into Adult Services. Denbighshire have around 10 people on that list and the work will continue in 2020-21.

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## Talking Points Vision – summary of key achievements

### April 2019

- Single Point of Access increased booked appointments.
- South Locality met to agree on a generic system.
- Membership of the Talking Point Steering Group was reviewed.
- ICT resolved WiFi issues in Llangollen.

### May 2019

- Continued to develop South Talking points.
- Engagement by all parties to develop more collaborative working.
- Produced a Talking Points newsletter.

### June 2019

- Talking Point prescription pads within GP surgeries.

### July 2019

- Awareness raised amongst elected members and town councillors.

### August 2019

- Communications team raised awareness amongst all council staff.

### September 2019

- Successfully increased use of Skype and WebEx to increase accessibility

### January 2020

- Recruitment of volunteers from local communities.

## **Fostering Service**

Our Fostering Service collaborated with the National Fostering Framework to enhance fostering across the county and improve support and training offered to foster carers. They continued work to move children into adoptive placements, using guidance and risk assessments provided by the National Adoption Service.

### **This is what we still have to do**

To roll out Ready for Work programme to develop young people's skills for employment.

Continue to develop work on Assistive Technologies.

Further improve support for young people at risk of homelessness through the Young People's Positive Pathway

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## 5. How we do what we do

### a) Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

#### Workforce Development

During 2019-20 we had just around 2000 statutory training places available for staff to attend and we had 92% of those places filled. A variety of training took place to upskill the workforce in both Adult Social Services and Education and Children's Services, including:

- Collaborative Conversations training for the whole of Children's Workforce.
- Understanding Mental Health, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Prevent - working with Young Carers.
- Age assessments & Working with Unaccompanied Children – Children's Services and Foster Carers.
- Supported the implementation of the new Local Authority Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2018. Denbighshire County Council Workforce Development Team took a lead on regional events to raise awareness.
- Implementation of the National Fostering Framework (NFF) 2019 and the standardisation of Foster Carer training.
- Supporting new ways of looking at Learning & Development for Foster Carers and promoting the use of informal learning to evidence competence.
- Dementia courses included experiential learning opportunities such as the Virtual Dementia Tour bus.

#### More Than Just Words

Within our internal Residential Care Homes, we continued to embed More than Just Words – all residents' doors now display a symbol with their chosen language, case files also carry the same symbol so it is easy to identify Welsh Speakers and offer a service in their language of choice.

A presentation was given at a Care Providers Conference and items on More than Just Words and the Active Offer are included in quarterly Provider Newsletters. Iaith Gwaith posters and lanyards are distributed as well as Working Welsh stickers.

All Council internal staff are expected to complete an e-learning module on 'Welsh Language Awareness' and staff new to the Department receive a presentation on More Than Just Words as part of their induction.

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A similar presentation is given to Authority based Social Work students. We have also updated the 'placements' form for Social Work students so that they can identify their language skills for the purpose of matching with specific Assessors.

A half day course has been run for 'front line' staff and the Single Point of Access service that aims to give individuals the skills to greet and meet the public in Welsh and make the Active Offer.

The Council is committed to promoting the use of Welsh in the workplace and is in the process of collecting information on the skill level of staff - in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards. The information will help us identify if there are any gaps in provision, as well as identify any training needs.

A short Welsh taster course has been offered to Care workers, as well as a 'Try your Welsh' course tailored for Care staff who have received bilingual education but who need to gain the confidence to use their Welsh.

4 members of staff have attended a Residential course at Nant Gwrtheyrn. In addition, 'cuppa and chat' sessions are held to give internal staff opportunities to practice their Welsh.

A 'More Than Just Words' course was run for Children and Adults Department Managers to ensure guidance and ownership of 'More Than Just Words' by departments.

Promote the Welsh language at the Community Resource Teams Regional Conference.

Promote specific days for the care sector including St Dwynwen's Day, St David's Day, Sumai Shumai Day and Wales Music Day.

## **b) Our Financial Resources and How We Plan for the Future**

Monthly financial outturn reports are presented to the executive forecasting the year-end position. Exceptions or pressures are referenced in the reports, with mitigating actions. The annual budget is set following a lengthy process of reviewing of pressures and savings across all services and engaging with elected members and others as part of that process.

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In the medium term, the council has a rolling three-year Medium-term Financial Plan which sets out the council's estimated funding position over the period and, working with services, builds in estimates of required savings or additional funding requirements. This medium term planning process helped to identify and secure, through the council's budget, additional funding in 2020-21. This helped to support growing pressures mainly due to annual care fee inflation and the rising costs of homelessness accommodation in adult social care (£2.6m) and children's services (£1.5m).

Main stream financial internal planning takes place on a monthly basis at Service leadership / management team meetings. There is a focus on performance and financial monitoring areas of the areas under greatest pressure. The Service finance officers also meet regularly with Heads of Service and the Management Executive Team.

## **c) Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability**

The council has very robust internal governance arrangements in place to support the effective management of Community Support Services and Education and Children's Services. Reports are taken to various Scrutiny Committees throughout the year to enable Elected Members to scrutinise policy and performance in relation to social services, including reports to monitor the progress of any actions required in response to the Director's annual report or the Care Inspectorate Wales's annual report.

We also have a very well established service performance challenge process, where each head of service is challenged annually on areas such as service performance and leadership. The panel for each service challenge meeting includes the Chief Executive; Corporate Directors; Lead Members; Scrutiny Members and our external regulators (the Wales Audit Office and the Care Inspectorate Wales).

In addition to the service challenge process, the council also has a very robust performance management framework, which includes regular performance reports being presented to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT); Scrutiny; and Cabinet, and various reports being presented to scrutiny periodically on service specific issues, such as Compliments and Complaints.

Effective partnership working is the success of our community-based Talking Points, where we work closely with organisations such as Alzheimer's Society, Citizens Advice Denbighshire, Prime Cymru, Natwest Banking and Working Denbighshire.

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A range of services are commissioned and delivered by a range of independent sector and voluntary or Third sector organisations such as North East Wales Carers Information Service, Age Connects and British Red Cross.

Providing an integrated and collaborative approach to health and social care is not only a statutory requirement of the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014, but a corporate priority. During 2019/20 we have seen our partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Conwy Borough Council as well as 3rd Sector and Independent Sector partners move the integrated Community Resource Teams (CRTs) forward to ensure we are providing seamless services to our citizens.

Early action between Education and Children's Services and schools has been implemented to identify 'vulnerable' learners' who may not be open to statutory services. Plans are then made for a schedule of contact for all the vulnerable learners identified and agreed across the service. There is then an agreed pathway for open cases to ensure allocation at school hubs for the most vulnerable children / young people.

### **Accessing Further Information and Key Documents**

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# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2020 - 2021

## 1. Introduction

Denbighshire County Council's Director of Social Services Annual Report demonstrates how we have promoted well-being and accounted for the delivery of well-being standards under the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

During the last 12 months we have delivered care and support services in a very different way to ensure we worked within the Welsh Government's Covid-19 guidelines and kept everyone safe. It has been necessary to change the ways in which we have engaged with citizens and key stakeholders, but we have kept the needs of individuals at the heart of our services when developing and delivering care and support services.

This report will provide an evaluation of Denbighshire County Council's performance in delivering social services functions over the last year. We will explain how we have achieved the Welsh Government's 6 quality standards for well-being outcomes:

1. Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve
2. Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health, and emotional well-being
3. Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs
4. Supporting people to develop safely and to maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships
5. Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society
6. Protecting and safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm

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## 2. Director's Summary of Performance

This has been an unprecedented year for us all, but within Social Services we have found ourselves working in ways that we would never have anticipated and seen staff stretched both emotionally and physically as never before.

Throughout the last 12 months we have developed new ways of working to ensure we continued to meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens and have seen innovation and creativity come to the fore.

For the most part we have had to put many of our plans and developments on hold, however the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated others. For example, the use of assistive technology has ensured that many of our citizens with learning disabilities and children and families supported by our Children's Services have been able to remain engaged and supported throughout the last 12 months.

Volunteers became an integral part of our delivery of support and through the success of the project is something we will develop and build on during the coming year.

Another exciting development is Bwthyn Y Ddol, which is being developed in partnership with Conwy County Borough Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. During 2020 - 21 we have seen the introduction of a multi-disciplinary team to further enhance preventative work, with the team offering a bespoke intervention, led by a clinical formulation to complex, high risk cases.

We hope that in the coming year we will be able to build on the good practice that has come out of the last 12 months and further develop a range of projects and services to continue to meet the increased demand on our Social Services. This will include:

- The construction of Bwthyn Y Ddol
- To embed the ethos of Moving with Dignity into all services provided and commissioned by Adult Social Services and to ensure staff are skilled to be able to assess for / or provide right-sized care
- To join the Welsh Government's Early Years Integration Transformation Programme as a pathfinder authority, in partnership with Conwy CBC
- To ensure the effective implementation of the Liberty Protection Standards

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- To continue to work on Denbighshire becoming a Dementia-Friendly Council
- To see residents move into Awel-y-Dyffryn, Extra Care Housing in Denbigh



Nicola Stubbins

Corporate Director for Communities and Statutory Director for Social Services

## 3. How people help us to shape our services

During the 2020 – 2021 pandemic we have had to develop new and innovative ways to deliver services to ensure we continued to meet the care and support needs of the citizens of Denbighshire. Whilst we were unable to engage with people in the traditional way, it was still really important to us that our citizens were involved in helping us shape our services.

### Children's Services

Education and Children's Services have launched Mind of My Own, an app which has been co-designed with children and young people. This technology uses child-focused language and design to encourage young people to share their thoughts using a tablet or phone screen. It enables children to share information in a confidential environment whenever and wherever they want to, it also helps their allocated worker to monitor their wellbeing on a regular basis. In addition, it helps the service to analyse data to identify emerging themes or safeguarding issues.

### Summary information from use of Mind of My Own app:

Who are young people sending most statements to?

- Their social worker
- Their foster carer's social worker
- Their independent reviewing officer

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Which age groups of young people are using the app most?

1. 10 year olds
2. 11 year olds
3. 13 year olds

Which scenario type is the app most used for?

- My life
- Foster care review
- Preparation for a meeting

Of the statements received, 79% were positive and only 21% were negative.

Virtual Training for Staff and E Learning for Foster Carers has been provided with ongoing quarterly Staff Refresher Sessions. The platform went 'live' with children and young people across Children's Services and Integrated Families First Teams on 8 June 2020 and for Education as of 1 September 2020. Commissioning this platform defines our commitment to raising the profile of the 'voice of the child', we have seen a positive take up by young people across the service.

The Quarterly Assurance Framework report continues to be produced and its finding presented to senior managers within Education and Children's Services. This report has reflected the changes made to service delivery due to the Covid-19 pandemic and has assisted the service in monitoring the impact of these changes.



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## Carers

Community Support Services (CSS) continue to implement improvements through the Supporting Carers in Denbighshire Project 2018-2022, which supports the Council's aim to develop 'independent and resilient communities. Pre-pandemic CSS was continuing to improve support for carers e.g. meeting eligible needs and commissioning and delivering what matters to carers.

Our Single Point of Access, Talking Points and Community Navigators continued to assist with identifying carers and signposting them to support. On Carers Rights Day we also launched the Carers Charter developed with the help of the Carers Strategy Group and local Carer networks. The purpose of the Charter is to improve recognition and raise awareness amongst the wider community.

Working in partnership with DVSC and other Third Sector organisations, we came together to focus on the immediate needs and support required by carers as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This included giving carers access to PPE from the Local Authority and specific Covid-19 information, advice and assistance for carers was added to the Denbighshire County Council website.

## Older People

During 2020-21 just under 20,000 citizens contacted our Single Point of Access (SPoA) and 47% of those were referred for formal health and social care services. 3983 citizens went on to receive an assessment of their health and social care needs.

At the beginning of lockdown in March 2020 we saw a dramatic increase in numbers of citizens contacting our Single Point of Access (SPOA) and we launched a dedicated phone line to provide additional support to citizens struggling with self-isolation and needing help during the Covid-19 lockdown. Talking Points became a virtual service and our Community Navigators took over the additional phone line. They were responding to around 240 calls per week and following a 'strengths based, what matters' conversation, provided a range of support including delivery of food, prescriptions and other essentials.

We tailored our Information, Advice and Assistance to ensure 'first contact right response'. In addition to undertaking prescription runs and dropping of food parcels and in response to

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the increasing isolation experienced by citizens we set up of a Telephone Befriending service with 45 telephone befrienders, 26 Councillors and 19 volunteers who were carefully matched to the 53 citizens who requested this support. Positive feedback was received, including; "We would like it known that we applaud what Denbighshire County Council are doing, thank you for the call we really appreciate it and we really appreciate all those still going to work and everything that has been done for us and everyone. Well done and Thank you."

A photo of a SPOA Wellbeing Coordinator and a Community Navigator on a prescription run, featured in a local paper under the heading; A Prestatyn "power duo" has delivered more than 1,700 prescriptions in the town during lockdown;



In November and December 2020 we commissioned Age Connects to run an engagement exercise for us looking at the appetite for a scheme to support the health, social care, housing and wellbeing needs of older people in the Corwen area. We then commissioned Practice Solutions to run an engagement exercise in the Denbigh area on the same theme. We are awaiting the final report from Practice Solutions.

In addition, work with older people in Denbighshire has been informed by:

- Engagement with Older People which is coordinated by the Older Peoples Commissioner's Office, every other month. This has included discussions on a range of topics including the impact on care homes and the impact that lockdown and social distancing has had on older people in our communities.
- Age Friendly Community of Practice meetings coordinated by Older People's Commissioner's office attended by range of citizens/workers

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- Quarterly Engagement Practitioners networks – attended by those representing citizens of all walks of life
- Quarterly Aging Well in Denbighshire meetings, also attended by citizens as well as practitioners
- Quarterly Wellbeing Network meeting, co-produced with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and including citizens as well as practitioners
- Quarterly DVSC Denbighshire Volunteers Third Sector Network looking at issue affecting volunteers and those in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector
- Occasional meetings with meeting North East Wales (NEW) Regional Cohesion Team, e.g. Celebrating Cohesive Communities: (an interactive workshop with community supporting organisations in Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire, and national organisations delivering support across North Wales).

## Learning Disabilities

During 2020 - 21 our day and work opportunity services have had to remain closed due to the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions and to ensure we helped keep citizens safe.

However, staff have continued to work on ensuring we have services that meet the needs of our citizens.

Popty, which is a catering service within our work opportunities, was required to move from its current premises and we engaged with citizens and their families and carers to get feedback on how they would like to see the service change and the support they would need to manage any change. Feedback from this survey is feeding into the plans for Popty moving forward.

Throughout the lockdown period we facilitated workshops with parent carers to understand their experiences and understand what support they required. This resulted in us providing individualised alternative support for some families. As part of this ongoing engagement process, parent carers were expressing their concerns of being able to go out with their son or daughter when restrictions were being eased. We worked closely with the families and some of our commissioned services and arranged outdoor space within 2 of our rural projects which allowed families or support workers to take their son/daughter out into woodland or onto a farm and enjoy private time in a safe environment.

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Our Commissioning Officer and Operational team engaged with the families of citizens with learning disabilities to inform the service specification for Supported Living projects in Llangollen and Denbigh. They also have been instrumental in designing the properties and the questions for providers responding to the tender to deliver the projects.

The Regional Transformation Project have funded £30,000 of additional support to the NWAAA (North Wales Independent Advocacy Service) and Conwy Connect to work alongside All Wales People First to skill-up individuals with learning disabilities to feed into the commissioning of services for people with Learning Disabilities across the region. The North Wales participation group is made up of self-advocates from the 6 local authorities - Denbighshire has two self-advocates on the group.

The Regional Transformation Project has also allocated £150,000 for Third Sector and Voluntary Sector activities for people with learning disabilities across North Wales. The Advocacy Services skilled-up the group to choose the bids put forward, thereby allocating that funding directly as a group of citizens. This is a brilliant example of regional co-production.



## Care Providers

Over the last year we have been hosting weekly or fortnightly web-based meetings with domiciliary and residential care providers. We aim to share key information and for care providers to share their questions, thoughts and feedback with Denbighshire County Council (DCC) and with each other. It has therefore also become a really good space for peer support.

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The meetings have helped to create a more open dialogue between care providers and DCC and feedback from care providers has been really positive. We have just recently started to trial similar meetings on a monthly basis with homelessness prevention providers.

## Complaints and Compliments

Our Customer Connections Team manage and monitor compliments and complaints that are received for both Adult Social Services and Children's Services.

During 2020 - 21 we saw a 50% reduction in the number of complaints being received compared to the previous year, which would appear to be an impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Complaints received in 2020-2021	Education and Children's Services	Community Support Services
Stage 1 complaints	9	7
Stage 2 complaints	3	3
Concerns	6	1
Compliments	82	132

One complaint against a member of staff in regard to their intervention with a citizen focussed on staff attitude and a lack of knowledge of the case.

Following analysis of complaints from the previous two years, we developed Conflict Management and Complaints Handling Training, which was rolled out across Community Support Services. There does now seem to be a greater awareness at customer facing level in terms of dealing with complaints, which we feel has also impacted on the reduced number of issues coming into the Customer Connections Team. Examples of recent contact;

- We feel the support we have received from the 'whole' department has been excellent. Our supporting Social Worker has been available to us if and when needed and has actively encouraged us to utilise any training opportunities that have been available. She has also been able to provide a level of reassurance and encouragement during times of doubt. X provides M (and us) with support if and when needed.

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The contact team have also played a part in providing positive feedback. Thank you for your comment at the end of this report; it is an emotional boost for its recognition which helps add another layer of resilience. A sincere thank you to you for it.

- I recently received a call from a lady from the proactive department, who after advising me that I was on the NHS shielding list gave me valuable information about available services for both myself and my wife, this included food and medication deliveries. I experienced difficulties with my local GP surgery over deliveries as they refused to do this and also provide a letter I could send to my employer. However, after leaving a message for X over this I later received a call from my surgery and everything was in place! And on Wednesday we received a food parcel with much needed essentials. Please pass on our thanks and appreciation to X and her colleagues in the department for everything they're doing for the community also everyone who are doing deliveries etc. in these difficult times.

## 4. Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help

### a) Quality standard 1: Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

#### This is what we said we would do

- To ensure information, advice and assistance to support Carers is available digitally as well as through other channels.
- Improve access, skills and confidence of vulnerable citizens who could benefit from digital technology based care and support solutions
- To strengthen the 'Information, Advice & Assistance' offer throughout the citizen's journey, enabling citizens to develop resilience and maintain independence.
- To develop a new integrated Early Years' Service and Pathway

#### This is what we have done and achieved

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1974 adults had a care and support plan in place during this year this is a 9% decrease from 2019-20.</li></ul>      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 72% of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales this is an 8% decrease from 2019-20.</li></ul> |

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Our priority over the last twelve months has been to continue delivering care and support to our citizens in a safe way. We endeavoured to maintain co-production and keep the citizen at the heart of all we did.

The Coronavirus Act allowed Adult Social Services to take a more flexible approach to assessing and delivering care and support during 2020 - 21 year. All forms of assessment and support planning, including social work, occupational therapy, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) and Adult Safeguarding have continued throughout lockdown.

However, the majority of these were facilitated through the implementation of an effective Covid-19 risk assessment and relevant mitigation. In most cases this was done through a range of virtual platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

Every citizen in receipt of a package of care and support was reviewed and assessed to ensure that their needs could still be met, albeit in different ways. Volunteers from our local communities were recruited into the service and they delivered a range of support to those citizens with lower care needs allowing our commissioned providers to continue to deliver care and support to those individuals with more complex needs.

Within our Children's Services the adaptation to remote working for staff and the use of virtual means of contact enabled work to continue in absence of face to face meetings. The use of technology as a means of communication has in some cases freed up capacity within teams and has resulted in meetings happening in a timelier manner. This has also resulted in staff being able to offer more frequent but shorter sessions.

Several pieces of work aimed at integrating the Early Years pathway have taken place during the last two years, this has included:

- Creating our **Pre-school Outreach Team** to ensure that childcare providers have access to advice and guidance when they have concerns relating to the development of a child in their care. During 2020-21 this service was extended to all childcare providers, including childminders, and incorporated the requirement of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Education and Tribunal Act Wales 2018 which will place a duty on the Local Authority to decide if a child or young person, from birth to age 25, may have additional learning needs and provide additional learning provision if deemed necessary. This year we implemented a programme of training to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the team to effectively support settings across Denbighshire.

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- Developing our **Team around the Setting** approach which aims to ensure quality childcare provision within the pre-school sector by creating a monitoring and support structure for settings. In January 2020 this began with the integration of Flying Start and Early Education delivery staff into one cohesive team managed by an Early Years Inclusion Officer working across Early Education, Additional Learning Needs and Flying Start. We intend to develop this approach further with education support officers from Flying Start, Early Education, Pre-school ALN Team and Early Education Teachers contacting and advising settings each half-term regarding self-evaluation, setting improvement and planning & delivery of the Early Years Curriculum. Mapping of this process has been completed and it will go live in September 2021.
- During 2019-20 and 2020-21 implementing the Solihull Approach, a parenting support programme which provides the foundation of our support for parents to understand their child, promoting good emotional health and wellbeing for families. This approach has also been adopted across Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board area giving professionals and parents a common approach and language to supporting parents. Throughout 2020/21 our Family Link Workers have provided direct support to over 300 parents, via phone and on-line, to access the **Solihull 'Understanding Your Child'** course.

Benefits of our joint working across all Early Years Services so far have included;

- a consistent delivery of services with improved communication and working relationships
- higher quality information sharing regarding speech, language and communication level and attendance for children who are due to start nursery
- production of guidance and advice for childcare providers regarding preparation and transition of children to school
- creation of a Single Early Years Panel meeting with improved engagement and contribution from professionals
- Solihull Training for professionals has been cascaded across not only Early Education and Flying Start, but also Team Around the Family and Family Support Workers who work in an integrated approach across Families First and Flying Start.

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Our Complex Disabilities team saw increased demand for our progression support service which is all about promoting inclusion and participation. Now a mainstream service, it has been effective in enabling citizens to consider outcomes previously not thought to be achievable.

Covid-19 sparked more innovation as traditional ways of co-production were no longer possible. Use of technology like the 'Owl' installed in a day centre to enable the transmission of sessions from the centre into Citizen's homes.

We have had a real drive to consider how we better implement person centred practice, especially at review stage, as it is key to co-producing outcomes with citizens.



The service has been able to adapt to meet changing needs of citizens in our community through use of technology. Video calling and media sharing apps. to keep in touch have continued to be used, while in-depth risk assessments have been completed to safely carry out any face to face contact.

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Using the owl device at the Glyndwr Centre for a Christmas disco, whilst maintaining social distancing is pictured below;



We have delivered cookery sessions over video and shared recipe ideas online, which has worked pretty well. We have worked closely with the Regional Transformation team and provided laptops and tablets to citizens who had no means to fund them themselves. This enabled access to virtual group activities held by Third sector agencies, maintaining well-being in an otherwise very isolating period.

In one case, boredom exacerbated behaviours which pushed a parent to seek support in a crisis. Provision of an electronic device enabling access to virtual activities helped fill the void that ceasing a work placement and face to face groups left, and helped avoid a complete carer breakdown.

Some achievement plans specifically looked at building skills around technology and accessing interactive applications that can support individuals. Some have focused on activities a citizen may not be able to do during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as sports and travel.

The ongoing change in government restrictions over the year has made it difficult for citizens to maintain these newly developed skills. This has meant many citizens have remained in the service longer than initially anticipated.

We have continuously looked at how to best promote and encourage technology within our intervention and have allocated a Support Worker to champion this and be a point of contact for information on virtual events and groups.

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During the last twelve months a large majority of our citizens have depended on their support networks or Third sector services to shop on their behalf. This was most evident during the initial lockdown when we identified dependency on this type of support and whenever appropriate we have incorporated essential shopping into achievement plans as this is a really meaningful and important occupation.

## **Case study:**

After the death of his father, Mr X was living in a caravan in the garden of a close friend with all meals provided and laundry and general housekeeping done for him. It was soon identified that the situation was not sustainable and a referral was made into the Complex Disability service to help support and develop independent daily living skills, with the aim for Mr X to live in his own flat.

He had never lived alone, taken any interest in cooking or taking care of his home. Mr X, was at risk of homelessness and there was a need for rehousing with significant care and support provision at that point.

Having a mild learning disability Mr X found it difficult to organise and focus on tasks, but with support of his friend had identified and set up a tenancy on a studio flat. Just Enough Support (JES) worked with Mr X to plan achievable outcomes over a period of four months, enabling him to move in. Weekly and then daily goals were set, increasing the level of complexity of tasks as Mr X progressed. A Support Worker focussed on practical sessions to increase skills and confidence in cleaning, laundry, cooking and shopping. Mr X enjoys fishing and was able to do this during the lockdown periods.

Initially he would cancel support sessions if he planned to go fishing and in the next scheduled session it was clear that the agreed targets had not been completed.

Weekly activity and meal planners were then developed to encouraged a sense of balance and this has worked well.

We supported Mr X to set up direct debits for most bills and pay as you go cards for electric and gas. Using a weekly planner meant that Mr X was able to set specific dates /times when he would go and top these up to ensure a consistent access to basic facilities and minimise risks of arrears. Mr X had always had support around his finances, but now he uses his online banking app to keep himself updated with his finances.

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Mr X was encouraged to reflect on each session and identify specific achievements that had been completed. This encouraged a sense of accomplishment which in turn promoted his motivation and focus on future tasks. Within three weeks Mr X had incorporated independently visiting the launderette into his weekly routine. This demonstrated his progression in new skills such as handling money, planning and time keeping.

“I am now living on my own for the first time in my life. My Support Worker is so helpful. I went to the launderette by myself last week!”

## **This is what we still have to do**

Further develop care and support to allow people to remain in their own accommodation.
Promote use of direct payments and support budgets to improve Adults and Children's choice and control over planning and delivery of their care and support.
Embed use of pre-paid cards to increase efficiency.

## **b) Working with people and partners to protect people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.**

### **This is what we said we would do**

- To progress developments to establish 4 co-located & integrated Community Resource Teams (CRTs) across Denbighshire to ensure citizens receive a seamless and responsive service.
- To continue to develop and review services that meet the needs of carers across Denbighshire through ongoing dialogue and consultation with partners and through carer fora.
- Introduce a peripatetic multi-agency team across Denbighshire and Conwy to work with children and families who are at risk of having children placed in long-term residential care

### **This is what we have done and achieved**

0.86 - The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 of the population aged 75 or over. A significant improvement from 2.27 in 2019 – 20.
The Average age of adults entering residential care homes in 2020 - 21 is 85 compared to 81 in 2019 – 20.

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Supporting our citizens to protect and maintain their mental health and emotional well-being was critical during the Covid-19 lockdown and a range of innovative and creative solutions were found to achieve this.

A collaboration between our Contracts and Commissioning team, Complex Disabilities service, day service providers and the farm & woodland skills centre enabled individuals with a learning disability to gain respite from lockdown through safe access to outdoors.

Face to Face Mental Health Act assessments have been maintained through the utilisation of social distancing and issue of Personal Protective Equipment and scrubs.

Through the use of digital technology, we were able to accelerate the development of our Community Resource Teams, this also helped us develop much stronger links with Primary Care health colleagues.

In July 2020 the 2 Community Resource Teams based in South Denbighshire linked up with GPs, resulting in 1924 patients being discussed in complex case reviews. Through this process we have now been able to deliver seamless health and social care services which has supported citizens achieving better outcomes.

Feedback from GPs on the value of these complex case discussions:

- Effective and efficient use of time.
- improved communication and sharing of information across the spectrum of health and social care professions
- reduced number of phone calls
- reduced process and bureaucracy
- improved relationships and joint working within the CRT
- provided a co-ordinated way to improve the quality and consistency of services for patient.

Reaching out to support to both Adult and Young carers during the Covid-19 lockdown was essential and one of the first things that we recognised was that there was an increase in need but a reduction in the availability of services such as day care or respite. This was due to the ability to deliver services safely and meet the Welsh Government Covid-19 Guidelines to reduce transmission and keep people safe.

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To support our carers, we added Covid-19 information for carers onto the Denbighshire County Council website and we arranged for carers to have access to PPE from the Local Authority store. Adult Social Services also supported individual carers with solutions such as laptops and other digital media devices to maintain communication and reduce isolation.

We ensured carers assessments continued, but this had to be in a different way as we could not always carry out face to face meeting, so we conducted them either through digital technology or over the phone. The Single Point of Access and NEWCIS continued to provide emergency cards and supported carers to put into place contingency planning.

The Healthy Carers Worker continued to deal with a range of referrals, maintaining and improving carers physical and mental well-being. We also continued to share opportunities for carers and encouraged them to attend on-line training events and activities.

## **Case study:**

Carer went into crisis when her husband fell ill with Covid-19 and she was caring for two grandparents at home alone. As her husband did not have stable employment their finances were also affected. A referral was made to NEWCIS Carer Assessor and the following support was put in place:

- Referral to Citizens Advice Denbighshire for full benefits check and employment advice.
- Emergency Bridging the Gap code issued to support carer with increased caring role
- Carer grant given to purchase a bigger washing machine to support with laundry for family and grandparents.

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- Counselling referral for six sessions to discuss stress levels around caring role and her husband's illness. Carer was finding it very difficult to cope with so much going on and fears for the future.
- Emergency plan completed to support with general stress and to ensure carer had what she needed in place.
- Sitting service application taken to panel for authorisation

Carer felt she had lost control over her own life and stress and anxiety over all the things she was trying to manage were making her unwell. Once she started to receive the support from NEWCIS she felt she knew where to turn. She appreciated the support given to help her in her caring role and felt more in control and able to manage. She shared with us that she had felt close to breaking point but had not been able to reach out previously.

Education and Children's Services made a successful funding bid to develop a Young Carers identity card, which has now been developed in partnership with other North Wales Authorities, 3rd Sector and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. A virtual launch event was held on 16 March 2021 at Wrexham Football Club.

Within our Education and Children's Services, the need for increased communication with partner agencies was noted by all parties, early in the pandemic, with recognition that decisions made in one agency would impact on the work of others. To this end, weekly meetings were held with colleagues in Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and North Wales Police where service delivery plans, emerging issues and service priorities were shared. As the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased, partners have met less frequently but the commitment to robust partnership working remains and is voiced by all.

In March 2020, in readiness for a possible nationwide school closure, schools were requested to provide details of pupils that they considered to be vulnerable. This list was considered by staff from across Education and Children's Services. All names were cross referenced on Children's Services client database and relevant information noted. Plans were put in place for all the identified children to have contact over the 'lockdown' period that resulted in school closure, utilising staff from across Education and Children's Services alongside school staff. An escalation procedure was also agreed should contact with vulnerable children prove problematic.

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During the first lockdown and period of school closure, education was effectively suspended, but vulnerable children could be offered a form of child care within schools. Denbighshire, like many authorities, opted for a hub approach, opening a small number of schools for vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers. A pathway was agreed across Education and Children's Services that ensured that open cases were allocated places at school hubs and vulnerable children were appropriately assessed to ensure that the limited places were available to those most in need.

Communication with our schools, and services to our vulnerable children did not cease over the first period of school closure and we have worked in partnership with our schools to offer continued support.

During the most recent period of school closures, education was not suspended. Unlike the first period of school closures, it was up to the school to decide who was eligible for and be offered in person teaching. A system was agreed where schools would share their lists of children attending in person teaching with Children's Services via a dedicated email address. This ensured that social care was aware of any vulnerable children who may not be accessing allocated school places. Schools have also shared their lists of self-isolating pupils due to Covid-19 incidents within the school. Again this has ensured that social care has been able to offer additional advice and support to vulnerable families during this time.

A weekly briefing has been held for Head Teachers hosted by the Interim Head of Education. These meetings are also attended by the Interim Head of Children's Services and other Senior Managers within Education and Children's Services. These meetings have been invaluable and are set to continue post pandemic.

Funding was secured via the Children and Young People's Transformation Programme for a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) collaboration between Denbighshire County Council, Conwy County Borough Council and BCUHB. The team consists of a clinical psychologist, two therapeutic social workers, two therapeutic family support workers, a dedicated administrator, a team manager and is supported by a service manager. The MDT will therapeutically work with children and young people and their families within the regional children's assessment centre (Bwthyn Y Ddol) when work on this facility is completed or within community settings if appropriate. The main aim of the MDT is to support children to remain in the care of their family of origin, wherever it safe for them to do so. Each case will have a clinical formulation, led by the principal psychologist with input from the whole team.

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This formulation will guide the evidence based interventions that will be delivered by agreed team members. These interventions will be subject to review and amended to ensure maximum benefit to the child and family.

## **This is what we still have to do**

Review opportunities for alternative services, share information from the Micro enterprises and Community Catalyst project, with carers and carer organisations.

To review our Information, Advice and Assistance offer in aiming to increase independence and resilience in hard to engage groups.

## **c) Protecting and safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm**

### **This is what we said we would do**

- Ensure all practitioners are meeting the 7day deadline for completion of safeguarding enquiries.
- To ensure the Safeguarding theme is embedded in everyone's practice, which includes embedding any lessons learnt from Safeguarding audits and / or Adult Practice Reviews.
- To Embed revised All Wales Safeguarding Procedures across Children's Services

### **This is what we have done and achieved**

99.2% of all adult protection enquiries were completed within statutory timescales, this is an 8 percentage point increase on last year.

Of those children who were placed on the child protection register during the collection year, the number that has been previously registered under any category, at any time during the previous twelve months. Denbighshire County Council figure was 1.

The total number of days on the child protection register for children who were removed from the register during the year = 36,581 and the total number of children removed (de-registered) from the child protection register during the year = 82. This gives us an average of 446 days. Increased from 311 days in the previous year.

Safeguarding responsibilities have continued throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, with new referrals being actioned within 24 hours and direct visits or assessments being undertaken as required, whilst adhering to appropriate health and safety measures.

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## **Case study:**

### **Effective and Responsive Assessment of Care and Support needs during lockdown - Ben's Story**

Throughout the pandemic we have widened our 'Strength based what matters conversation' with citizens and carers to capture their knowledge, skills and access to ICT.

Ben had formal care and support. Equipment, assistive technology and support for his wife was all arranged over the phone. The video assessment of him attempting to stand from his armchair identified a need for just one home visit from the Occupational Therapist. Creative remote working enabled Ben to be assessed in a timely manner and ultimately enabled him to stay in his own home. The family took the time to thank the practitioners involved for being so thorough and helpful.

Safeguarding has remained a priority throughout 2020-21 within Education and Children's services. All new referrals in to the department have continued to be actioned within 24 hours, with child protection visits and assessments continuing.

All open cases within Children's Services have been routinely risk assessed with a view to how contact would be managed and plans made regarding continued communication.

In person visits continued for the highest risk cases with staff adhering to appropriate health and safety advice and virtual meetings taking place for those cases that presented lower risk.

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Following on from the Exploitation Panel, Denbighshire Therapeutic Service have been developing group work for parents of those children and young people to empower them and enable them to share their experiences.

## **This is what we still have to do**

To continue to embed the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures into all aspects of Children's Services.
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Ensure effective implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards.
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## **d) Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society**

### **This is what we said we would do**

- To build on existing and develop links with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Working Denbighshire and other potential employers to create opportunities for work experience for younger homeless people.
- Improve access, skills and confidence of vulnerable citizens who could benefit from digital technology based care and support solutions.
- Implement the Moving with Dignity Project.

### **This is what we have done and achieved**

4.69% of looked after children during the year to 31 March have experienced one or more changes in school during periods of being looked after that were not due to transitional arrangements. This is down from a figure of 11% in the previous year.
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Percentage of children achieving the core subject indicator at key stages 2 and 4 – This data is not available this year due to the Covid-19 lockdown and schools being closed for much of the year.
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The closure of libraries required Denbighshire 'Talking Points' to go virtual, providing Information, Advice and Assistance via a dedicated telephone line in SPOA. At the peak of the crisis the service was responding to 240 calls per week and following a 'strengths based, what matters' conversation, support provided included the delivery of food, prescriptions and other essentials and referral to the integral telephone befriending service created to support citizens experiencing social isolation.

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Denbighshire County Council redeployed 114 staff to proactively call the 10,361 Denbighshire citizens receiving shielding letters to ensure they were aware of all the support available to them during lockdown. They conducted 240 home visits to citizens not contactable by phone and referred 1,300 citizens for ongoing support.

Across our Operational Services, teams adopted regular proactive calling to monitor and support the well-being of citizens and carers currently open to their service.

To reduce social isolation and continue support to our citizens with lower care needs we introduced a volunteering project early on within the first Covid-19 lockdown. The Project has been successful in encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society. As of Feb 21, there are 24 volunteers still working with us and we are confident that many will continue post Covid-19. Our volunteers include a school cleaner, an Easy Jet redeployee, a retired CEO, a taxi driver and retired GP to name a few. Our youngest is 16 and our oldest in their 70's. Through the ongoing success of the Volunteer Project it is our aim to embed it into our Community Resource Teams.

We will carry on recruiting based on best practice throughout the last 12 months including:

- Through our Community Navigators;
- HR recruitment campaigns via Social Media;
- Word of mouth – one lady saw how much her friend was benefitting from volunteering and she has put herself forward to help.
- Future plans to promote via Talking Points, recruitment days and internal staff communications.

Here are some examples of what our Volunteers have been doing:

- Shopping
- Gentle walking exercise
- Light Housework
- Dog walking
- Gardening
- Helping to read mail and pay bills
- Prompting to prepare meals
- Supporting to set up on-line shopping services

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People who have benefitted from volunteer support:

- Young mum with small children – volunteer support to make her garden safe for her children to play in, and encouragement and support to enjoy being a mum again following a relationship breakdown. Mum now enjoys taking her children to the park etc. without support.
- Mr R, 92yrs. Support to get his scooter fixed and confidence to get out on it again.



The Moving with Dignity project, which aims to improve quality of care and to ensure access to the right equipment to carry out tasks as safely as possible, continued during the Covid-19 pandemic but not at the pace we had originally anticipated.

For many years, people who have needed to be hoisted or cared for in bed have needed two people to assist and attend to them. In the last few years there have been lots of developments in the design and safety of the specialist equipment used to help people move. So, in many cases, just one carer can safely provide care to an individual and for some people it will enable them to be cared for safely by a relative for longer, if that is their choice.

One individual commented; “I feel I have more independence, choice and control, a better relationship with my care worker, more dignity and privacy.”

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Specialist and accredited training was delivered between January and March 2020 to 36 staff across health staff, domiciliary care providers and Adult Social Services Staff and was completed just before the pandemic hit. Unfortunately, since this time it has been impossible to maintain skills and a number of domiciliary care agency staff have moved from their positions, leaving some agencies without day to day support from someone appropriately trained.

It is anticipated that training will re-commence during 2021 as soon as it is permitted to deliver training. Cascading the training to other staff will start shortly afterwards. Investment has been made to ensure the required equipment is in stock, substantially reducing delay in getting it to the citizen.

Discharges from all hospitals have continued to consider this approach in the first instance, however due to difficulties providing face to face training to domiciliary care agencies it has proved to be difficult to reinforce the new ways of working over the last 12 months.

Through our Regional Transformation Project, we have seen great strides being made in the use of technology to support many of our citizens with learning disabilities remain engaged and participating in activities during the Covid-19 lockdown. This included providing iPads, epilepsy smart watches, Fitbits, iPads, portals and smart scales purchased through the Communities Transformation Fund.

Working with our Day and Work Opportunities Team online sessions were set up to support those no longer able to attend day services, such as a Fitbits and wellbeing group online with community nurses and the Denbighshire self-advocacy group. The Regional Team also supported Cartref Ni to trial a care-planning app in Community Living projects. 'Here to There', a care planning and communications app, was also trialled in Denbighshire.

The Regional Transformation Team designed the rainbow card. Families and carers supporting individuals with a learning disability and/or autism were able to show the card to police when they needed to travel outside their area and/or needed to exercise more than once a day to maintain their wellbeing. North Wales Police formally accepted the use of the card across North Wales and over 1300 have been distributed to citizens.

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Social care staff within Education and Children's Services identified Looked After Children and Care Leavers who required additional technology to enable virtual meetings and / or family contact to take place. Appropriate technology was provided using grant funds where applicable. In addition, some foster carers who had several children in placement were provided with additional equipment to ensure that each child within the household had individual access to technology.

Children's Services have worked closely with the Personal Advisor Service, provided by Barnardo's, monitoring the impact of lockdown on the wellbeing of care leavers. Focussing primarily on the impact on their employment, training / education and housing. We have collated statistics weekly and responded to increased needs as required.

## **This is what we still have to do**

To sustain and expand the successful Volunteers Project set up in response to Covid-19.
To embed the ethos of Moving with Dignity into all the services provided and commissioned by CSS and also to ensure that all relevant staff are suitably skilled to be able to assess for or provide right-sized care.
Build upon work done so far and further develop Assistive Technologies to increase access and knowledge within Community Support Services and the community

## **e) Supporting people to develop safely and to maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships**

### **This is what we said we would do**

- Review the provision of childcare and respite for parents with children with additional and complex needs, and grow that provision within existing childcare settings

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- Development of an improved and expanded Edge of Care Service, focussed on supporting children to remain at home or return home as part of the strategy to safely reduce the number of looked after children.
- Further develop and review services that meet the needs of Denbighshire carers, working with partners and carers to identify / reduce gaps in support

## **This is what we have done and achieved.**

16 children returned home from care during the year.
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On 31 March, 12 looked after children have had three or more placements during the year.
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In Education and Children's Services the Therapeutic Team have developed a Parenting Group to work directly with parents of children and young people assessed as being at high risk of exploitation. The Therapeutic Practitioners use the PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) Model. This is based on developmental attachment theory and research and is the primary model for relationship development and trauma resolution.

The enhanced offer from our Edge of Care Service continued throughout the pandemic, with therapeutic work with children and families continuing both virtually and in-person.

The development of the regional Bwthyn Y Ddol multi-disciplinary team has further enhanced preventative work in the region, with the team offering a bespoke intervention, led by a clinical formulation to complex high risk cases.

Quotes about the work of Bwthyn Y Ddol;

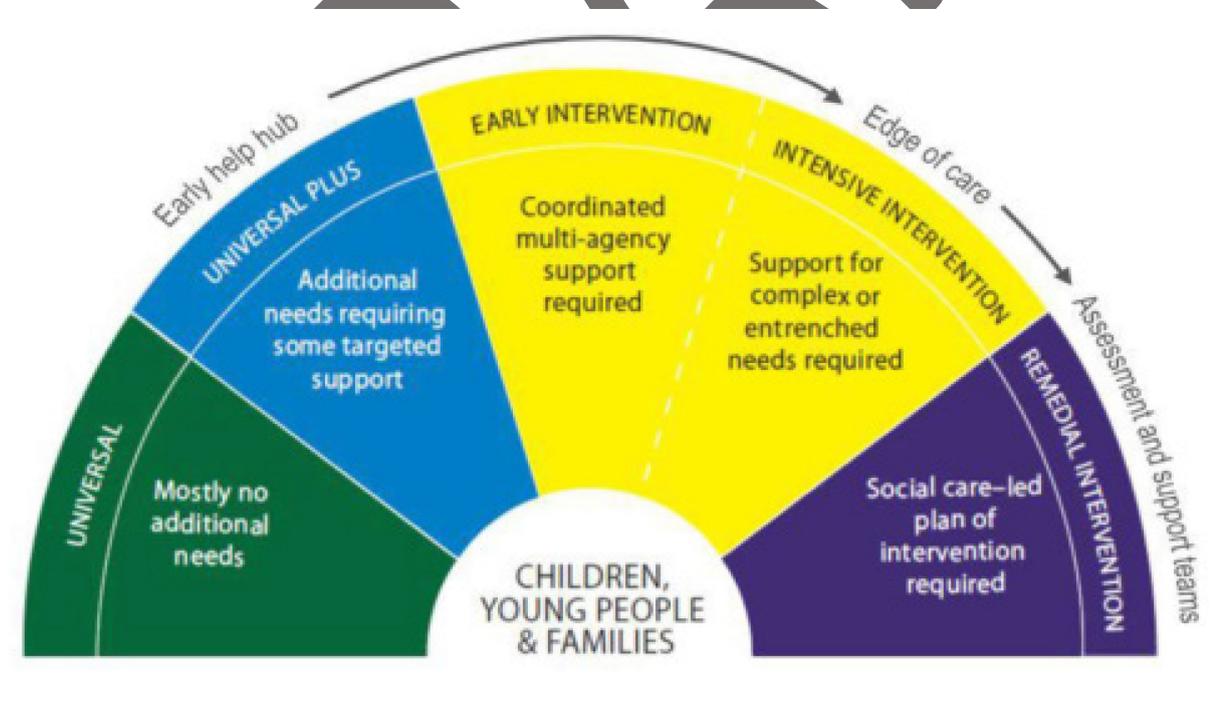
- We launched our parent group on 9 November 2020 and we meet once a fortnight. We have had great support from other colleagues within services who also advocate for parents as partners.
- We want to have guest speakers from any services that are working with our young people because then we are educating parents on exactly what that role looks like. Quite often these parents aren't sure what these professionals do and how they can support them and their children. The guest speakers are so important to our group. We've had a range of different speakers who believe in the Relational Safeguarding Model and how important parents are in protecting their children.
- In this safe environment we have created, parents feel comfortable to ask their questions to these professionals and what exactly their role is in their child's case. The group are incredibly supportive of each other and we always check-in on their wellbeing.

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- On the week we don't run the group, we offer parents the chance to have a chat with one of us in private. The need is there especially if the family is in crisis. Although we only started in November, we have made such a difference for those parents and carers. They feel more supported, listened to and much more educated on a lot of things.
- Our parents are amazing. It is an educational programme and for us, it's all about safeguarding. Not just the child, but the whole family. The best people to safeguard the child are the parents. Empowering our parents has made a huge difference. When we don't have the knowledge and education about things, those things scare us. But this group and the journey we go on enables parents to learn about child sexual exploitation and they are better equipped to support and safeguard their children.

The Bwthyn Y Ddol multi-disciplinary team work with children and young people who are at the edge of care and are at risk of becoming looked after as their parent or carer, for a variety of reasons, is unable to manage a healthy family dynamic.

The team will initially focus on completing a holistic formulation of strengths and difficulties, risks and needs through a consultation process, in order to recommend a program of interventions.



The model of care has been developed through a multi-agency team with a focus on what the requirement and specific needs of the children and young people within Denbighshire and Conwy.

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This innovative approach to an evidence based model of care, along with the reflective practice adopted by the team, has already seen very positive results with the 5 children/ young people successfully completing the intervention and safely remaining at home with family.

Putting the child or young person at the centre of the clinical formulation and taking a whole family approach has seen multi-agency collaborative discussions routinely taking place which has promoted partnership work across all agencies.

Planning has been approved and contractors have been appointed for the Bwthyn y Ddol residential assessment centre.

This state of the art centre will contain three separate buildings which will comprise of the pre-planned assessment accommodation for four children or young people, short term, unplanned, accommodation for two children or young people and an assessment and intervention centre. The development is expected to be completed during 2022.



New Carers were identified through the Local Authorities shielding calls and North east Wales Carer Information Service (NEWCIS) 'Keeping in Touch' calls also provided ongoing and regular contact with isolated carers during lockdown.

A Supporting Carers project was set up with NEWCIS & Citizen's Advice Denbighshire, building on the supportive calls during the pandemic and targeting hidden carers in rural areas.

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Another innovative solution that was implemented during the lockdown was Push to Talk which is a joint project with Conwy County Council which will offer opportunity for carers to have a chat and share their experiences. This has allowed carers who are experiencing a high degree of loneliness and isolation to stay connected.

Bridging The Gap voucher scheme – take up maintained and domiciliary care providers continued to provide a service unless a member of the household was symptomatic.

## **Carer case study:**

Terry is a full time carer for his wife and both are on a low, fixed income. During lockdown he accessed the local foodbank a number of times and a volunteer there thought that Terry may benefit from a conversation with a Community Navigator, so with Terry's consent a referral was made. The Community Navigator phoned Terry to chat about his circumstances. Gently and sensitively they explored any issues or struggles that Terry or his wife had that they needed support with. Terry shared that due to fear of Covid-19 both he and his wife were shielding at home. He had not been able to get a delivery slot with his regular supermarket and their food had nearly run out before he was forced to contact the foodbank for help. The Community Navigator provided information of a local volunteer group that could assist with shopping and dog walking, along with a list of shopping resources including supermarkets offering services for vulnerable citizens.

Terry was shocked to learn there was so much out there and he wished he could have known about some of them sooner. He also shared that he was worried because they had a letter about their energy bill going up in price. The Community Navigator put Terry in touch with Age Cymru, who offered a free telephone benefit check and advised of programs and services that can help to reduce energy bills.

Following his initial call with the Community Navigator, Terry has not needed to access the Foodbank and is using a different supermarket that can offer him priority deliveries. Terry and his wife are in the process of lowering their monthly bills and have been reconnected to Carers support.

# Director of Social Services Annual Report 2020 - 2021

## This is what we still have to do

To continue the work on Denbighshire becoming a Dementia Friendly Council.

To continue to review and develop services that meet the needs of carers in Denbighshire.

To continue with the development of Bwthyn Y Ddol and the multi-disciplinary approach for children on the edge of care.

## f) Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

### This is what we said we would do

- To roll out Ready for Work programme to develop young people's skills for employment
- Continue to develop work on Assistive Technologies
- Further improve support for young people at risk of homelessness through the Young People's Positive Pathway

### This is what we have done and achieved

The total number of care leavers who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in: a) the 12 months since leaving care was 7 and b) the 13 -24 months since leaving care was 5

2 care leavers have experienced homelessness during the year, within 12 months of leaving care.



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## Dementia Friendly Council (DFC) Project

Our work to be a Dementia Friendly Council has continued over the last 12 months, despite the impact of Covid-19 restrictions. Since the recognition from the Alzheimer's Society we have achieved the following:

- Completed the majority of our action plan activities;
- Shared good practice across all of Denbighshire County Council services, through information on our staff intranet (Linc);
- Promoted training to increase awareness of dementia throughout the Council;
- Extended and consolidated our connections with dementia friendly communities and groups across Denbighshire and the wider North Wales region.

We are currently working with partners to evaluate our effectiveness over the first year of recognition with the Alzheimer's Society and to document our forward work plan for the coming year.

## Dementia Social Care Practitioners

Dementia Social Care Practitioners are working well within each of the 4 Community Resource Teams. They are working with Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC) and the Dementia Friendly Denbighshire Project Manager is helping to support the development of new dementia friendly communities in Llangollen, Rhyl and Ruthin, as well as the existing ones in Prestatyn, Denbigh and St Asaph.

Having Dementia Support Workers in the Community Resource Teams has strengthened our relationships and links with Older People's Mental Health Services and the Memory Clinic. The Dementia Support Workers work creatively and autonomously, using themselves as a resource when required and have delivered 'A team around the individual' approach. They utilise Peer Forums and Cluster meetings to share expertise and knowledge and provide general advice to Community Resource Team members.

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**Case study:** Due to memory issues, Alice was over medicating herself, having reoccurring Infections, was reliant on daily input from family and was this exceptionally problematic with the Covid-19 restrictions. Family were visiting daily to ensure that she had a cooked meal and would often find that 2-3 days' worth of tablets had been taken from their mothers' blister packs and felt that her memory and health were deteriorating so started considering residential care. A referral was made to a Dementia Support Worker who had discussions with Alice's family and got a referral to Memory Clinic. Following this, Alice received a 30-minute morning call to support with breakfast, drinks and morning medication, a key safe was also installed. It soon became apparent Alice was not managing her medication, family were also struggling to provide daily visits to support with this, so support calls were increased to two 30- minute calls a day. Alice's overall health has significantly improved, as has her wellbeing – the support calls have taken away the social isolation she was experiencing. "I am so pleased. The care calls are working very, very well. It has made a huge difference to us as a family, we can now enjoy the time we spend with her, without all the stress and worry."

The work we intended to implement in relation to a robotics project and other new initiatives had to be put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, early in 2021 work begun to establish the implementation of the following assistive technologies:

- Reminiscence Interactive Therapy Activities (RITA) technology is aimed at augmenting the care delivered to older people, those suffering with dementia, mental health conditions, acute brain injuries and learning difficulties as a means of supporting them, reducing their agitation, isolation, depression and delirium.

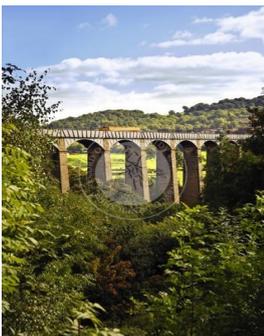
Evidence suggests that the systems facilitate:

- a) Reducing Falls by up 76.9%
- b) Reducing need for single or multiple handed high cost care packages
- c) Supporting dementia care mapping
- d) Dramatically improved patient, family and staff experience
- e) Significant improvements in patients with dementia who are unable to sleep
- f) Supporting dignity, respect and wellbeing for patients
- g) Clinically led, improving the quality of patient-centred care
- h) Improved interaction between the individual and their carers and relatives

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- Pepper Robotics – Pepper is a humanoid robot that perceives emotions and adapts its behaviour accordingly. It can memorise personality traits amongst its interacting contacts. Initially Pepper will be used for community engagement within enhanced care, for awareness raising and to facilitate reminiscence activities. It is anticipated that a project tackling community loneliness will be the next phase of exploration into the use of social care robotics.
- PARO Seal is designed as, and evidence shows that the baby harp seal is, an advanced interactive therapeutic robot that brings psychological enrichment and joy to citizens in particular where they are experiencing any of the following:
  - a) Dementia, emotional and behavioural distress
  - b) Cognitive disorders
  - c) Developmental disorders
  - d) Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and social isolation
- REM PODS– is another interactive reminiscence solution. It features a liquid crystal display (LCD) television disguised as a train window. The room is also transformed to mimic a train carriage and this provides people living with dementia and citizens with cognitive disorders opportunity to enjoy the experience of a train ride, brought to life through the playing of hours of countryside footage on the LCD screen

The implementation of the above technologies has been facilitated by creating a small project team from the Community Equipment Service, Workforce Development, and Provider Services. The approach is designed to bring together a number of skills to ensure that a fully inclusive service is introduced across enhanced care and in-house care provision. The collaboration is expected to create a new way of working to ensure new technologies are explored and that citizen and staff engagement is maximized to promote the use of self-funded solutions. It will also enhance the provision alongside traditional technologies that have been established across the community.



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Throughout the Covid-19 lockdown support has been provided to young people at risk of homelessness through multi-agency support. This has included input from our Education and Children's Services, the Homelessness Prevention Team and delivery partners such as, Clwyd Alyn's Dyfodol Project. Work has continued to review the provision of services to those young people at risk of homelessness, across different services within Denbighshire County Council, and our Youth Services will be leading on the Young People's Pathway from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. The team will include a dedicated Youth Worker and a Homelessness Youth Support Worker. A priority for the team will be care leavers and Looked After Children.

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic an audit was completed by the Fostering Service that mapped all available placements, and which foster carers could offer additional placements in an emergency, accepting that this may require additional equipment and changes to approval status. In addition, the Fostering Service highlighted which carers had potential vulnerability due to their own or their household members (including LAC) health needs. The Fostering Service has continued to engage with the work of the National Fostering Framework, including on the forthcoming national fostering brand and recruitment drive.

We have continued to be able to effectively support and care plan for our children and we have successfully returned children home where this was appropriate. Looked After Children have continued to be placed into adoptive placements, using guidance and risk assessments provided by the National Adoption Service. Adoption and Fostering Panels have continued to be held, albeit virtually, with excellent attendance by Panel members and applicants.

Social workers have been successful in continuing to permanency plan for children, moving some children from residential homes to foster care, other children into permanent kinship arrangements, discharging care orders for children placed with parents and supporting carers to gain special guardianship orders.

## **This is what we still have to do**

- |  |
|--|
| To embed the Young People's Pathway into Youth Services.                                   |
| To work with partners to focus on recruitment to care and career pathways for young people |

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## 5. How we do what we do

### a) Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

The President of ADSS Cymru, Nicola Stubbins has underlined the seriousness of the current pressure on social workers and care workers and praised the sector for its resourcefulness, in a report published today by BBC Wales.

The President said, "Social care staff are stretched now to a point I've never seen before and at this moment in time, stretched far more than any point during this entire pandemic. They are exhausted, but they keep going."

"The pressures of being able to maintain service delivery is becoming more and more challenging and with certain aspects we are only able to cover some critical services - that isn't anything that anybody ever came into this job to do, to have to choose between who you may or may not be able to help." February 2021

Providing ongoing support to our staff during the Covid-19 pandemic has been one of our key priorities. Working closely with our Human Resources team we have identified a range of resources to support individuals and ensure we maintained the wellbeing of all our staff. Many struggled with the impact of working from home and not having the close interaction with their colleagues and for many of our care home staff the impact of having to manage Covid-19 outbreaks will have a long lasting impact. We sourced and shared a range of online materials, access to workshops and ensured we ran informal keeping in touch sessions such as virtual Tea at Three and when restrictions would allow Walk and Talk supervisions with line managers.



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## Workforce Development

During 2020 - 21 we had to take a whole new approach to learning and development for the Social Care workforce across Denbighshire. Classroom based learning was no longer possible and all of our training had to move to on-line / virtual sessions and our training room was taken over as the PPE store. Where learning required supervision to complete the qualification / certification then blended learning was put in place with the face to face element done in a very safe manner.

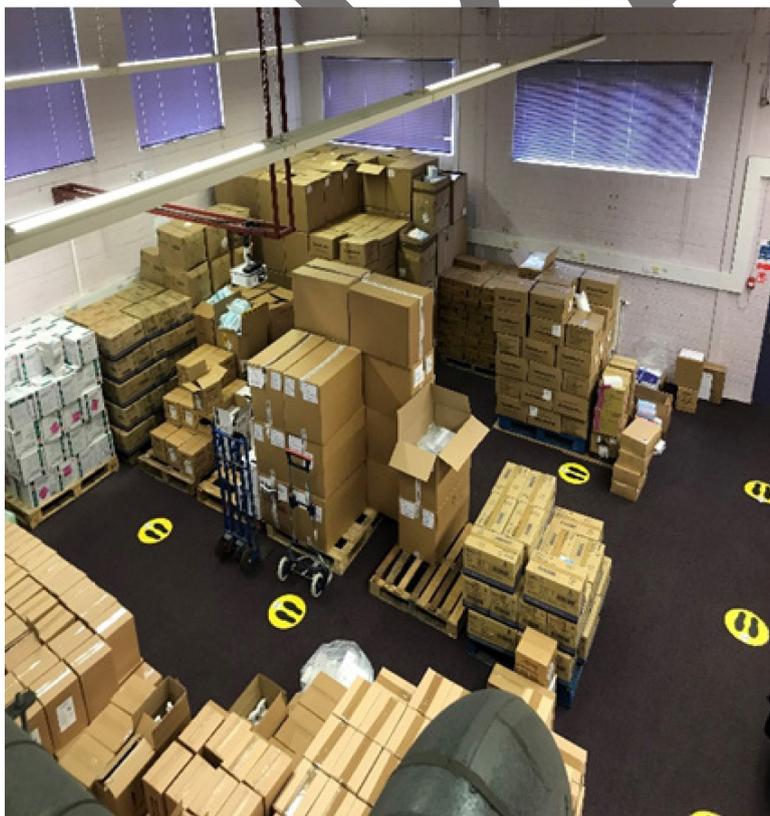
Our Workforce Development Team continued to support the ongoing learning and development of our workforce in a number of different ways including:

- The sharing of information about free resources / training which supports learning.
- Providing a monthly Workforce Development Team newsletter with information for providers.
- Working quickly to create digital access to training materials, utilising the Social Care Wales Learning Hub, CCIInform and SC-TV which have all provided accredited training on-line.
- Social Work students being supported to complete as much of their placement as possible during the initial COVID lockdown. This was to ensure that a cohort of students would be ready to graduate and take up posts in available Social Work vacancies.
- Developing an e-Induction for redeployees and volunteers to the Care Sector.
- Working with TGP Cymru (Tros Gynnal Plant, our partner agency) around Advocacy training for all of Children's Services.
- Delivering "Working with Cannabis and Substance Misusing Parents" commissioned to reflect the learnings from Child Practice Reviews and North Wales Safeguarding Board 2021.
- Dementia courses – including challenging behaviour in dementia care, dementia and hearing loss and one of the most popular sessions - communication in dementia care.
- Covid-19 related courses – as a result of the pandemic the training team identified a need to ensure support was available for workers directly impacted from this, courses included COVID 19 dealing with loss and grief as a professional worker and a course entitled The Way Forward – focussing on ways to help people move forward.

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- Frontline care courses – a number of courses were offered to ensure continued development of frontline care workers, including medication awareness, nutrition and hydration, falls prevention plus many more. The team continued to offer important training such as those listed and were able to work with training providers to ensure vital training and workshops to support frontline staff continued even during turbulent and uncertain times, by adapting delivery to be online.
- Other courses offered included, substance misuse and awareness training and safeguarding (new procedures).
- Additional courses included workshops around supporting managers with the All Wales Induction framework, new to the 2020-2021 training plan.
- Tidal Training to deliver a Psychological First Aid and post incident facilitators debriefing course to the workforce, a new course offered during 2020-2021 to further support members of the workforce dealing with unprecedented situations.

Our training room has now been transformed again following the relocation of the new Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) store. The photographs below show it as the PPE store and then back to being a training facility as the Covid-19 restrictions are starting to ease.



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## More Than Just Words

An online course was commissioned, aimed at equipping care staff across Adults and Children's services with the skills to greet and meet the public in Welsh and to make the Active Offer.

In addition, specific online courses have been commissioned for Denbighshire care staff across Adults and Children's services. These have included a short online Welsh taster course and workbook, and also an online course suitable for staff who understand spoken Welsh with ease but lack confidence in speaking Welsh.

During 2020-21 we have also shared the details as to where Providers can order the free 'Iaith Gwaith' resources.

We have promoted the orange speech bubble sticker which we recently produced in Denbighshire. The sticker is useful as a quick and visual indication of language choice on any paperwork, e.g. individuals' files in residential homes or 'what matters' forms. Some care providers are also using the large stickers on residents' bedroom doors. This year the Welsh Language Commissioner celebrated 15 years since the launch of the orange speech bubble badge. A Denbighshire member of staff and residents of a Denbighshire Care Home were included in social media posts about the importance of the 'orange bubble as part of the care package for carers'.

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We have shared information about the free 10-hour Welsh on-line course available for the care sector, together with the resources produced by Digital Communities Wales. In addition, within our monthly social care newsletter, we have shared the details with Providers of a range of Welsh resources which promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. This included a variety of language apps and details of the new Social Care Wales training resource which supports bilingual working for people working in health and social care.

Within Children and Education Services we have commissioned the 'Mind of My Own' app which was launched in June 2020. The app is available for children and young people who are referred to Children's Services to express their views. The app is available in English and Welsh.

In Adult Services, we have ensured that those involved in a newly commissioned piece of work in partnership with 'Community Catalysts' from York are fully aware of the requirements of the Welsh Language standards as they deliver Community Micro-enterprises.

A dis-used building at Ysgol Glan Clwyd has been refurbished and is now a Welsh Centre offering Welsh-medium provision for all ages, including pre-school pupils and support for latecomers to Welsh-medium education. Following the completion of the building work during 2020 the 'Canolfan Gymraeg' building is now available for use. To date a Welsh medium teacher sabbatical (Bangor University), a post-16 Childcare course (Mudiad Meithrin) and also the Cylch Meithrin St Asaph has opened on site. Use of the 'Canolfan Gymraeg' is expected to increase when Covid-19 restrictions are relaxed and its further use as a facility for developing the use of the Welsh-language within Denbighshire can be explored.

A representative from the Workforce Development team has also been asked for input into the workshops to support the pilot of the online Welsh language Champion induction for Dementia Friends Wales and involvement in a National project to lead on the work to standardise health and social care terminology.

## **b) Our Financial Resources and How We Plan for the Future**

Monthly financial outturn reports are presented to the executive forecasting the year-end position. Exceptions or pressures are referenced in the reports, with mitigating actions.

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The annual budget is set following a lengthy process of reviewing of pressures and savings across all services and engaging with elected members and others as part of that process.

In the medium term, the council has a rolling three-year Medium-term Financial Plan which sets out the council's estimated funding position over the period and, working with services, builds in estimates of required savings or additional funding requirements. This medium term planning process helped to identify and secure, through the council's budget, additional funding in 2021/22. This helped to support growing pressures mainly due to annual care fee inflation and the rising costs of homelessness accommodation in adult social care (£2.4m).

Main stream financial internal planning takes place on a monthly basis at Service leadership / management team meetings. There is a focus on performance and financial monitoring areas of the areas under greatest pressure. The Service finance officers also meet regularly with Heads of Service and the Management Executive Team.

## **c) Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability**

Support for our Social Care providers became increasingly important as the pandemic progressed. In Denbighshire we implemented daily proactive calling to our care homes and domiciliary care agencies led by the Contracts and Commissioning team. We also introduced a weekly virtual meeting which allowed us to share messages, discuss issues and concerns, share best practice, but most importantly allowed the participants to provide peer support to each other. We feel that as a result of this increased communication and engagement we have seen a positive shift in the relationship between the Local Authority and Providers, we have got to know our providers like never before and we are working much more collaboratively.

In the CRTs digital technology has enabled stronger links with Primary Care and the broader health and care community.

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This has been particularly successful in central and south Denbighshire where in July GP's joined a range of other health and care professionals attending complex case reviews. In North Denbighshire the daily update meetings set up during Covid-19 to communicate service and staffing pressures, COVID patients and issues have worked really well throughout the pandemic serving to build strong relationships with Older People Mental Health, Children's Services and Primary Care.

Denbighshire's Complex Disability Team developed very strong working partnerships during Covid-19 with their delivery partners. modifying traditional provision to ensure those most in need of services were supported. This has included virtual means of support and alternative use of environments i.e. Use of outside spaces to enable support to be provided to citizens whose mental health was at particular risk. A quote from one mother; "Woodlands was a godsend to us and our son. It gave us a very welcome return to some sort of normality for him. He spent most of the evening after his first session back laughing! Personally, it was such a relief that someone else was responsible for planning what he did, for the next 2 hours at least."

The council has very robust internal governance arrangements in place to support the effective management of Community Support Services and Children's and Education Services. Reports are taken to various Scrutiny Committees throughout the year to enable Elected Members to scrutinise policy and performance in relation to social services, including reports to monitor the progress of any actions required in response to the Director's annual report or the CIW's annual report.

We also have a very well established service performance challenge process, where each head of service is challenged annually on areas such as service performance and leadership. The panel for each service challenge meeting includes the Chief Executive; Corporate Directors; Lead Members; Scrutiny Members and our external regulators (the Wales Audit Office and the Care Inspectorate Wales).

In addition to the service challenge process, the council also has a very robust performance management framework, which includes regular performance reports being presented to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT); Scrutiny; and Cabinet, and various reports being presented to scrutiny periodically on service specific issues, such as Compliments and Complaints.

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## Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

DRAFT

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>15 July 2021</b>
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>

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

The report seeks Performance Scrutiny Committee to review its draft forward work programme. In doing so the Committee is asked to reflect on the implications of the focus on business critical operations during the emergency phase of the COVID -19 pandemic and the programmes of work underway or being planned under the recovery phase, whilst also having regard to items of business already on its forward work programme prior to the pandemic.

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

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

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

That the Committee

- 3.1 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate; and
- 3.2 identifies key messages and themes from the current meeting which it wishes to publicise via the press and/or social media.

## 4. Report details

- 4.1 Section 7 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, as well as the rules of procedure and debate.
- 4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must set, and regularly review, a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.
- 4.4 In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and Audit Wales (AW) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users. From now on scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens. AW will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.
- 4.5 Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:
- budget savings;
  - achievement of the Corporate Plan objectives (with particular emphasis on their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
  - any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2);

- Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues; and
- Supporting the Council's recovery work in relation to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on Council services, the local economy and the county's communities

#### 4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

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

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

### Cabinet Forward Work Programme

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

### Progress on Committee Resolutions

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

## **5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group**

- 5.1 Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 1 July 2021. No topics were referred from the Group to this Committee for consideration. The Group's scheduled to hold its next meeting on the 9 September 2021.
- 5.2 With a view to raising Scrutiny's profile and encouraging public engagement the Group recently decided that all three scrutiny committees should, for a trial period, identify key themes or messages arising from their meetings for publication via the Authority's social media pages and the local press. The Committee is therefore asked to identify which themes or messages it wishes to highlight from the current meeting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

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

**Contact Officer:**

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

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
30 September	<b><i>Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts</i></b>	1. <i>Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments [Education]</i>  <b><i>Education Update???</i></b> <i>(tbc)</i>	<i>To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children</i>	<i>Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement</i>	<i>Geraint Davies/GwE</i>	<i>October 2020</i>
	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	2. Cefndy Healthcare Annual Reports 2019/20 & 2020/21 and Annual Plan 2021/22 & Options Appraisal for future business delivery	To consider: (i) the company's performance during 2019/20 & 2020/21 and its Annual Plan for 2021/22; and (ii) the findings of the Project Board's work in drawing up an options appraisal for future delivery of the company's business	(i) An assessment of the company's performance in delivering its business within budget and meeting targets will assist with the identification of future trends and requirements; (ii) Formulation of recommendations in relation to a future business model that will support the delivery of the Council's priority relating to Resilient Communities	Phil Gilroy/Ann Lloyd/Simon Rowlands/Nick Bowles	September 2019 (Options Appraisal element originally scheduled for 30 April 2020 but rescheduled due to COVID-19/rescheduled again due to COVID-19 December 2020. Reschedule April 2021 due to Brexit)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
25 November	<b>Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill</b>	1. Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register and risk appetite statement	Effective monitoring and management of identified risk to reduce risks to residents and the Authority	Alan Smith/Iolo McGregor/Emma Horan	November 2020
	<b>Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts</b>	2. <i>Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) System</i>  <i>(tbc)</i>	<i>To review</i> <i>(i) the implementation of the new CRM/360 system and its performance in delivering efficient and effective customer focussed services in line with the product specification and the Council's expectations; and</i> <i>(ii) service demand in terms of supporting recovery from COVID-19 by moving requests on to C360</i>	<i>An efficient and effective customer enquiries system that deals with enquiries quickly, to a high level of customer satisfaction, whilst realising value for money for the Authority</i>	<i>Liz Grieve/Ffion Angharad</i>	<i>September 2018 (rescheduled November 2019/rescheduled again March/Oct 2020 &amp; January 2021 due to COVID-19)</i>
	<b>Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill</b>	3. Corporate Plan (Q2) 2021/22	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2017-22	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets to deliver its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Alan Smith/Iolo McGregor/Heidi Barton-Price	March 2021
	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	4. Draft Sustainable Travel Plan	To consider the draft sustainable travel plan (including the Council's role in facilitating the locating of vehicle charging points across the county, its work with other local authorities and stakeholders with respect of their availability and in relation to other potential alternative travel modes, and in supporting the community to switch to sustainable fuels)	To provide observations and recommendations that will support the delivery of the corporate priorities relating to the environment and connected communities by reducing CO2 emissions and improving travel connectivity	Emlyn Jones/Mike Jones	By SCVCG June 2018 (rescheduled February & November 2019, October 2020 & June 2021 due to

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
						COVID-19)
January 2022 <i>(date tbc)</i>	<b>Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts</b>	1. <i>Verified External Examinations [Education]</i>	<i>To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children; and GwE's impact on the educational attainment of the County's pupils.</i>  <i>The report to include actual figures in addition to percentages along with school absenteeism and exclusion data.</i>  <i>The report to incorporate GwE's Annual report and information on the 5 year trend in relation to educational attainment in Denbighshire</i>	<i>Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement</i>	<i>Geraint Davies/GwE</i>	<i>October 2020</i>
	<b>Cllrs. Tony Thomas/Bobby Feeley</b>	2. <i>Denbighshire's Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan</i>	<i>To examine the progress made to date in delivering the revised Strategy and Action Plan approved by County Council in December 2020</i>	<i>The identification of actions that will support and ensure the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities relating to Housing, Environment, Young People and Resilient Communities and ultimately the Corporate Plan</i>	<i>Emlyn Jones/ Angela Loftus</i>	<i>By SCVCG January 2021</i>
	<b>Cllr. Tony Thomas</b>	3. <i>Library Service Standards 2020-21</i>	<i>To consider the results of the WG's annual evaluation of the Council's Library Service and receive information on how the Service has progressed and adapted its service provision during the year</i>	<i>Identification of any slippages in performance in order to formulate recommendations to redress the situation and ensure that the Service delivers the Council's Corporate Plan and its priorities in relation to Young People, Resilient and Connected Communities</i>	<i>Liz Grieve/Bethan Hughes</i>	<i>March 2021</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
March	<b>Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts</b>	1. Curriculum for Wales  <b>[Education]</b>	To detail the progress made to date towards the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales along with the support provided by the local education authority and GwE to schools, education staff and governing bodies in readiness for the delivery of the new curriculum from September 2022	Assurances that all educational establishments and staff are fully equipped and trained to deliver the new curriculum, identification of any gaps or risks associated with the provision and solutions to address them, ahead of its implementation with a view to ensuring that children and young people in Denbighshire realise their full potential in line with the Council's Corporate Plan	Geraint Davies/James Brown/GwE	June 2021
	<b>Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts</b>	2. Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation  <b>[Education]</b>	To examine the Council's compliance with the statutory requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018	To reduce the risk of the Authority not complying with any of the requirements of the Act and to ensure that every pupil and student in the County is given the required support and opportunities to realise their full potential	Geraint Davies/Mari Gaskell/Joseph Earl	June 2021
September	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	1. Hafan Deg, Rhyl (tbc)  <b>Representatives from KL Care to be invited to attend</b>	<i>To monitor the effectiveness of the transfer of the facility and services to an external provider and the provider's progress in growing and expanding the services available at the centre, including the lessons learnt from COVID-19 and the new services commissioned as a result of the pandemic</i>	<i>To evaluate the impact of the transfer of the facility and services on all stakeholders and to assess whether the services provided at Hafan Deg are in line with the contract specification, support the Council's vision for adult social care and the five ways to well-being and the requirements of the</i>	<i>Phil Gilroy/Ann Lloyd/Katie Newe/Ben Chandler</i>	<i>September 2019 (Rescheduled October 2020, January &amp; March 2021 due to COVID-19)</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			<i>(the report to include an updated Well-being Impact Assessment)</i>	<i>Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014</i>		

## Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
<p><i>School Categorisation according to Welsh—medium Provision</i></p> <p><i>tbc (late 2021/early 2022) dependent upon WG</i></p> <p><b>Education</b></p>	<p><i>To outline the conclusions of the recent Welsh Government consultation and its implications for Denbighshire schools and pupils</i></p>	<p><i>Identification of potential changes to the Council's education policies and any associated costs and budget implications</i></p>	<p><i>Geraint Davies/James Curran</i></p>	<p><i>January 2021</i></p>
<p><i>Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008</i></p> <p><i>tbc (late 2021/early 2022) dependent upon WG</i></p> <p><b>Education</b></p>	<p><i>To outline the conclusions of the recent Welsh Government consultation on the Measure and its implications for Denbighshire schools and pupils</i></p>	<p><i>Identification of potential changes to the Council's learner travel policy and any associated costs and budget implications</i></p>	<p><i>Geraint Davies/Ian Land</i></p>	<p><i>January 2021</i></p>
<p><i>Dolwen Residential Care Home</i></p>	<p><i>To consider the Task and Finish Group's recommendations relating to the future provision of services at Dolwen Residential Care Home, Denbigh</i></p>	<p><i>Pre-decision scrutiny of the task and finish group's findings and the formulation of recommendations for presentation to Cabinet with respect of the future provision of services at Dolwen with a view to ensuring that everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs and are able to live independent and resilient lives</i></p>	<p><i>Task and Finish Group/Phil Gilroy/Abbe Harvey</i></p>	<p><i>July 2018 (currently on-hold due to COVID-19)</i></p>
<p>Post 16 provision at Rhyl College (suggested for scrutiny during service challenge)</p> <p>Date tbc following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions</p>	<p><i>To examine the post 16 provision at Rhyl College</i></p>	<p><i>The development of an effective working relationship between the College and the Council to secure the delivery of courses required to support the delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal and improve the future prospects of the area's students</i></p>	<p>Rhyl College (and invite Geraint Davies &amp; John Evans – post 16 officer from DCC)</p>	<p><i>By SCVCG July 2020</i></p>

Information/Consultation Reports

Date	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
<p><b>September 2021 &amp; March 2022</b></p> <p>[Information]</p>	<p>Corporate Plan 2017/22 Q1 2021/22 &amp; Corporate Plan 2017/22 (Q3) 2021/20</p> <p>To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan</p>	<p>Ensuring that the Council meets its targets and delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents</p>	<p>Alan Smith/Iolo McGregor/Heidi Barton-Price</p>	<p>September 2018</p>
<p><b>Feb/May/Sept/November each year</b></p> <p>[Information]</p>	<p>Quarterly 'Your Voice' complaints performance to include social services complaints</p>	<p>To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints and identify areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. The report to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe;</li> <li>(ii) how services encourage feedback and use it to redesign or change the way they deliver services; and</li> <li>(iii) details of complaints which have been upheld or partially upheld and the lessons learnt from them.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Consideration of the information provided will assist the Committee to determine whether any issues merit detailed scrutiny</i></b></p>	<p>Kevin Roberts/Ann Lloyd/Phil Gilroy</p>	<p>November 2018</p>
<p>Information Report <b>(June 2020 rescheduled to December 2021)</b></p>	<p>Housing Services – Review of the effectiveness of the new working model for Housing Officers and the development of new ways of working with residents from the lessons learnt through COVID-19</p>	<p>To review the effectiveness and impact of the new Housing Officer model in delivering personal advice and support to tenants, particularly those who reside in older people's schemes</p>	<p>Geoff Davies</p>	<p>March 2019 (rescheduled May 2019 &amp; then Jan 2021 at officers request due</p>

				to COVID-19 pressures)
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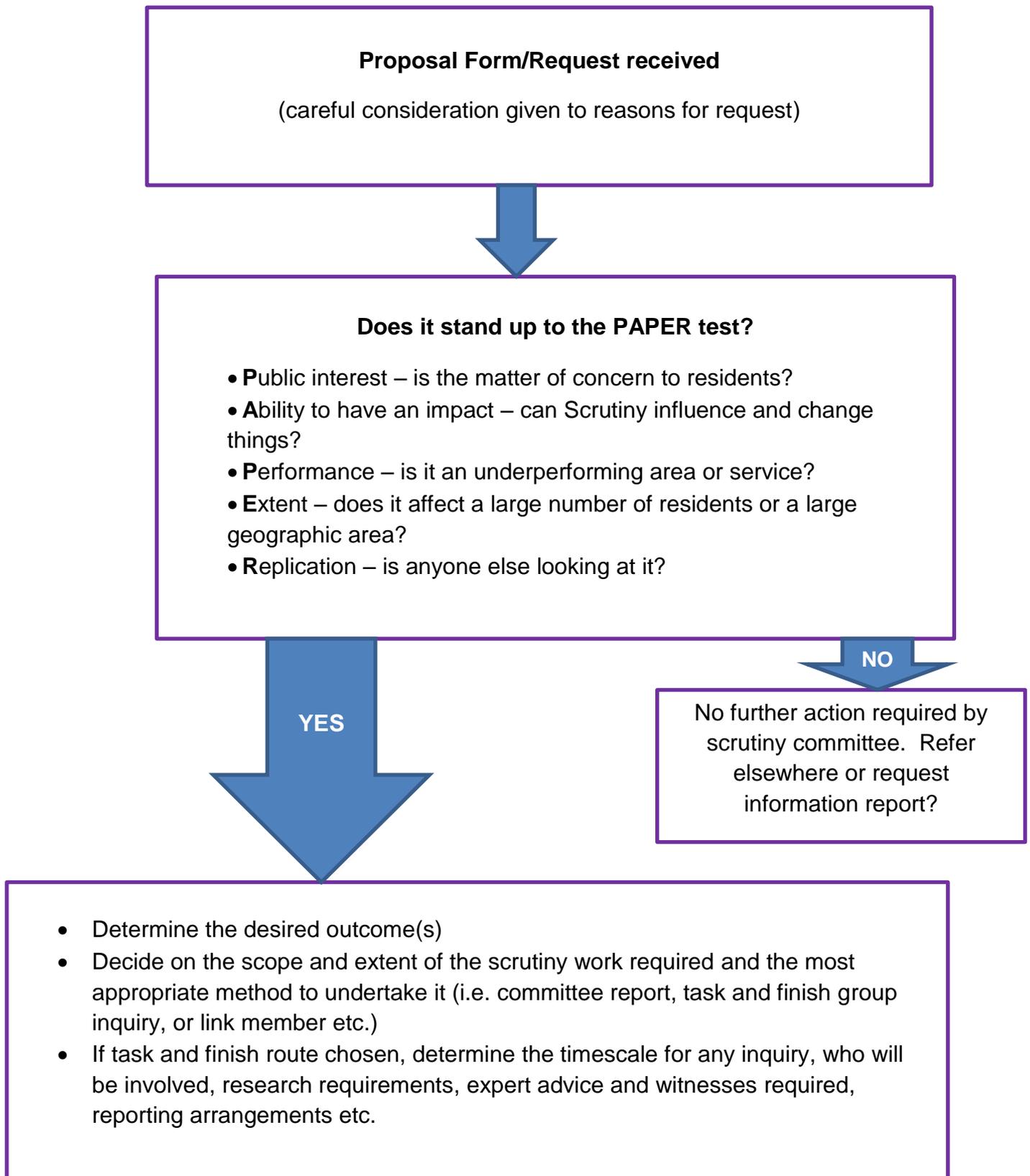
**Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines**

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
30 September	<b>16 September</b>	25 November	<b>11 November</b>		

Performance Scrutiny Work Programme.doc  
 Updated 29/06/2021 RhE

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

## Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
<b>27 July</b>	1	Llangollen 2020	To seek approval for proceeding with the Llangollen 2020 project	Yes	Councillor Brian Jones / Mike Jones
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>21 Sept</b>	1	External Enveloping and Energy Efficiency Framework for Council Housing	To award suppliers to the framework	Yes	Councillor Tony Thomas / Christopher Morris / Glyn Forsdick
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>19 Oct</b>	1	Replacement LDP revised Delivery Agreement and Covid Impact Assessment	To seek Cabinet approval for revisions to the Replacement LDP Delivery Agreement and accompanying Covid19	Yes	Councillor Mark Young / Angela Loftus

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			impact assessment for submission to Welsh Government		
	2	Replacement LDP - Report back on Preferred Strategy consultation	Replacement LDP Preferred Strategy consultation and seek approval for subsequent proposed amendments to the Preferred Strategy	Yes	Councillor Mark Young / Angela Loftus
	3	Queen's Buildings Rhyl Project	To seek approval to award a contract for the delivery of Phase 1 of the Queens Building Rhyl	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Russell Vaughan
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>23 Nov</b>	1	Corporate Plan Update: July to September 2021	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Iolo McGregor

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>14 Dec</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>July</i>	<b>13 July</b>	<i>September</i>	<b>7 September</b>	<i>October</i>	<b>5 October</b>

Updated 05/07/2021 - KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

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## Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
10 June 2021	<b>6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DONALDSON REPORT 'SUCCESSFUL FUTURES' – CURRICULUM FOR WALES</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> subject to the above observations to –</p> <p>(a) receive the information provided in the report and its associated appendices, along with that delivered during the course of the discussion, on the work undertaken to date by GwE in partnership with the Local Authority to support schools with the implementation of the New Curriculum for Wales following the publication of the Donaldson Report 'Successful Futures', and</p> <p>(b) request that a further progress report be presented to the Committee during the Spring of 2022 detailing the readiness of all educational establishments and staff to deliver the new curriculum from September 2022 onwards.</p>	<p>Lead Member along with local authority and GwE officers informed of the Committee's observations and recommendations.</p> <p>A progress report has been scheduled into the Committee's forward work programme for its meeting in March 2022 (see Appendix 1 attached)</p>
	<b>7. ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS TRANSFORMATION UPDATE JUNE 2021</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that –</p> <p>(a) subject to the above comments and observations to endorse the work undertaken thus far to ensure that the Local Authority and its schools are ready to meet the statutory requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018 that come into force in September 2021;</p> <p>(b) as part of its consideration it had read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 5), and</p> <p>(c) a report be presented to the Committee during the Spring of 2022 detailing the Council's compliance with the</p>	<p>Lead Member along with local authority and GwE officers informed of the Committee's observations and recommendations.</p> <p>A progress report has been scheduled into the Committee's forward work programme for its meeting in March 2022 (see Appendix 1 attached)</p>

		<i>statutory requirements set out in the Additional Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018.</i>	
	<b>8. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2020 TO 2021</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that, subject to the comments outlined above, to endorse the information on the Council's performance during 2020/21 and the projects it aimed to deliver during 2021/22 as detailed in the Annual Performance Review report.	Lead Member and officers advised of the Committee's comments. The report has since been presented to Cabinet on 29 June 2021 and approved by County Council on 6 July 2021.