

To: Members of the Cabinet

Date: 15 November 2023

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **CABINET** to be held at **10.00 am** on **TUESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2023** in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams  
Monitoring Officer

## **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**

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

### **4 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 12)**

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 24 October 2023 (copy enclosed).

**5 REVISION OF DENBIGHSHIRE'S GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT (GTAA) 2023 (Pages 13 - 114)**

To consider a report (**which contains a confidential appendix**) by Councillor Win Mullen-James, Lead Member for Local Development and Housing (copy enclosed) seeking Cabinet approval of the revised draft Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for submission to the Welsh Government.

**6 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE UPDATE: JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2023 (Pages 115 - 246)**

To consider a report by Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets (copy enclosed) presenting an update on the Council's performance against its Corporate Plan as at that the end of September 2023 (quarter 2).

**7 FINANCE REPORT (Pages 247 - 262)**

To consider a report by Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets (copy enclosed) detailing the latest financial position and progress against the agreed budget strategy.

**8 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 263 - 266)**

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

**MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis  
Councillor Gill German  
Councillor Elen Heaton  
Councillor Julie Matthews  
Councillor Jason McLellan

Councillor Barry Mellor  
Councillor Win Mullen-James  
Councillor Rhys Thomas  
Councillor Emrys Wynne

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

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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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## **CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by video conference on Tuesday, 24 October 2023 at 10.00 am.

## **PRESENT**

Councillors Jason McLellan, Leader and Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation; Gill German, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Education, Children and Families; Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets; Elen Heaton, Lead Member for Health and Social Care; Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities; Barry Mellor, Lead Member for the Environment and Transport; Win Mullen-James, Lead Member for Local Development and Planning, Rhys Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities, and Emrys Wynne, Lead Member for Welsh Language, Culture and Heritage

**Observers:** Councillors Karen Edwards, Bobby Feeley, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Brian Jones, Merfyn Parry and Andrea Tomlin

## **ALSO PRESENT**

Chief Executive (GB); Corporate Directors: Social Services and Education (NS), Governance and Business/Monitoring Officer (GW), and Environment and Economy TW; Heads of Service: Finance and Audit (SG) and Housing and Communities (LG); Joint Archive Service Manager (CB); Project Manager (SLP); Lead Officer – Corporate Property and Housing Stock (DL); Works Unit and Streetscene Manager (AC); Business Coordinator – Leader’s Office, and Committee Administrators (KEJ & SJ [Webcaster])

## **BEREAVEMENT**

The Leader reflected on the passing of Councillor Peter Prendergast, whom he had worked closely with as Chairman, and who would be greatly missed.

### **1 APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Jason McLellan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 – Storage Solution for our Archive Collections, because a close personal associate of his worked on the project in Flintshire County Council.

### **3 URGENT MATTERS**

No urgent matters had been raised.

## 4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 September 2023 were submitted.

Matters Arising – Item 5 Rhyl Business Improvement District (BID) Re-ballot – Councillor Barry Mellor asked whether the Leader could confirm that Rhyl Town Council had written to him expressing their concerns regarding factually incorrect comments expressed by Councillors Justine Evans and Brian Jones at the last Cabinet meeting relating to the Town Council's involvement with the Rhyl BID and whether any further action would be taken by the County Council in that regard.

The Leader confirmed he had received a letter from the Rhyl Town Clerk which had been shared with the Monitoring Officer given its contents. The Monitoring Officer confirmed receipt of a letter from Rhyl Town Council expressing concerns regarding some factual inaccuracies about the Town Council's involvement in the Rhyl BID and asserting the Town Council had representation from Rhyl BID at all appropriate times, and also expressed concern about an allegation made regarding the Town Council. The Monitoring Officer had spoken to the Town Clerk confirming that if there was a complaint about the Town Council it was not a matter for the County Council to investigate but if anyone had concerns regarding the Town Council, they should write to the Town Council so that they could deal with the matter. If the Town Council had any concern about the conduct of any individual member, they could take that matter up through the appropriate process if they so wished.

Councillor Brian Jones queried the position regarding the webcast of that meeting which had been removed from the Council's website. The Monitoring Officer advised of the requirement to broadcast the meeting but there was no requirement to retain the webcast on the website and he explained the circumstances in which a webcast could be removed, including concerns regarding personal information. A copy of the webcast had been retained and in the event of a freedom of information request, consideration would be given as to whether any exemptions applied to any of the information contained in the webcast. Councillor Jones indicated he may communicate further with the Chief Executive on the issue.

***RESOLVED*** that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

## 5 STORAGE SOLUTION FOR OUR ARCHIVE COLLECTIONS

Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this matter, the Leader Councillor Jason McLellan left the meeting for the duration of the item and the Deputy Leader Councillor Gill German took the Chair.

Councillor Emrys Wynne presented the report seeking Cabinet's support for the preferred option for the future storage of the Council's archive collections.

The Council had a statutory duty to collect, preserve and make accessible documents of historical importance. A joint archive service with Flintshire County Council (FCC) had previously been established and, given both Councils faced similar issues with buildings that were no longer fit for purpose for storing archive

material, there was a desire to find a joint solution. The problems associated with the archive storage at Ruthin Gaol were highlighted and the need for a sustainable solution going forward. The report set out the various options available and their viability. All options came with significant costs and potential risks but as the current arrangements were unsustainable and could not fulfil the Council's statutory duties there was not a "do nothing" option. Therefore, a case was made for the preferred option for a new joint archive building in Mold (subject to National Lottery Heritage Funding) and proposals for Ruthin Gaol to enhance the visitor offer.

Councillor Wynne advised that the previous Cabinet had approved a similar proposal in November 2020, but the funding bid had been unsuccessful. The Head of Housing and Communities advised Denbighshire's financial contribution would be just over £2m and would provide a resource costing £12m in total, provide more resilience for service delivery and better contribute towards the Council's corporate priorities; prudential borrowing for the project would not be required until 2026/27.

Cabinet carefully considered the report and options available together with the rationale behind the recommendations and preferred option going forward. Cabinet had discussed the issue on a number of occasions and challenged officers to fully explore all options, particularly given the significant costs associated with the project against a backdrop of unprecedented budget pressures facing the authority with difficult decisions needing to be made regarding reduced services and budget cuts in order to deliver a balanced budget. The point was also made that the dire financial situation facing local authorities had been due to direct decisions taken by the UK Government over a number of years. Cabinet accepted that archives was a statutory service and that a solution was required and given the work undertaken by officers and after careful consideration of the options put forward, agreed that the preferred option as set out was the right one in order to ensure a sustainable and resilient service in the future and enable the Council to meet its statutory duties in that regard. Other benefits were also noted as detailed within the Wellbeing Impact Assessment to expand the Ruthin Gaol site which would increase footfall and boost the local economy in Ruthin and the surrounding areas together with plans to widen and diversify the service audience benefitting local communities and education.

Main points of debate focused on the following –

- Councillor Gwyneth Ellis noted that FCC would own the new archive facility and queried why Denbighshire could not own 40% in line with their financial contribution. Officers advised that FCC owned the land on which the facility would be built and discussions to date had focused on FCC owning the asset and being responsible for its operation and maintenance with Denbighshire having access for a peppercorn rent for 25 years with the option to extend that period as part of a Heads of Terms agreement. However, in the event of a successful bid the potential for a shared asset could be discussed further
- plans to enhance the visitor offer in Ruthin Gaol were discussed and assurances given regarding the specific intentions going forward which would be developed as a separate project alongside the joint archive facility, including retaining an archive presence on site and expanding that provision; it was suggested the wording of recommendation 3.4 could be strengthened to clarify that element

- it was confirmed that FCC's Cabinet had agreed the proposal within their last administration and confirmed their commitment for their contribution in January
- elaborated on the difficulties if the bid was unsuccessful, including risks to the accreditation status and having to find alternative sites for archive storage which potentially could be outside of the area, and transport costs for both storage and retrieving archive material resulting in significant additional cost.

The Deputy Leader appreciated the hard work in developing the project and acknowledged the statutory responsibilities of the Council and the wider benefits of the project which together with Levelling Up funding would improve the economic future of Ruthin and the wider area. It was frustrating that the level of investment required came at a time of severe financial difficulties facing the authority.

The debate was opened up to non-Cabinet members. Councillors Bobby Feeley and Merfyn Parry spoke in support of the report recommendations which would secure the future of the archive service in the event of a successful bid and meet the Council's legal duty in that regard. Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts was also supportive of the investment in Ruthin but queried the principle and prioritisation of investment given the potential cuts to other services such as libraries.

The Lead Member and officers responded to questions as follows –

- early indications were good regarding the likely success of the bid and there had been an open and supportive dialogue in that regard
- in the event the bid was unsuccessful a further review of the options would need to be carried out and a report back to Cabinet for a decision on the way forward
- highlighted the findings of the options appraisal and significant costs associated with other options which would likely increase over time
- referred to assurances sought at the Cabinet meeting in November 2020 regarding plans for enhancing the heritage attraction of Ruthin Gaol, service provision for communities and the role of libraries and the offer for schools, all of which were part of the current proposal including retaining an archive presence on site to be further enhanced through outreach work within communities and schools to extend the service with wider community access.

Councillor Rhys Thomas reiterated that the Council had a statutory duty and no choice but to approve an archive storage solution at significant cost and therefore it could not be compared with potential service cuts in other areas.

Councillor Emrys Wynne proposed an amendment to report recommendation 3.4 in order to clarify the expected archive presence on site, seconded by Councillor Gwyneth Ellis. Upon being put to the vote it was subsequently –

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet –

- (a) *support Option 2 as the preferred option, i.e. (subject to a successful bid, see (b) below) to build a new joint archive facility on the Theatr Clwyd campus in Mold to relocate our archive collections from Ruthin Gaol and develop a community-based activity plan to reach all communities across*



*Denbighshire. A detailed summary of the available options had been provided at Appendix A to the report;*

- (b) authorise officers to submit a joint funding bid with Flintshire County Council (FCC) to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Wales, seeking a capital grant value of £7m to fund a new purpose-build net carbon zero building on the Theatr Clwyd campus;*
- (c) allocate £2,052,358 of Denbighshire County Council capital funding as our match towards the new joint archive facility, subject to the NLHF funding bid being successful;*
- (d) support the preparation of plans to enhance the visitor offer within Ruthin Gaol, including retaining an archive presence on site, and that the service will be open five days a week with digital service available throughout the whole time and an archivist service on at least one of those days, and*
- (e) confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix C to the report) as part of its consideration.*

At this point (11.10 am) the meeting adjourned for a refreshment break.

## **6 SALT BARNNS (SOUTH) LON PARCWR AND CORWEN**

Councillor Barry Mellor presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to progress the Salt Barnns (South) project to the tendering and procurement stage.

Proposals had been developed under two separate projects to facilitate the design and build of two purpose-built salt storage facilities, one for Lon Parcwr depot, Ruthin and one for Corwen depot as well as improving welfare facilities by replacing the temporary Portakabin style buildings at Corwen. The necessary approvals and funding had already been awarded for each individual project, but as the two projects had since been grouped together for tendering purposes as design and build projects, the total value of the contract value exceeded £2m and therefore Cabinet approval was required to progress the project to the procurement stage.

The Works Unit and Streetscene Manager provided an overview of the report and rationale behind the projects in order to address the current environmental issues relating to salt storage in the depots and much needed health and safety and staff welfare facility improvement. The benefits of combining the two individual salt barn projects into one project for tendering purposes was explained to ensure better value for money and a more cost-effective solution for the Council.

Officers responded to questions from Cabinet members as follows –

- confirmed that separate funding bids had been approved previously for the two projects, by the Strategic Investment Group and Cabinet, with funding already allocated for the projects from the Horizon Scanning Capital Priorities Fund
- explained that operations from the Corwen site had been suspended due to salt run off into the drainage system with additives being traced back to the Council

by Natural Resources Wales. Since then, all gritting procedures in the south of the county had been operated from Lon Parcwr which had resulted in increased travel and non-productive time also leading to increased carbon emissions

- advised that some potential pollution issues in terms of the River Dee had been raised by Natural Resources Wales with a number of tests carried out at the time containing traces of salt within some of those tests.

Cabinet noted that the funding had been previously approved and allocated for the projects without the need for additional borrowing or creating a budget pressure going forward. Cabinet supported the case made both in terms of the need for fit for purpose salt storage facilities ensuring compliance with environmental standards and effective service delivery together with suitable welfare facilities for staff.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet –

- (a) *approves the tendering and procurement of the project in order to develop new buildings and facilitate the safe and correct storage of salt for the purpose of winter maintenance operations, which are servicing the south of the county along with accommodation and welfare and equipment storage improvements at the Corwen site, and*
- (b) *confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix A to the report) as part of its consideration.*

## **7 FINANCE REPORT**

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis presented the report detailing the latest financial position and progress against the agreed budget strategy. The report also highlighted the funding position with regard to Nant Clwyd Y Dre Lord's Garden Wall repairs scheme and sought approval for new salt storage facilities at Kinmel Park Depot.

A summary of the Council's financial position was provided as follows –

- the net revenue budget for 2023/24 was £250.793m (£233.696m in 2022/23)
- an overspend of £3.446m was forecast for service and corporate budgets
- highlighted current risks and assumptions relating to corporate budgets and individual service areas
- detailed savings and efficiencies and increases in fees and charges (£8.172m)
- provided a general update on the Housing Revenue Account, Treasury Management, Capital Plan and major projects.

The Head of Finance and Audit guided members through the detail of the report. The increase in the forecasted overspend on service and corporate budgets from £3.119m last month to £3.446m was highlighted mainly due to additional pressures in Social Care and Housing and Environmental budgets offset by savings in the Capital Financing budget. Whilst the budget mitigation reserve could be used to cover the overspend in the current year, it would reduce the resources available to meet unforeseen pressures in future years. In response to a question from Councillor Rhys Thomas regarding the decreased balance in the Housing Revenue Account, it was explained there was no minimum requirement to be held in reserve

but historically balances of £1m had been retained. The amount held in reserves was reviewed on a regular basis and as part of the Housing Stock Business Plan.

Cabinet's attention was drawn to the use of contingency funding to cover the projected overspend on the Nant Clwyd y Dre Lord's Garden Wall repairs scheme due to a number of elements including an archaeological watching brief extension as a result of significant Roman finds and health and safety requirements. Cabinet was also asked to approve new salt storage facilities at Kinmel Park Depot in Bodelwddan in order to ensure fit for purpose facilities and compliance with environmental standards in line with approvals under the previous report item.

The Leader advised that it was the Head of Finance and Audit's last meeting as S.151 Officer and thanked him for all his ongoing hard work. The budget position was the most pressing issue facing the authority with difficult decisions ahead and all were working hard to deliver a balanced budget for the next financial year.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet –

- (a) *note the budgets set for 2023/24 and progress against the agreed strategy;*
- (b) *approve the installation of new salt storage facilities at Kinmel Park Depot in Bodelwyddan, as detailed in Section 6.9 and Appendix 5 to the report, and*
- (c) *note the use of the capital programme contingency to fund the projected overspend on the Nant Clwyd y Dre Lord's Garden Wall repairs scheme, as detailed in Section 6.10 of the report.*

## **8 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet forward work programme was presented for members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet's forward work programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.45 am.

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<b>Report to</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of meeting</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> November 2023
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	Councillor Win Mullen-James Lead Member for Lead Member for Local Development and Planning Angela Loftus, Strategic Planning & Housing Manager
<b>Head of Service</b>	Emlyn Jones Head of Planning, Public Protection & Countryside Services
<b>Report author</b>	Kimberley Mason, Corporate Project Manager
<b>Title</b>	Revision of Denbighshire's Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2023)

## 1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires that an assessment of accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers must be undertaken and submitted to Welsh Government (WG) every 5 years. The Council undertook the assessment between August and October 2021, and this was submitted to WG on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2021.
- 1.2. Following Cabinet approval and WG submission of the previous Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), a family with an existing need who had previously declined to participate, contacted the Council, and asked to now be included.
- 1.3. Following a report to Cabinet Briefing on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023, it was agreed that the assessment should be reviewed, the additional family interviewed, and their data included in a revision to be resubmitted to WG. A Task and Finish (T&F) Group was established to support work on the new assessment, and they presented their report to Communities Scrutiny Committee in October 2023.

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

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to present the revised draft GTAA for Denbighshire as attached as Appendix 1 and to seek approval from Cabinet for re-submission to WG.

- 2.2. Local authorities are permitted to submit a revised GTAA until WG approval and as of October 2023, WG has not yet provided any feedback to any local authorities in Wales and no clear indication as to when this is likely to occur has been provided either.

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

- 3.1. That Cabinet confirms support for the approach adopted for the delivery of revision of Denbighshire's GTAA as being robust and in line with WG guidance.
- 3.2. That Cabinet approves Denbighshire's revised GTAA for submission to WG.
- 3.3. Delegate authority for the Lead Member Local Development and Planning to agree any minor editorial changes required to the draft GTAA, prior to submission to WG.
- 3.4. That Cabinet confirms that it has read, understood, and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 4 as part of its consideration. This was completed prior to the first assessment submission in 2021 and has been reviewed in 2023.

### **4. Report details**

#### **Background**

- 4.1. The Housing Act (Wales) 2014 places a legal duty on Local Authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers (Section 101), produce a report detailing how the assessment was carried out and submit to WG for approval of the authority's assessment (Section 102) and subsequently meet those needs (Section 103). An up to date GTAA is also a requirement for the replacement Local Development Plan (LDP).
- 4.2. WG have published detailed statutory guidance '*Undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments*'<sup>1</sup>. WG will assess the completed GTAA against this methodology. The GTAA is required to identify accommodation needs in Denbighshire, in terms of permanent residential and transit needs. It is not required to identify locations for sites to meet any needs identified.
- 4.3. The WG methodology allows for external consultants to be engaged to undertake the Accommodation Needs Assessment. Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned to undertake the assessment on behalf of Denbighshire County Council and Conwy County

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<sup>1</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/undertaking-gypsy-and-traveller-accommodation-assessments.pdf>

Borough Council. Separate reports have been developed for each authority and they have carried out the additional work at this time for Denbighshire.

- 4.4. A robust project management approach was re-established in 2022 with a Member-led Project Board, with the Lead Member working with Senior Officers to direct this work ensuring Member involvement, openness, and transparency.

### **Task and Finish Group**

- 4.5. Elected Members and Scrutiny Committee had previously raised concerns regarding the level of consultation with Gypsy and Traveller communities and the need for early engagement with Members. Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to establish a T&F Group to provide support to the development of the new GTAA and this group was re-established in March 2023 to support with the additional work for the GTAA revision. The T&F Group's Terms of Reference are attached as Appendix 2.

### **Denbighshire GTAA 2023 Findings and Conclusions**

- 4.6. A wide range of methods were used to raise awareness of the GTAA and to engage with the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) community in line with the Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan when the initial work was carried out in 2021. For the revised assessment, the consultants, ORS contacted the additional family for inclusion in the resubmission, assessing their needs using the survey questionnaire provided within the WG methodology. ORS also contacted the existing families interviewed in 2021 to ensure their circumstances had not changed and that their information was updated accordingly.
- 4.7. The revised draft Denbighshire GTAA concludes that:

Based upon the evidence presented in ORS' study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the study period (2023/24 - 2028/29) is for **16 permanent residential pitches**.

Based on the need by 2033, the end of the Denbighshire replacement LDP period, is for a further **2 permanent residential pitches** for future household growth.

This gives a total need for the whole period across Denbighshire for **18 permanent residential pitches** which is **an increase of 6 permanent residential pitches from the previous GTAA completed in 2021.**

There is **no evidence of need for a permanent transit site**, due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, short term nature of these encampments and the fact that

interviews with Gypsies and Travellers did not identify there was a need for permanent transit provision locally.

4.8. If approved by Cabinet, the next step will be to submit the revised GTAA to WG for its approval.

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

Completion of the GTAA will contribute to Denbighshire's Well-being and Equality Objective: *A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs* by identifying the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community.

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

Consultants were procured jointly with Conwy County Borough Council to undertake the GTAA. Denbighshire's commitment of £5,500 has been met from the LDP budget. Any costs incurred from this additional work will be funded through the original commission and the LDP budget.

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

A Well-being Impact Assessment was carried out for the project in 2021 and reviewed in 2023 for this additional work and is attached as Appendix 4. This concludes that the overall impact was and remains positive.

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

8.1. The T&F Group reviewed the GTAA data analysis and summary findings at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 and agreed that they were satisfied that the WG methodology had been applied appropriately to the analysis of need.

8.3. The T&F Group concluded that the arrangements and process undertaken by the group had worked well and requested that the same group membership be involved in the site selection for pitches, when required, in the next phase of this project.

8.4. The T&F Group reported back to Communities Scrutiny Committee with their final report and the revised draft GTAA was considered at Communities Scrutiny Committee on 19 October 2023. Scrutiny endorsed the conclusion of the T&F Group that the WG methodology has been applied appropriately to the analysis of need, that the approach adopted for the delivery of



Denbighshire's GTAA was robust and in line with WG guidance and recommended to Cabinet that the revised draft GTAA should be approved for re-submission to WG.

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

As set out in Section 6, Denbighshire's commitment of £5,500 has been met from the LDP budget. It is welcome that the initial costs of Consultants have been taken account of within existing budgets.

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

A number of risks to the project have been identified and have been included in the full project business case risk assessment. A lack of political support has been identified as a significant risk which has led to the engagement of the Leader and Lead Member in the project from the start. The establishment of the T&F Group and reports to Scrutiny have aimed to ensure wider Member involvement in the project.

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

[Section 101 - Housing \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)

[Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000](#)

[Section 7.4.1 and Section 7.4.2 \(d\) of the Council's Constitution](#)

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1** - Revised GTAA for Denbighshire 2023 [Redacted]

**Appendix 2** – Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference 2023

**Appendix 3** - Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Task and Finish Group Report October 2023

**Appendix 4** – GTAA Well-Being Impact Assessment 2021 (reviewed in 2023)

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# Denbighshire County Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Update

Final Report  
October 2023



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**Note:** This GTAA Report updates the one that was published in November 2021 due to changes to the circumstances on a number of sites and additional interviews that have now been completed with households living in bricks and mortar and households living on unauthorised encampments.

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# 1. Executive Summary

## Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 The primary objective of this (2023) Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Update is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy and Traveller<sup>1</sup> accommodation in Denbighshire.
- 1.2 The reasons for the update are that it has been brought to the attention of the Council that there have been changes to the occupation status on some of the sites that were included in the previous GTAA, and an extended family who declined to take part in an interview previously have now agreed to be interviewed. The update is only to the fieldwork and overall assessment of need.
- 1.3 The GTAA provides a robust and credible evidence base which can be used to aid in the understanding of, and the provision of, Gypsy and Traveller pitches and plots, and potential transit provision, for the Denbighshire Local Development Plan (LDP) period to 2033. The outcomes of this GTAA will replace the outcomes of the previous GTAA that was published in November 2021 and submitted to Welsh Government for approval in December 2021 as it now included a more up-to-date assessment of need.
- 1.4 The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Denbighshire through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder engagement and engagement with members of the Travelling Community. In addition, during the preparation of the GTAA that was published in November 2021 a range of local stakeholders were invited to sit on a Project Steering Group; a wider GTAA Project Group was established; and a Task and Finish Group was established. An online survey was also distributed to all Elected Members, and City, Town, and Community Councils.
- 1.5 Following preliminary engagement with the Council, a total of 15 interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites, unauthorised encampments, and living in bricks and mortar in Denbighshire. This represents a response rate of 100% of identified households. No Travelling Showpeople yards were identified in Denbighshire. Engagement was completed with neighbouring local authorities and other stakeholders during the preparation of the 2021 GTAA to discuss potential need for transit provision. In addition, the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Liaison Officer sought to engage with households living on encampments.
- 1.6 The baseline date for the revised GTAA is **August 2023**.

## Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.7 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the GTAA period (2023/24 - 2027/28), and for the full LDP period to 2033.
- 1.8 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the GTAA Study period to 2027/28 is for **16 pitches** and need for the remainder of the LDP period to 2033 is for a further **2 pitches**. This gives a total need to the end of the LDP period to 2033 for **18 pitches**. These figures should be seen as the projected amount of provision

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 2 for the planning definition of a Traveller in Wales.

which is necessary to meet the statutory obligations towards identifiable needs of the population arising in the area. These figures are made up from a combination of unauthorised pitches; unauthorised encampments; concealed/doubled-up households; movement from bricks and mortar; and new household formation.

- <sup>1.9</sup> A detailed breakdown which sets out the components that make up this identified need, together with any other issues that have been taken into consideration can be found in **Chapter 6** of this report.

### Plot Needs - Travelling Showpeople

- <sup>1.10</sup> There were no Travelling Showpeople identified living in Denbighshire so there is no current or future need for plots over the LDP period to 2033. The Council should however monitor any future approaches for planning permission from Travelling Showpeople and have in place appropriate Criteria-Based LDP policies to deal with any future applications.

### Transit Recommendations

- <sup>1.11</sup> Discussions with local stakeholders, neighbouring local authorities, and analysis of records of unauthorised encampments, confirmed that there are instances of unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire, but that these are normally Travellers passing through for work purposes given that the area is on the main A55 travelling corridor across North Wales for Travellers coming to and from Ireland on the ferry from Holyhead. This is also evidenced by anecdotal information of repeat visits from the same households at similar times of the year.
- <sup>1.12</sup> There have been other localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Denbighshire to attend weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.
- <sup>1.13</sup> The outcomes from the household interviews and discussions with stakeholders did not identify that there was a need for permanent transit provision locally, although there were discussions about a need for more transit provision across Wales.
- <sup>1.14</sup> It is understood that the Council have recently invested in employing a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Liaison Officer post as well as formalising a more co-ordinated process for the management of unauthorised encampments. This is understood to be to ensure early engagement with families travelling through Denbighshire, and to provide a coordinated approach to ensure that welfare checks and facilities such as bins and toilets are provided. This resulted in engagement with a total of 5 households living on encampments during the GTAA fieldwork period and none expressed a specific need for formal transit provision. This role is also intended to build better relations between the Council and the Travelling Community. Discussions with the Council have concluded that this approach could be developed further to form the basis of a more comprehensive managed approach to include considerations of options such as negotiated stopping.
- <sup>1.15</sup> Despite the 2016 GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Denbighshire, more recent evidence suggests that this is no longer the case and that alternative approaches should be considered. As such it is recommended that **there is not a need at this time for the Council to provide a transit site** in Denbighshire due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the short-term transient nature of these encampments.



<sup>1.16</sup> It is also recommended that the Council should continue to monitor the number of unauthorised encampments and consider the use of short-term toleration (including negotiated stopping arrangements) to deal with short-term transient stops. This management-based approach should also include consideration about whether to provide toilets, water and refuse facilities. There are a number of examples across Wales and England where management-based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments have been successful. A good example can be found at [www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk](http://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk). There are also many examples where local authorities are taking a more strategic and regional approach towards addressing transit issues including in Essex, Leicestershire, the former Northamptonshire, and Hampshire.

## 2. Background and Policy Context

### The Study

- <sup>2.1</sup> Opinion Research Services (ORS) were appointed by Denbighshire County Council (the Council) as independent consultants to update the 2021 GTAA in June 2023 for the new LDP period to 2033.
- <sup>2.2</sup> The study provides an evidence base to enable the Council to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies and Travellers under Part 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, and to support the Denbighshire Replacement Local Development Plan (2018-33). The Act requires Local Authorities to undertake a GTAA at least every 5 years, although Local Authorities have flexibility to undertake GTAAs more frequently if a material change in the level of need in the area has been identified. The Council published a GTAA in November 2021 (covering the period up to 2033) and submitted it to Welsh Government in December 2021. Welsh Government wrote to all Local Planning Authorities in September 2019 to confirm those undertaking an LDP Review must ensure the GTAA establishes an evidence base for Gypsy and Traveller needs across the entire plan period. Welsh Government also confirmed that this may necessitate undertaking of a new GTAA (and providing appropriate site allocations, where relevant) prior to the statutory Deposit consultation to ensure plans can be found sound through the examination process and are able to be adopted. Denbighshire commenced a review of their adopted LDP (2006-2021) in 2018.
- <sup>2.3</sup> This GTAA provides an assessment of need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Denbighshire to fulfil these requirements, updating the previous GTAA published in 2021. It is a robust and credible evidence base which can be used to aid in the understanding of, and the provision of Gypsy and Traveller pitches and plots, and also to support the Denbighshire Replacement LDP (2018-2033).
- <sup>2.4</sup> We would note at the outset that the study covers the needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople, but for ease of reference we have referred to the study as a GTAA.
- <sup>2.5</sup> The baseline date for the revised GTAA is **August 2023**.

### Legislation and Guidance

#### Welsh Government Circular 005/2018

- <sup>2.6</sup> Welsh Government Circular 005/2018 provides updated guidance on the planning aspects of identifying sustainable sites for Gypsies and Travellers. It also outlines how planning authorities and Gypsies and Travellers can work together to achieve this aim. It supersedes advice contained in Circular 30/2007 “Planning for gypsy and traveller caravan sites”, Circular 78/91 “Travelling Showpeople” and Circular 76/94 “Gypsy Sites Policy and Unauthorised Camping”.
- <sup>2.7</sup> The Circular include guidance on a range of issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers including:
- » Definition of Travellers
  - » Gypsies and Travellers – A Context
  - » Duty to Provide Sites
  - » Providing the Evidence Base

- » Regional Working
- » Development Plans
- » Major Development Projects
- » Designated Areas
- » Planning Applications
- » Enforcement
- » Appeals
- » Human Rights and Equality of Opportunity
- » Monitoring Planning Applications

## Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

<sup>2.8</sup> In relation to Gypsies and Travellers, Welsh Government Circular 005/2018 sets out that:

*7. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets a framework for local authorities across Wales to ensure the ‘sustainable development principle’ (meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) is met. Section 4 of the Act puts in place a number of well-being goals which authorities are to seek to achieve in order to meet this principle. These goals include achieving ‘a Wales of cohesive communities’, containing attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities, and ‘a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language’, containing a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language.*

*8. Housing is a fundamental issue that affects the lives of people across Wales, including our Gypsy and Traveller communities. The Welsh Government seeks to ensure a wide choice of accommodation is available to meet the needs of all members of the community. It is reflective of the Government’s commitment to ensure equality of opportunity for all sections of the community and in this instance, Gypsies and Travellers should have equal access to culturally appropriate accommodation as all other members of the community.*

## Housing (Wales) Act 2014

<sup>2.9</sup> Part 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (the Act) sets out that a *local housing authority must, in each review period, carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to its area.*

<sup>2.10</sup> Section 102 of the Act requires that local authorities must prepare a report which they must submit to Welsh Ministers for approval that:

- » details how the assessment was carried out.
- » contains a summary of:
  - the consultation it carried out in connection with the assessment, and
  - the responses (if any) it received to that consultation.
- » details the accommodation needs identified by the assessment.

<sup>2.11</sup> Once approved the local housing authority must publish the assessment.

- 2.12 If need is identified in the GTAA report, Section 103 of the Act requires that a local authority must exercise its powers in Section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 so far as may be necessary to meet those needs.
- 2.13 Section 106 of the Act sets out that local authorities should have regard to any guidance given by Welsh Ministers. Guidance on Undertaking GTAAs was published by Welsh Government in May 2015 and this Guidance remains in place in 2020.
- 2.14 The GTAA Guidance covers the following issues:
- » Why a specific GTAA is required?
  - » What should be produced?
  - » Who needs to be consulted?
  - » What data sources need to be reviewed?
  - » Understanding the culture of Gypsy and Traveller communities.
  - » How to identify and communicate with Gypsies and Travellers?
  - » How to design, manage and undertake a GTAA?
  - » Support with partnership working and working regionally.
  - » Exploring specialist surveys, techniques, and questions to be used.
  - » How accommodation 'need' is assessed?
  - » Submitting reports to Welsh Ministers.
  - » How to make provision for identified need?
- 2.15 Section 108 of the Act sets out that:
- » **Accommodation needs** - includes, but is not limited to, needs with respect to the provision of sites on which mobile homes may be stationed.
  - » **Gypsies and Travellers** – means persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependent's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such), and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.
  - » **Mobile home** - has the meaning given by section 60 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.

## Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013

- 2.16 The GTAA Guidance sets out the requirement that local authorities have to meet a legal duty to exercise their functions to provide mobile home pitches to meet any identified needs. These are set out in Section 60 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.
- 2.17 In this Act "*mobile home*" means:
- » *Any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle designed or adapted for human habitation but does*

*not include any railway rolling stock which is for the time being on rails forming part of a railway system, or any tent.*

- » *A structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is composed of not more than 2 sections separately constructed and designed to be assembled on a site by means of bolts, clamps, or other devices, and is, when assembled, physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer).*

## Welsh Government Designing and Managing Gypsy and Traveller Sites Guidance

- <sup>2.18</sup> As well as publishing guidance on undertaking GTAA's in May 2015 the Welsh Government also published additional guidance on designing and managing Gypsy and Traveller sites in order to assist local authorities in meeting need for Gypsies and Travellers. These two documents are intended as a guide to assist Local Authorities in providing appropriate services at reasonable cost to the public purse for Gypsies and Travellers living on residential sites in Wales. They contain practical guidance to assist local authorities to ensure sites are fit-for-purpose, and how best to manage public Traveller sites. The guidance is not statutory. However, it is anticipated by Welsh Government that the guidance will help local authorities and others in the development, improvement and management of Gypsy and Traveller sites, and will form part of the consideration of the Welsh Government in assessing applications for Sites Capital Grant funding in relation to Gypsy and Traveller sites.

## Denbighshire Local Development Plan (2006-2021), Adopted 2013

- <sup>2.19</sup> The Denbighshire LDP (2006-2021) was adopted by Denbighshire County Council on the 4th of June 2013 and became operative immediately. The adopted LDP superseded and replaced the earlier Denbighshire Unitary Development Plan.
- <sup>2.20</sup> The LDP includes one policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers – Policy BSC 10 Gypsy & Traveller Sites.

### **Policy BSC 10 – Gypsy & Traveller Sites**

Proposals for gypsy and traveller caravan sites (including mixed residential and business sites) will be permitted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) the site is situated outside the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Barriers and the Pontcysyllte Canal and Aqueduct World Heritage site (including the buffer zone); and
- ii) the site is located within or on the outskirts of an established settlement boundary with access to a range of facilities/services (including schools), public transport and main transport routes; and,
- iii) the proposal makes suitable provision for on-site play space, storage, and parking; and,
- iv) the proposal would not be detrimental to the amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties.

Sites in other locations will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that sites within or on the outskirts of an established settlement boundaries are not available and all the above criteria are met.

The Council will identify permanent and transit caravan sites for gypsies and travellers should an unmet need be identified for Denbighshire in the emerging North West Wales Local Housing Market Assessment.

## Definition of Key Terms

<sup>2.21</sup> The 2015 GTAA Guidance contains common definitions that have been used in the Guidance and that will also be used in the GTAA Report. These can be found in **Appendix A**.

## 3. Analysis of Existing Data

- 3.1 The purpose of this section of the GTAA is to set out current information relating to the Gypsy and Traveller population in Denbighshire including previous assessments of need, socio-demographic data, caravan count data and the current provision of accommodation.

### Current and Previous GTAAs

#### Denbighshire GTAA 2021

- 3.2 The most recent GTAA for Denbighshire was completed by ORS and the Final GTAA report was published in November 2021. Based upon the evidence presented in the study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the GTAA plan period was for 8 pitches, and for the remainder of the GTAA plan period for a further 4 pitches. This gave a total need for the whole GTAA plan period of 12 pitches.
- 3.3 It was also recommended that there was no need for the Council to provide any transit pitches in Denbighshire.
- 3.4 Given that there were no Travelling Showpeople identified as living in Denbighshire, no assessment of need was undertaken.

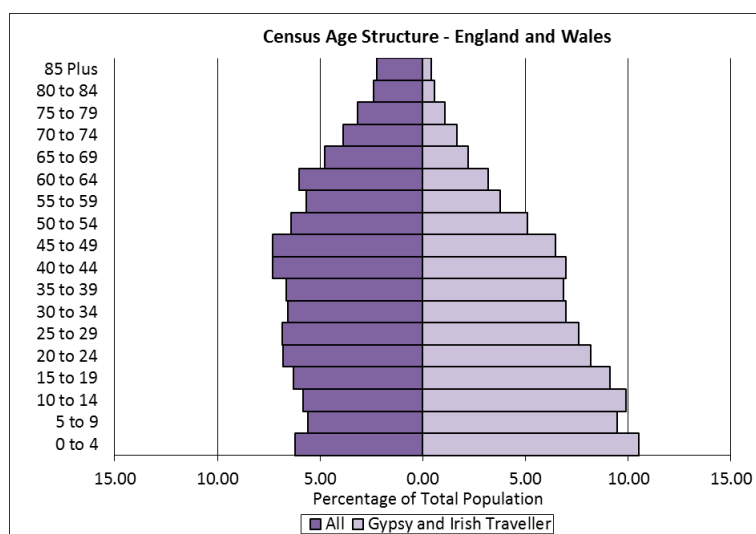
### Population Data – 2011 and 2021 Census

- 3.5 Analysis of 2021 Census data relating to the Gypsy and Traveller population identified a total of 23 households who identified as Gypsies or Irish Travellers living in Denbighshire, and a further 14 households who identified as Roma (a new ethnicity category that was included in the 2021 Census) – representing less than 0.08% of households as a whole. It is likely that this could be an under-estimate given the accepted lower than average levels of response to the Census from the members of the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 3.6 Detailed analysis of the 2021 Census has not yet been completed, but data from the 2011 Census does identify some significant demographic differences when compared to the population as a whole. These are important in terms of explaining the higher rate of new household formation for Gypsy and Traveller households compared with the settled population. In summary the 2011 Census shows that nationally for England and Wales:
- » Just under half of Gypsy or Irish Traveller households had dependent children (45%), compared to 29% for England and Wales as a whole.
  - » The median age of Gypsies or Irish Travellers was 26 years compared to the national median of 39 years.
  - » Just 6% of the Gypsy or Irish Traveller population were aged 65 years and over compared to a national figure of 16%.
  - » Gypsies or Irish Travellers below 20 years of age accounted for 39% of the population compared to a national figure of 24%.
  - » Gypsies or Irish Travellers below 10 years of age accounted for 20% of the population compared to a national figure of 12%.

- » Gypsies or Irish Travellers had the lowest proportion of people rating their health as good or very good at 70% compared to a national figure of 81%.

3.7 The chart below shows the age structure for the whole population (All) and the Gypsy or Irish Traveller population in England and Wales. This shows that there is a higher proportion of Gypsy or Irish Traveller children and younger adults, and significantly lower proportions of those aged 50 and over. This is due to higher birth rates and lower life expectancy for the Gypsy and Traveller population. Unfortunately, due to the low numbers of Gypsies and Irish Travellers identified in the 2011 Census living in Denbighshire it is not possible to make any meaningful comparisons at a local level.

**Figure 1 - Comparison of Census Age Structure (2011 Census)**



## Caravan Count Data

- 3.8 Another source of published information on the Gypsy and Traveller population is the Welsh Government Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count which uses data provided by Local Authorities and is published twice a year.
- 3.9 This is a physical count of the number of caravans on both authorised and unauthorised sites across Wales. As this count is of caravans and not households, it makes it very difficult to interpret and use for a study such as this because it does not count pitches, resident households, or household demographics. The published count data is merely a snapshot in time conducted by the Local Authority on a specific day in January and July, and therefore any unauthorised sites or encampments which occur on other dates are not recorded. Likewise, any caravans that are away from sites on the day of the count will not be included. The count also does not seek to determine the ethnic status of the occupiers of caravans.
- 3.10 However, the data captured in the Caravan Count does give an indication of the number of sites, and authorised and unauthorised caravans in each local authority, and can be useful in supporting the determination of any transit needs and identifying year on year trends to support an assessment of need.
- 3.11 More recently in Wales a live system has been put in place which allows local authorities to upload details of encampments when they occur throughout the year.
- 3.12 The latest Gypsy and Traveller Caravan County data for Wales is from January 2023 and was published in April 2023.



- 3.13 The latest time series statistical data available published on StatsWales is from April 2020. Analysis of the Caravan Count Data for Denbighshire between January 2010 and July 2021 shows that there have been 2 unauthorised sites recorded in recent years, with 3 tolerated caravans on 1 site and 3 non-tolerated caravans on the other site. It is understood from the Council that these are the 2 unauthorised sites that were identified in the November 2021 GTAA.
- 3.14 Data from the January 2023 Caravan Count identified a total of 3 caravans on unauthorised sites that are tolerated, and 3 caravans on unauthorised sites that are not tolerated, on 2 unauthorised sites.
- 3.15 In addition, details of all recorded encampments from 2014 were provided by the Council and were analysed to help to determine whether there was any need for transit provision. See Chapter 6 for further details.

## Current Accommodation Provision

- 3.16 One of the main considerations of this study is provide evidence to support the provision of pitches and plots to meet the current and future accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire. In general, a pitch is an area which is large enough for one household to occupy and typically contains enough space for one or two caravans but can vary in size. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies and Travellers. For Travelling Showpeople, the most common descriptions used are a plot for the space occupied by one household and a yard for a collection of plots which are typically exclusively occupied by Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.17 The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of a Gypsy and Traveller site is a publicly provided residential site, which is provided by a Local Authority or by a Housing Association. Pitches on public sites can usually be obtained through signing up to a waiting list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the tenants (similar to social housing).
- 3.18 The alternatives to public residential sites are private residential sites and yards for Gypsies and Travellers. These result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on some private sites that are run on a commercial basis. Therefore, these two forms of accommodation are the equivalent to private ownership and renting for those who live in bricks and mortar housing. Generally, the majority of Travelling Showpeople yards are privately owned and managed.
- 3.19 The Gypsy and Traveller population also has other forms of sites due to its mobile nature. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as a residential site, except that there is a restricted period of residence which can vary from a period of weeks to a period of months. An alternative to a transit site is an emergency stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time someone can stay on it but has much more limited facilities. Another alternative is a Negotiated Stopping Agreement that allows Gypsy and Traveller families to set up short-term camps as long as they agree to certain conditions. These are designed to accommodate, for a temporary period, Gypsies and Travellers whilst they travel. A number of authorities also operate an accepted encampments policy where short-term stopovers are tolerated without enforcement action.
- 3.20 Further considerations for the Gypsy and Traveller population are unauthorised developments and encampments. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers or with the approval of the landowner, but for which they do not have planning permission to use for residential

purposes. Unauthorised encampments are usually short-term and occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers – for example laybys or car parks.

## Sites and Yards in Denbighshire

- <sup>3.21</sup> In Denbighshire, at the baseline date for the GTAA, there were no sites with planning permission, and 2 unauthorised sites (7 pitches). There was also no transit provision.
- <sup>3.22</sup> Despite efforts to identify them, no Travelling Showpeople yards were found in Denbighshire. This is consistent with findings from previous GTAAs for Denbighshire.
- <sup>3.23</sup> Further details can be found in Chapter 5 and **Appendix B**.

**Figure 2 - Total amount of provision in Denbighshire (August 2023)**

Category	Sites/Yards	Pitches/Plots
Private with permanent planning permission	0	0
Private sites with temporary planning permission	0	0
Public sites	0	0
Public transit provision (seasonal)	0	0
Private transit provision	0	0
Tolerated sites	0	0
Unauthorised sites	2	7
Travelling Showpeople yards	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>

**Figure 3 - Sites and Yards in Denbighshire (August 2023)**

Site Name	Pitches/Plots	Status
Unauthorised 1	1	Unauthorised
Unauthorised 2	6	Unauthorised
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	

## 4. Methodology

4.1 This section sets out the methodology that has been followed to deliver the outputs for this study. The Welsh Government GTAA Guidance issued under Section 106 of the Housing (Wales) Act sets out the requirements for the GTAA and the methodology and calculation of need that has been followed has sought to address these and allow for a full and robust GTAA to be completed. The study has been undertaken by ORS, in conjunction with Denbighshire County Council, and the approach taken covers the following core areas of work:

- » GTAA Project Steering Group.
- » GTAA Project Board.
- » Task and Finish Group.
- » Identifying and analysing existing data sources.
- » Publicising the accommodation assessment.
- » Conducting the accommodation assessment surveys.
- » Calculating the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

4.2 The stages below provide a summary of the methodology that was used to complete this study.

### GTAA Project Steering Group

4.3 The Welsh Government GTAA Guidance requires that a Project Steering Group be established to ensure that the study is informed by all available local knowledge and expertise. The Council set up and managed a Joint Steering Group for Denbighshire and Conwy as part of the 2021 GTAA as it was a joint commission. The individuals who attended the meetings of the GTAA Steering Group were:

**Figure 4 – GTAA Project Steering Group Membership**

Organisation	Role
Denbighshire CC	Lead Member for Planning, Public Protection and Safer Communities
Denbighshire CC	Strategic Planning and Housing Manager
Denbighshire CC	Lead Project Manager
Denbighshire CC	Senior Officer, Strategic Planning and Housing
Denbighshire CC	Senior Officer, Strategic Planning and Housing
Conwy BC	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regulatory Services
Conwy BC	Strategic Planning Policy Manager
Opinion Research Services	Consultant
Opinion Research Services	Consultant
Travelling Ahead	North Wales Engagement Lead
Travelling Ahead	Team Manager

4.4 As set out in the GTAA Guidance the key responsibilities of the Steering Group were to agree on the aims and objectives of the study; to promote the benefits of the study to members of the Travelling Community; to help identify households living in bricks and mortar and on unauthorised sites and encampments; to provide expert stakeholder input into the identification of local need; to provide feedback on the emerging outputs from the study; and to share and promote the final outcomes to members of the Travelling Community. The

first Steering Group meeting was held in June 2021, the second Steering Group Meeting was held in November 2021, and a final Steering Group Meeting was held in January 2022. All meetings were held online due to COVID-19.

- 4.5 The first Steering Group meeting discussed the background to the GTAA and clarified the purpose and the role of the Group. Means of communicating the GTAA were also discussed, together with opportunities to engage with households living in bricks and mortar. The second Steering Group meeting provided an opportunity for an update on the emerging outcomes of the assessment of need and an opportunity to discuss the content of the Draft GTAA Report. The final Steering Group meeting discussed sharing the GTAA Report, discussing how the study outcomes could be communicated to members of the Travelling Community and how to address the identified need in LDP Policies.

## GTAA Project Board

- 4.6 In addition to establishing a GTAA Steering Group as required by the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance, the Council also established a GTAA Project Board to support the 2021 GTAA. The key purpose of the Project Board was to provide oversight, direction, and governance for the GTAA project and its workstreams in Denbighshire. It also provided a forum for managing communications and stakeholder engagement. It operated in a similar manner to other Project Boards within the local authority, managing the detail of the project including progress, issues, and risks. The Project Board met monthly since June 2020 until the publication of the 2021 GTAA Report. The Project Board was reconvened in December 2022 to support the 2023 GTAA Update and has met monthly since February 2023.
- 4.7 Membership of the GTAA Project Board comprised the following members with full voting rights:

**Figure 5 – GTAA Reconvened Project Board Membership**

Role
Lead Member for Local Development and Planning
Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services
Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services
Corporate Director – Economy and Environment
Head of Housing and Community Services

## Task & Finish Group

- 4.8 A Task & Finish Group was also established by the Council to support the 2021 GTAA. This Group was also reconvened to support the 2023 GTAA Update. The key purposes of the Group were to:
- » Ensure that the approach taken to deliver the new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment complied with the Welsh Government methodology and that previous feedback was considered within the new document in line with Scrutiny requirements.
  - » To monitor progress and advise as necessary on the delivery of the Assessment, and to help develop a suitable Stakeholder Engagement Plan to satisfy Scrutiny concerns and requirements.

- 4.9 A total of 5 meetings of the Group were held between May and September 2021, and a final meeting was held in November 2021 to discuss the Draft GTAA Report. Since it was reconvened the Group has met 3 times since March 2023
- 4.10 Membership of the Task & Finish Group comprised Elected Members appointed by each of the Councils 6 Member Area Groups, together with support from Officers. In addition, other individuals were invited to attend certain meetings of the group to discuss specific issues:

**Figure 6 – GTAA Reconvened Task & Finish Group**

Role
Member Area Group Representative for Elwy (Chair)
Member Area Group Representative for Dee Valley
Member Area Group Representative for Denbigh
Member Area Group Representative for Prestatyn
Member Area Group Representative for Rhyl
Member Area Group Representative for Ruthin
Lead Member for Local Development
Strategic Planning and Housing Manager
Corporate Project Manager

- 4.11 It is anticipated that further meetings of the reconvened Project Board and Task & Finish Group will be held to discuss the outcomes of this GTAA Update.

## Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.12 In addition to the Steering Group contact was made with a number of stakeholders listed in Annex 1 in the GTAA Guidance to identify whether they had any particular issues they would like to raise in relation to Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire. The organisations that were contacted were:
- » Friends, Families and Travellers
  - » Gypsies & Travellers Wales
  - » Roma Support Group
  - » The Bridges Project
  - » The Gypsy Council
  - » The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
  - » The Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain - South Wales
  - » The Traveller Movement
  - » The Unity Project
  - » Travelling Ahead
- 4.13 The only response that was received was from Travelling Ahead and a summary of the interview that was completed in 2021 can be found in **Appendix E**.

## Identify and Analyse Existing Data

4.14 A desk-based review was undertaken to collate and analyse a range of secondary data and other local intelligence that has been used to identify and support the assessment of current and future accommodation need including:

- » Planning records.
- » Census data.
- » Site records and waiting lists.
- » Caravan Counts data.
- » Records of unauthorised sites/encampments.
- » Information on planning applications/appeals.
- » Information on enforcement actions.
- » Existing GTAA's and other relevant local studies.
- » Existing national and local policy, guidance, and best practice.

## Publicise the Accommodation Assessment

4.15 In order to get buy-in from members of the Travelling Community during the preparation of the 2021 GTAA to ensure that they were able and willing to participate in the site and household interviews and provide accurate information, it was important that effective publicity and pre-notification was put in place. This was also very important in terms of identifying households living in bricks and mortar accommodation to interview as part of the study.

4.16 The approach to publicity was discussed with members of the Steering Group prior to the fieldwork commencing. This publicity that was put in place included the actions below and examples can be found in **Appendix F:**

- » Press Releases.
- » Information on the Council's website.
- » Information in the Council's online residents' publication 'County Voice'.
- » Social media adverts.
- » Posters in a range of community venues and libraries.
- » Promotion through front-line services including the Local Health Board and North Wales Police.
- » Online engagement with Elected Members, and City, Town, and Community Councillors.
- » Information circulation by Gypsy and Traveller advocacy organisations.
- » Word-of-mouth information sharing by Gypsy Liaison officers.
- » Contact with organisations set out in the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance.

- 4.17 This approach was not repeated for the 2023 GTAA Update as the Council were aware of all the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites in Denbighshire.

## Conducting the Accommodation Assessment Surveys

### Household Interviews

- 4.18 Through the desk-based research and previous information from the Steering Group, ORS worked closely with the Council to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites, yards, and encampments in Denbighshire, and sought to undertake a full demographic study of the residents on all pitches and plots – as required by the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance.
- 4.19 Contact details for site residents were obtained from the Council and permission was obtained from residents prior to any contact information for telephone numbers being shared with Researchers from ORS via secure email.
- 4.20 Residents on sites were contacted by telephone by Researchers from ORS to arrange an appointment to complete a face-to-face interview. However, all households who were contacted requested to complete their interviews over the telephone. Interviews were completed with all households using the Welsh Government GTAA Household Interview questions.

### Bricks and Mortar Interviews

- 4.21 During the completion of the 2021 GTAA ORS worked closely with the Council to identify and encourage households living in bricks and mortar to participate in the assessment. Contacts were sought through members of the Steering Group, speaking with people on existing sites and adverts on social media, and through posters displayed on community noticeboards and within local communities. Permission was obtained for telephone numbers to be shared with Researchers from ORS.
- 4.22 For the 2023 GTAA Update ORS liaised with the Council to identify any further contacts for households living in bricks and mortar and a total of 4 households were identified.
- 4.23 Residents living in bricks and mortar were contacted by telephone by Researchers from ORS to arrange an appointment to complete a face-to-face interview. However, all 4 households who were contacted requested to complete their interviews over the telephone, or via Teams. Interviews were completed with all households using the Welsh Government GTAA Household Interview questions.

## Calculate the Accommodation Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 4.24 The Welsh Government GTAA Guidance sets out a detailed methodology to assess current and future pitch needs. This approach has been followed for the purpose of this GTAA.
- 4.25 As with any housing assessment, the underlying calculation is comprised of a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply of pitches available for occupation with the current and future population need. This information has been obtained from a

combination of the desk-based research and the outcomes of the site and household interviews. The key factors in each of these elements are set out below.

## Current Residential Supply

- » Occupied local authority pitches.
- » Occupied authorised private pitches.
- » Vacant local authority pitches and available private pitches.
- » Pitches expected to be vacated in the near future.
- » New local authority pitches private pitches with planning permission.

## Current Residential Demand

<sup>4.26</sup> Total current residential demand is made up of the following components. It was important to make full use of the desk-based research and intelligence from members of the Steering Group to address issues of double counting (for example bricks and mortar households who are also on the waiting list for pitches):

- » Households on unauthorised developments.
- » Households on unauthorised encampments.
- » Concealed /over-crowded/doubled-up households<sup>2</sup>.
- » Conventional housing – movement from bricks and mortar<sup>3</sup>.
- » New households to arrive from waiting lists/in-migration.

## Future Demand

<sup>4.27</sup> Total future demand is a result of the formation of new households during the study period. ORS has undertaken extensive research into the population and household growth of the Gypsy and Traveller community in England and Wales (**Appendix G**). This was used to inform this element of the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance (see Paragraphs 203-209). Paragraph 203 sets out that the research completed by ORS suggests that an acceptable growth rate is usually within the range of 1.50% – 3.00% per annum and Paragraph 204 sets out that Local Authorities should analyse the demographic data provided by community members to consider their own local anticipated future household growth.

<sup>4.28</sup> Information from the site interviews provides details of the gross number of new households expected to form within the first 5 years of the study.

<sup>4.29</sup> The estimate of new household formation for remaining years of the study has been completed based on demographic evidence from the site interviews. Further evidence to support the approach taken to calculate new household formation is set out in Chapter 6.

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<sup>2</sup> Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 195-201 of the GTAA Guidance.

<sup>3</sup> Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 172-183 of the GTAA Guidance.



## Final Outcomes

- 4.30 All of the components of supply and demand are presented in an easy-to-understand table as set out in the GTAA Guidance in Table 3.

## Transit Provision

- 4.31 The GTAA also includes an assessment of the need for any transit sites or temporary stopping places to meet the needs of members of the Travelling Community who either travel permanently or for part of the year. In order to investigate the potential need for transit provision when undertaking the GTAA, ORS have undertaken analysis of records of unauthorised sites and encampments that were identified during the desk-based research. Data from the Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count has also been considered as supporting evidence.

## Compliance with Engagement Checklist

- 4.32 The table below shows that the 2021 GTAA has been compliant with all of points set out in the Engagement Checklist in the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance. Given that the 2023 GTAA Update only included a new round of household interviews and subsequent needs analysis, the checklist has been updated where appropriate.

Figure 7 – Engagement Checklist

	Task	Completed
1	<p>Visit every Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson household identified through the data analysis process up to 3 times, if necessary.</p> <p><i>It was possible for ORS Researchers to contact households living on every site in Denbighshire, and it was possible to interview all resident households that were identified over the phone. [Updated]</i></p>	✓
2	<p>Publish details of the GTAA process, including contact details to allow community members to request an interview, on the local authority website, Travellers Times website and the World's Fair publication. In addition, adverts were placed by Welsh Government.</p> <p><i>Extensive publicity was undertaken to promote the GTAA, and details can be found in Appendix F. However, Worlds Fair ceased being published as a weekly newspaper in 2019 (although there are plans to relaunch it in 2021) and Travellers Times no longer publish details of GTAAs on their Facebook pages.</i></p>	✓
3	<p>Consult relevant community support organisations, such as those in Annex 1.</p> <p><i>Engagement was sought with all organisations listed in Annex 1 of the GTAA Guidance. The only organisation that responded was Travelling Ahead and a telephone interview was completed with their Team Manager. A summary of the outcomes of the interview can be found in Appendix E.</i></p>	✓
4	<p>Develop a Local Authority waiting list for both pitches and housing, which is accessible and communicated to community members.</p>	✓

	<i>There are no public sites in Denbighshire County Council.</i>	
5	<p>Endeavour to include Gypsies and Travellers on the GTAA Project Steering Group.</p> <p><i>Due to the small numbers of Gypsy and Traveller households within the county, it was not possible to encourage a member of the Gypsy and Traveller community to sit on the Steering Group.</i></p>	✓
6	<p>Ensure contact details provided to the local authority by community members through the survey process are followed up and needs assessed.</p> <p><i>All contacts provided by the local authority were followed up and interviews were completed with all households. [Updated].</i></p>	✓
7	<p>Consider holding on-site (or nearby) GTAA information events to explain why community members should participate and encourage site residents to bring others who may not be known to the local authority.</p> <p><i>Due to the very small number of Travellers in Denbighshire and COVID-19 restrictions, it was not possible to hold any on-site information events.</i></p>	✓

## 5. Survey Findings

### Background

- 5.1 The desk-based research, and additional information from the Council, identified a total of 2 unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites and no Travelling Showpeople yards in Denbighshire. A total of 4 households living on unauthorised encampments and 4 households living in bricks and mortar were also identified.

Figure 8 - Sites in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site Name	Pitches	Status
Unauthorised 1	1	Unauthorised
Unauthorised 2	6	Unauthorised
Various (x4)	4	Encampments
Various (x4)	n/a	Bricks and Mortar
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	

- 5.2 Interviews were attempted with households on the sites and encampments between June 2023 and August 2023 and a total of 7 successful interviews were completed across all the 2 sites and encampments. In addition, a total of 4 interviews were completed with households that were identified living in bricks and mortar. This represented an overall response rate of 100% of occupied pitches and households

Figure 9 – Interviews completed in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site/Yard Name	Pitches	Interviews	Refusals
Unauthorised 1	1	1	0
Unauthorised 2	6	6	0
Unauthorised 3	1	1	0
Unauthorised 4	1	1	0
Unauthorised 5	1	1	0
Unauthorised 6	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 1	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 2	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 3	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 4 <sup>4</sup>	1	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>

- 5.3 In addition the 2021 GTAA identified a further household who were living in bricks and mortar which they felt was unsuitable for their needs. The Council have confirmed that this household have now been rehoused in suitable accommodation and as such their needs have not been included in the GTAA Update.

### Interview Log

- 5.4 A copy of the Interview Log can be found in **Appendix C**.

<sup>4</sup> This household was living on an unauthorised site in Denbighshire at the time of the 2021 GTAA but have now moved to a bricks and mortar property in Wrexham. Their needs have not been included in the GTAA Update.

## Overview and Demographics of Residents

- 5.5 Information collected on the type of accommodation lived in by those who were interviewed shows that the Gypsies and Travellers who were interviewed in Denbighshire live on unauthorised sites, unauthorised encampments, or in bricks and mortar.
- 5.6 Ethnicity data was captured from all the households that were interviewed on the unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites and for those living in bricks and mortar. All those who were interviewed identified as Welsh Gypsies.
- 5.7 In total the interviews identified 39 residents living on the 2 unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites, the 4 encampments, and living in bricks and mortar. This was made up of 24 adults and 15 children aged under 18. This equates to 62% adults and 38% children and teenagers. Although not a direct comparison, data from the 2011 Census for Denbighshire as a whole (the settled community and the Gypsy or Irish Traveller community) and for Gypsies or Irish Travellers has been compared to the site population. This shows a higher proportion of those aged under 18 in the Gypsy and Traveller population when compared to that of the Denbighshire population as a whole. This is important when considering the new household growth rate that could be applied to the population when longer-term need is determined.

**Figure 10 – Age and Gender of Household Members as % of Total Residents Interviewed (August 2023)**

Age and Gender - Sites	Number	%
Male	21	54
Female	18	46
Under 18	15	39
18 and over	24	61

## Interview Summary

- 5.8 Summaries of the interviews that were completed with Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites, unauthorised encampments, and living in bricks and mortar can be found in **Appendix D**.

## 6. Assessing Accommodation Needs

- 6.1 This section focuses on the pitch provision which is needed by Denbighshire County Council for a short-term period of 5 years and the full LDP period to 2033. This includes both current unmet need and need which is likely to arise in the future. This period allows for robust forecasts for future provision, based upon the evidence contained within this study and from secondary data sources.
- 6.2 This section is based upon a combination of information from the household interviews, planning records, and from the Council. In many cases, the survey data is not used in isolation, but instead is used to validate information from planning records or other sources.
- 6.3 This section concentrates not only upon the total provision, which is needed in the area, but also whether there is a need for any transit sites and/or emergency stopping place provision.
- 6.4 Welsh Government Guidance requires an assessment of current and future pitch needs and provides a prescribed framework for undertaking this calculation. This framework has been followed for the purpose of this GTAA.
- 6.5 As with any assessment of housing need the underlying calculation can be broken down into a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply that is available for occupation with the current and future needs of the households. The key factors in each of these elements are set out in the sections below.

### Current Residential Supply

- » Occupied local authority pitches.
- » Occupied authorised private pitches.
- » Vacant local authority pitches and available private pitches.
- » Pitches expected to be vacated in the near future.
- » New local authority pitches private pitches with planning permission.

### Current Residential Demand

- » Households on unauthorised encampments.
- » Households on unauthorised developments.
- » Concealed /over-crowded/doubled-up households<sup>5</sup>.
- » Conventional housing – movement from bricks and mortar<sup>6</sup>.
- » New households to arrive from waiting lists/in-migration.

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<sup>5</sup> Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 195-201 of the GTAA Guidance.

<sup>6</sup> Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 172-183 of the GTAA Guidance.

## Future Demand

- 6.6 Total future demand is a result of the formation of new households during the study period. Information from the site interviews provides details of the gross number of new households expected to form within the first 5 years of the study (although it is important to *net* this off against supply that has been identified during the first 5 years of the study). New household formation for the remainder of the study period have been based on demographic evidence from the site interviews.

## Current Authorised Residential Supply

- 6.7 To assess the current Gypsy and Traveller provision it is important to understand the total number of existing pitches and their planning status. At the baseline for the GTAA there were no authorised sites in Denbighshire.

Figure 11 – Total number of authorised sites in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Category	Sites	Pitches	Occupied
Private sites with permanent planning permission	0	0	0
Private sites with temporary planning permission	0	0	0
Public sites (Council and Registered Providers)	0	0	0
Public transit provision	0	0	0
Private transit provision	0	0	0
Tolerated sites	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

- 6.8 The next stage of the process is to assess how much space is, or will become, available on existing sites in order to determine the supply of available pitches. The main ways of finding this is through:
- » **Current vacant pitches** – There are no authorised sites in Denbighshire.
  - » **Pitches expected to become vacant** – There are no authorised sites in Denbighshire.
  - » **Pitches currently with planning permission** – There are no pitches on sites that have planning permission that have not been implemented.
- 6.9 This gives a figure for **overall supply of no pitches**.

Figure 12 - Summary of Pitch Supply in Denbighshire - August 2023

Category	Pitches
Current vacant pitches	0
Pitches expected to become vacant	0
Movement to bricks and mortar	0
Out-migration	0
Unimplemented pitches with planning consent	0
<b>TOTAL SUPPLY</b>	<b>0</b>

## Current Residential Demand

- 6.10 The next stage of the process is to assess current need and determine how many households are currently seeking pitches in the area.

## Current Unauthorised Sites and Encampments

- 6.11 The study has identified 2 unauthorised sites in Denbighshire. A site with 1 pitch (Unauthorised 1) and a site with 6 pitches (Unauthorised 2). The study also identified 4 households living on unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire.

Figure 13 - Summary of Unauthorised and Tolerated Pitches in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site	Pitches
Unauthorised Sites (x2)	7
Unauthorised Encampments (x4)	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

## Concealed Households and Over-Crowded Pitches

- 6.12 The site interviews sought to identify concealed or doubled-up households on sites that require a pitch immediately. Welsh Government Guidance defines concealed households as those which are unable to achieve their own authorised accommodation and are instead living within authorised accommodation (houses or pitches) assigned to another household. This may include adult children who have been unable to move home or different households occupying a single pitch. The site interviews identified **1 concealed or doubled-up household, and no over-crowded pitches**.

## Conventional Housing

- 6.13 Identifying households in bricks and mortar has been frequently highlighted as an issue with GTAA's. The 2021 Census identified a total of just 36 Gypsy or Irish Traveller and Roma households in Denbighshire living in bricks and mortar.
- 6.14 As noted earlier, ORS went to all possible lengths to identify Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar and worked with Council Officers, and households that were interviewed to identify households to interview. This process resulted in 4 households that were interviewed, 2 who stated that they had a need to move to a site in Denbighshire; 1 who was happy living in bricks and mortar; and 1 who are now living in bricks and mortar in Wrexham.

Figure 14 - Summary of Bricks and Mortar Need in Denbighshire - August 2023

Site	Pitches
Existing households	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>

## New Households to Arrive

- 6.15 At the time of the GTAA there were no public sites in Denbighshire and no waiting list. Therefore, there are **no additional households** in need of a pitch in Denbighshire from the waiting list.
- 6.16 Assessments also need to consider in-migration (households requiring accommodation who intend to move into the study area from outside) and out-migration (households intending to move away from the study area). Site surveys typically identify only small numbers of in-migrant and out-migrant households and the data is not normally robust enough to extrapolate long-term trends. At the national level, there is zero net migration of Gypsies and Travellers across the UK, but this assessment has considered local migration effects on the basis of the best local evidence available.
- 6.17 Evidence drawn from household interviews in Denbighshire, and discussions with the Council has been carefully considered **and has identified no evidence of any in-migration**.

## Additional Pitch Provision: Future Need

- 6.18 The next stage of the process is to assess future need and determine how many households are likely to be seeking pitches in the area in the future during the first 5 years of the assessment, and for the longer LDP period to 2033.

## Population and Household Growth

- 6.19 Nationally, a household formation and growth rate of 3.00% net per annum has been commonly assumed and widely used in local GTAAs, even though there is no statistical evidence of households growing so quickly. The result has been to inflate both national and local requirements for additional pitches unrealistically. In this context, ORS has prepared a *Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates* that was updated in June 2020. The main conclusions are set out here and the full Technical Note can be found in **Appendix G**.
- 6.20 Those seeking to provide evidence of high annual net household growth rates for Gypsies and Travellers have sometimes sought to rely on increases in the number of caravans, as reflected in the Caravan Counts. However, Caravan Count data is unreliable and erratic – so the only proper way to project future population and household growth is through detailed demographic analysis.
- 6.21 The research undertaken by ORS has identified that the growth in the national Gypsy and Traveller population may be as low as 1.50% per annum – much less than the 3.00% per annum often assumed, but still greater than in the settled community. Even using extreme and unrealistic assumptions, it is hard to find evidence that net Gypsy and Traveller population and household growth rates are above 2.00% per annum nationally.
- 6.22 The often assumed 3.00% per annum net household growth rate is unrealistic and would require clear statistical evidence before being used for planning purposes. In practice, the best available evidence supports the ORS national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum for Gypsies and Travellers.
- 6.23 There are 2 measures of household growth that are used for the assessment of need in this study. Evidence of gross household formation (family growth) from Section D of the Household Survey, netted off against evidence of 1 year pitch turnover and pitches expected to become vacant, has been used for the first 5 year period. New household formation for the remaining years of the GTAA has been based on demographic evidence from the household interviews.



- 6.24 The site and bricks and mortar interviews identified **2 new households** as a result of family growth from teenagers over the first 5 years of the assessment, and a no annual pitch turnover as there are no public sites.
- 6.25 Household formation for the remainder of the GTAA period to 2033 has been based on the overall demographics of the population. The GTAA Guidance recommends that applying a net compound growth rate should be considered.
- 6.26 However, in certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are low, or the population age structure is skewed by certain age groups, it is not appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement is made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children. This is based on the assumption that 50% of households likely to form will stay in the area. This is based on evidence from other GTAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales. This approach has been taken to determine levels of new household formation for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the wider period to 2033 given the low numbers of younger children identified in the household interviews. The outcome is that a total future need for 2 pitches was identified for the period 2028/29–2033. However, it should be noted that this figure may change over time.

## Overall Need for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire

- 6.27 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the study period, and for the full Local Development Plan period.
- 6.28 Following this approach, the overall estimated provision that is needed in Denbighshire for the first 5 years is for **16 pitches**.
- 6.29 The overall estimated provision that is needed up to 2033 is for **18 pitches**.

Figure 15 – Pitches Needed in Denbighshire from 2023-2033

Current Residential Supply	Number of Pitches	Notes
A. Occupied Local Authority Pitches	0	No public sites
B. Occupied authorised private pitches/tolerated pitches	0	No authorised sites
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	
Planned Residential Supply	Number of Pitches	
C. Vacant Local Authority pitches and available vacant pitches	0	No public sites
D. Pitches expected to become vacant in near future	0	No public sites
E. New Local Authority and private pitches with planning permission	0	No unimplemented pitches
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	
Current Residential Demand	Pitch Demand	
F. Unauthorised encampments	4	4 encampments
G. Unauthorised developments	7	7 unauthorised pitches
H. Overcrowded pitches/Unsuitable accommodation	1	1 doubled-up household
I. Conventional housing	2	2 households from bricks and mortar
J. New households to arrive	0	No in-migration
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	
Current Households	Future Households (at year 5)	Future Households (years 6 to 12)
K. 14 households	16	18
L. Additional household pitch need	2	2
Unmet Need	Need Arising	Need Accommodated
M. Current residential demand	14	
N. Future residential demand (year 5)	2	
O. Future residential demand (years 6 to 10)	2	
P. Planned residential supply		0
Q. Unmet need (5 year)	16	
R. Unmet need (to end of the Denbighshire LDP period to 2033)	18	

## Transit/Emergency Stopping Site Provision

- 6.30 Transit sites serve a specific function of meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households who are visiting an area or who are passing through. A transit site typically has a restriction on the length of stay of around 13 weeks and has a range of facilities such as water supply, electricity, and amenity blocks. An alternative to a transit site is a temporary stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time a Traveller can stay on it but has much more limited facilities with typically only a source of water and chemical toilets provided.
- 6.31 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is particularly important with regard to the issue of Gypsy and Traveller transit site provision. Section 62A of the Act allows the Police to direct trespassers to remove themselves, their vehicles, and their property from any land where a suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site is available within the same Local Authority area. A suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site is one which is situated in the same Local Authority area as the land on which the trespass has occurred, and which is managed by a Local Authority, a Registered Provider or other person or body as specified by order by the Secretary of State. Case law has confirmed that a suitable pitch must be somewhere where the household can occupy their caravan. Bricks and mortar housing is not a suitable alternative to a pitch<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, a transit site both provides a place for households in transit to an area and also a mechanism for greater enforcement action against inappropriate unauthorised encampments.
- 6.32 Consideration will also have to be given to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act which came into force in June 2022. Part 4 of the Act gives the Police additional powers to deal with unauthorised encampments through new offences relating to residing on land without consent in or with a vehicle and new powers in relation to the seizure of property.
- 6.33 In order to identify whether there is a need for the Council to provide transit accommodation analysis has been undertaken of the Caravan Count data, recorded encampment data provided by the Council, and the outcomes from the household interviews.
- 6.34 Discussions with local stakeholders at the time of the 2021 GTAA, and analysis of records of unauthorised encampments, confirmed that there are limited instances of unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire, and that these are normally Travellers passing through for work purposes given that the area is on the main A55 travelling corridor across North Wales for Travellers coming to and from Ireland on the ferry from Holyhead. There have also been records of encampments in the middle and south of the county. There is also evidence of records of repeat annual visits from the same households at similar times of the year.
- 6.35 There have been other localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Denbighshire to attend weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.
- 6.36 Detailed analysis of records of unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire from 2014 to 2023 are shown in the table below. These include localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Denbighshire to attend

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.travellerstimes.org.uk/features/lawyers-opinion-police-powers-and-unauthorised-camps-travellers-motor-vehicles-and>

weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.

- 6.37 The outcomes from the household interviews and discussions with stakeholders did not identify that there was a need for permanent transit provision locally, although there were discussions about a need for more transit provision across Wales.

**Figure 16 – Recorded Encampments in Denbighshire 2014-2023 (to October)**

Year	Recorded Encampments	No. of Locations
2014	9	8
2015	6	6
2016	15	13
2017	17	17
2018	15	15
2019	7	7
2020	4	4
2021	12	11
2022	13	12
2023 (to October)	5	5

## Transit Recommendations

- 6.38 The outcomes from the household interviews and discussions with stakeholders did not identify that there was a need for permanent transit provision locally, although there were discussions about a need for more transit provision across Wales.
- 6.39 The Council employ a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Liaison Officer post as well as having formalised a more co-ordinated process for the management of unauthorised encampments. This is understood to be to ensure early engagement with families travelling through Denbighshire, and to provide a coordinated approach to ensure that welfare checks and facilities such as bins and toilets are provided. This resulted in engagement with a total of 5 households living on encampments during the GTAA fieldwork period and none expressed a specific need for formal transit provision. This role is also intended to build better relations between the Council and the Travelling Community. Discussions with the Council have concluded that this approach could be developed further to form the basis of a more comprehensive managed approach to include considerations of options such as negotiated stopping.
- 6.40 Despite the previous GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Denbighshire, more recent evidence suggests that this is no longer the case and that alternative approaches should be considered. As such it is recommended that **there is not a need at this time for the Council to provide a transit site** in Denbighshire due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the short-term transient nature of these encampments.
- 6.41 It is also recommended that the Council should continue to monitor the number of unauthorised encampments and consider the use of short-term toleration (including negotiated stopping arrangements) to deal with short-term transient stops. This management-based approach should also include consideration about whether to provide toilets, water and refuse facilities. There are a number of examples across Wales

and England where management-based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments have been successful. A good example can be found at [www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk](http://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk). There are also many examples where local authorities are taking a more strategic and regional approach towards addressing transit issues including in Essex, Leicestershire, the former Northamptonshire, and Hampshire.

### Need for Travelling Showpeople Plots

- <sup>6.42</sup> Given that there were no Travelling Showpeople identified as living in Denbighshire, no assessment of need has been undertaken. The Council should however monitor any future approaches for planning permission from Travelling Showpeople and have in place appropriate criteria based LDP policies to deal with any future applications.

## 7. Conclusions

### Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need

- 7.1 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the study period (2023/24-2028/29) is for **16 pitches** and need by 2033, the end of the Denbighshire replacement LDP period, is for a further **2 pitches**. This gives a total need for the whole period across Denbighshire for **18 pitches**.

### Travelling Showpeople Plot Need

- 7.2 Given that there have been no Travelling Showpeople identified as living in Denbighshire, no assessment of need has been undertaken. The Council should however monitor any future approaches for planning permission from Travelling Showpeople and have in place appropriate criteria based LDP policies to deal with any future applications.

### Transit Sites

- 7.3 Despite the previous GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Denbighshire, more recent evidence suggests that this is no longer the case and that alternative approaches should be considered. As such it is recommended that **there is not a need at this time for the Council to provide a transit site** in Denbighshire due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the short-term transient nature of these encampments.

### Addressing Identified Need

- 7.4 In general terms need identified in a GTAA should be seen as need for pitches. Welsh Government Guidance on Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2015) recommends that as a minimum a pitch should be capable of accommodating an amenity block, a mobile home, a touring caravan, and parking for two vehicles. However, this guidance relates only to public sites provided by Local Authorities and there are currently no public sites in Denbighshire.
- 7.5 Given that the need identified in Denbighshire is from households living on unauthorised sites, from unauthorised encampments, or from households living in bricks and mortar who have expressed a desire to either meet their own needs, or for new public site provision, it is recommended that the Council should seek to support these households to meet their need.
- 7.6 It is recognised that the Council are in the process of reviewing their adopted LDP that sets out how overall housing need will be addressed. The replacement Denbighshire LDP covers the period 2018-2033. The findings of this report should be considered as part of future housing mix and type within the context of the assessment of overall housing need in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

# Appendix A: Definition of Key Terms

<p><b>Concealed or ‘doubled-up’ household</b></p>	<p>This refers to households which are unable to achieve their own authorised accommodation and are instead living within authorised accommodation (houses or pitches) assigned to another household.</p> <p>This may include adult children who have been unable to move home or different households occupying a single pitch.</p>
<p><b>Current residential demand</b></p>	<p>Those with a need for authorised pitches for a range of reasons, including:</p> <p>An inability to secure an authorised pitch leading to occupation of unauthorised encampments.</p> <p>An inability to secure correct planning permission for an unauthorised development.</p> <p>Households living in overcrowded conditions and want a pitch.</p> <p>Households in conventional housing demonstrating cultural aversion.</p> <p>New households expected to arrive from elsewhere.</p>
<p><b>Current residential supply</b></p>	<p>The number of authorised pitches which are available and occupied within the Local Authority or partnership area. This includes pitches on Local Authority or private sites.</p>
<p><b>Future residential demand</b></p>	<p>The expected level of new household formation which will generate additional demand within the 5-year period of the accommodation assessment and longer LDP period.</p>

<p><b>Gypsies and Travellers</b></p>	<p>(a) Persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:</p> <p>(1) Persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependent's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and</p> <p>(2) Members of an organized group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such); and</p> <p>(b) All other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.</p> <p>Source: Section 108, Housing (Wales) Act 2014</p>
<p><b>Household</b></p>	<p>In this guidance this refers to individuals from the same family who live together on a single pitch / house / encampment.</p>
<p><b>Household growth</b></p>	<p>In this guidance household growth is defined by the number of new households arising from households which are already accommodated in the area.</p>
<p><b>Overall residential pitch need</b></p>	<p>The ultimate calculation of unmet accommodation need which must be identified through the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment process. This figure can be found by adding the immediate residential need to the future residential demand. The overall residential need will capture the needs across the 5-year period within which the accommodation assessment is considered to be robust.</p>
<p><b>Planned residential pitch supply</b></p>	<p>The number of authorised pitches which are vacant and available to rent on Local Authority or private sites. It also includes pitches which will be vacated in the near future by households moving to conventional housing or in other circumstances. Additional pitches which are due to open or private sites likely to achieve planning permission shortly should be included as planned residential supply.</p>



<p><b>Residential pitch</b></p>	<p>Land on a mobile home site where occupiers are entitled to station their mobile homes indefinitely (unless stated in their pitch agreement). Typically includes an amenity block, space for a static caravan and touring caravan and parking.</p>
<p><b>Residential site</b></p>	<p>A permanent residential site can be privately owned or owned by the Local Authority. This site will be designated for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site indefinitely. Residents on these sites can expect to occupy their pitches for as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements, under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.</p> <p>Working space may also be provided on, or nearby, sites for activities carried out by community members.</p>
<p><b>Temporary residential site</b></p>	<p>These sites are residential sites which only have planning permission or a site licence for a limited period. Residents on these sites can expect to occupy their pitches for the duration of the planning permission or site licence (or as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements, under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 – whichever is sooner).</p>
<p><b>Temporary Stopping Place</b></p>	<p>Also known as a ‘stopping place’, ‘Atchin Tan’, or ‘green lane’, amongst other names. These are intended to be short-term in nature to assist Local Authorities where a need for pitches is accepted, however, none are currently available. Pro-actively identified temporary stopping places can be used to relocate inappropriately located encampments, whilst alternative sites are progressed.</p> <p>Temporary stopping places must make provision for waste disposal, water supply and sanitation at a minimum.</p>
<p><b>Transit pitch</b></p>	<p>Land on a mobile home site where occupiers are entitled to station their mobile homes for a maximum of 3 months.</p>

	<p>Transit pitches can exist on permanent residential sites; however, this is not recommended.</p>
<p><b>Transit site</b></p>	<p>Transit sites are permanent facilities designed for temporary use by occupiers. These sites must be designated as such and provide a route for Gypsies and Travellers to maintain a nomadic way of life. Individual occupiers are permitted to reside on the site for a maximum of 3 months at a time.</p> <p>Specific terms under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 apply on these sites. Working space may also be provided on, or near, sites for activities carried out by community members</p>
<p><b>Unauthorised development</b></p>	<p>Land occupied by the owner without the necessary land use planning permission.</p>
<p><b>Unauthorised encampment</b></p>	<p>Land occupied without the permission of the owner or without the correct land use planning permission. Encampments may be tolerated by the Local Authority, whilst alternative sites are developed.</p>

## Appendix B: Sites and Yards in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site/Yard	Operational Pitches/Plots	Unauthorised Pitches/Plots
<b>Public Sites</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Private Sites with Permanent Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Private Sites with Temporary Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Tolerated Sites</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Unauthorised Sites</b>		
Unauthorised 1	-	1
Unauthorised 2	-	6
<b>TOTAL PITCHES</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Public Transit Sites</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Private Transit Sites</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Private Travelling Showpeople Yards</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Tolerated Travelling Showpeople Yards</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Unauthorised Travelling Showpeople Yards</b>		
None	-	-

## Appendix C: Interview Log

Address	Type of tenure	Engagement attempts	Engagement techniques	Completed or refusal?	Reason for refusal?
Unauthorised 1	Unauthorised Site	04/07/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 2	Unauthorised Site	04/07/2023, 16/08/2023	Telephone, SMS Message	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 3	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 4	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 5	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 6	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 1	Bricks and Mortar	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 2	Bricks and Mortar	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 3	Bricks and Mortar	04/07/2023, 16/08/2023	Telephone, SMS Message	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 4	Bricks and Mortar	07/07/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a

# Appendix E: Interview Summary – Travelling Ahead

ORS interviewed a representative from Travelling Ahead for the 2021 GTAA<sup>8</sup>.

Travelling Ahead are an organisation which provides support, advice and advocacy for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma families across Wales. They have helped to raise awareness of Accommodation Assessments across Wales to ensure that the Travelling community are represented and were able to offer assistance to ORS in engaging with Travelling Community in Denbighshire for the latest Assessment.

The following matters were highlighted during the discussion with ORS and relate to existing matters in Denbighshire, and the wider context of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson accommodation in Wales.

## Denbighshire Specific Issues

- » It was felt that, within Denbighshire Council, there should be continued engagement with members of the Travelling Community, including relationship-building engagement with elected members. This engagement should be intended to better understand what the needs of the Travelling community are and to strengthen understanding of the Local Authority duty to actually deliver sites.
- » Underlying all of the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation work in Denbighshire is the recent history concerning the planning committee's refusal of the site put forward by Council Officers last year (2020). The refusal of the site was accompanied by public opposition. The whole process has done untold damage to the faith of the community into how likely it is that the Council are willing or will be able to follow through on delivering any sites in the foreseeable future. This is felt by and impacts not just the local family who were due to be allocated the site, but all the community across North Wales. The council has to work to address these issues systemically and urgently if there is any chance of rebuilding this trust.
- » The new Gypsy and Traveller Liaison post in Denbighshire Council is understood to have helped with the management of encampments in the area. It was felt it has allowed for negotiations on stopping which has made mutually beneficial arrangements and is building relationships/reputation with members of the Travelling community.

## Wider Regional/National Issues

- » It was highlighted that there could be unidentified need arising from people living in nomadic accommodation, such as vans, who reside regularly on the North coast of Wales. This includes holiday makers and others that would not be seen as traditional Gypsy Travellers. These people are therefore not subjected to the same sort of scrutiny and the

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.tgpcymru.org.uk/what-we-do/travelling-ahead-wales-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-advice-and-advocacy-service/>

same sort of response from local people and Councils as those seen as Gypsies and Travellers would be.

- » The lack of any form of transit provision in North Wales is seen as a big concern, especially after a need for transit provision was identified in the last round of GTAA's and no provision has been delivered. The Housing Act duty has not been met and shows no signs of being met. It was suggested that advice on this issue could be sought from organisations outside of Councils and discussed with people with experience of travelling. It was felt that engagement with members of the Travelling community will be the best way to identify what form the transit provision should take. Furthermore, the Council should continually be monitoring the situation and hold itself accountable for any lack of action.
- » Given the lack of progress with transit provision in North Wales, there is concern whether the GTAA process as a whole actually delivers the network of support for nomadic families that is actually needed. While need is being systematically measured, it can be questioned whether what is identified is monitored and/or implemented correctly. Concerns regarding the reviews of encampment being undertaken by the police and councils across North Wales with no involvement of Gypsies and Travellers
- » Travelling Ahead would like to see Welsh Government promote a form of 'pre-application support' for Travellers looking to purchase land. This is in order to limit the frequency with which Travellers purchase land that is ultimately unsuitable for permanent accommodation.
- » Travelling Ahead would also like to see Welsh Government provide grants and encourage leases so that people who don't have their own resources may be able to access land over the long-term.

# Appendix F: Publicity Examples (2021 GTAA)

## NEW – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2022

Conwy and Denbighshire County Councils invite you to take part in a survey to make sure we know what your accommodation needs are.

- ? Are you a Gypsy, Travelling Show person or Traveller?
- ? Do you live in, or stop off in Conwy and/or Denbighshire?
- ? Do you find it hard to find the right places to live or stop off in Conwy and/or Denbighshire?

If the answer is **YES** then please contact Opinion Research Services who are doing the work for the councils, to take part in the new survey to help us assess your needs.

Contact: **Michael Bayliss**  
☎ **07471 267095** or **01792 535300**  
✉ **Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk**

Thank you for your help.



## NEWYDD – Aseiad o Anghenion Llety Sipsiwn a Theithwyr 2022

Mae Cyngor Sir Conwy a Sir Ddinbych yn eich gwahodd i gymryd rhan mewn arolwg i sicrhau ein bod yn gwybod beth yw eich anghenion o ran llety.

- ? Ydych chi'n Sipsi, aelod o Sioe Deithiol neu'n Deithiwr?
- ? Ydych chi'n byw yng Nghonwy a /neu Sir Ddinbych neu'n aros yma?
- ? Ydych chi'n ei chael yn anodd dod o hyd i'r lleoedd iawn i fyw neu aros yng Nghonwy a /neu Sir Ddinbych?

Os **YDYCH** gallwch gymryd rhan mewn arolwg newydd a fydd yn ein helpu i asesu eich anghenion, drwy gysylltu ag ORS (Opinion Research Services) sy'n cynnal yr arolwg ar ran y Cyngor.

Cysylltwch â: **Michael Bayliss**  
☎ **07471 267095** neu **01792 535300**  
✉ **Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk**

Diolch am eich help.





Copy of DCC Website page – uploaded 5/8/21

## New Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2022

- Are you a Gypsy, Travelling Show person or Traveller?
- Do you live in, or stop off in Denbighshire?
- Do you find it hard to find the right places to live or stop off in Denbighshire?

If the answer is **yes** then please contact ORS (who are doing the work for the Council) to take part in the new survey to help us assess your needs.

**Contact:** Michael Bayliss  
**Phone:** 07471 267095 or 01792 535300  
**Email:** [Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk](mailto:Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk)

The Council has to carry out a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to assess the current and future accommodation needs of Gypsy, Travelling Show People and Traveller families in Denbighshire. This study once complete and approved by Welsh Government will replace the previous one approved in 2017. You can access a copy of the previous assessment below.

 [2017 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment \(PDF, 2.75MB\)](#)

The Council is keen that anybody who identifies as a member of the Gypsy, Travelling Show People or Traveller community has the opportunity to take part in the study to ensure that their current and future accommodation needs are assessed. This is for both residential need and any need for sites for families travelling through Denbighshire. The invitation to take part in the survey applies equally to all members of the above communities whether currently in traditional caravan or trailer living or currently living in Bricks and Mortar accommodation.

If you would like to take part in the study, or if you know somebody who should be included in the survey then please contact the survey team:

**Contact:** Michael Bayliss  
**Phone:** 07471 267095 or 01792 535300  
**Email:** [Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk](mailto:Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk)

### Related websites

[Guidance for those supporting Gypsy and Traveller communities: COVID-19 \(external website\)](#)

### Document accessibility

[Download Adobe Acrobat Reader from Adobe.com.](#)

[What we're doing to improve accessibility.](#)

Copy of DCC facebook post 09/08/2021

<https://www.facebook.com/denbighshirecountycouncil>

The screenshot shows a Facebook post from the official page of Denbighshire County Council. The post is dated 8 August 2021 at 03:59. The text of the post reads: "A survey has been launched as part of work to produce an up to date needs assessment for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Denbighshire. Denbighshire County Council is assessing current accommodation need for Gypsies, Traveller and Travelling Show people and this does not include looking for locations for sites. The process will include talking to Gypsy and Traveller families, key stakeholders and representative groups and will run until 7 October 2021. It will include a review of local data, including the number of unauthorised encampments that have taken place in the county and a consultation with families from the Gypsy and Travelling community living in Denbighshire." Below the text is a large image of the Denbighshire County Council logo, which features the text "sir ddinbych denbighshire" and "Cyngor County Council" alongside a stylized graphic of a hand holding a leaf. At the bottom of the post, there is a link to a survey page: "DENBIGHSHIRE.COV.UK. Survey for needs assessment for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation | Denbighshire County Council". The post has 3 reactions and 1 share. The right-hand side of the screenshot shows the Facebook interface, including a "Sign Up" button, a "Send Message" button, and a list of pages liked by the user, such as "Citizens Advice", "Community Catalysts Denbighsh...", "Pavillon Theatre Rhyf", "Rhyd Journal", and "Home Education Wales".

Rhyl Journal 09/08/2021

<https://www.denbighshirefreepress.co.uk/news/19500585.survey-help-produce-needs-assessment-gypsy-traveller-accommodation/>

**News**  
9th August

## Survey to help produce needs assessment for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

By Arron Evans | [@ArronEvansNews](#)  
Reporter



A new gypsy and traveller site is being looked into in Denbighshire.

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [m](#) [0 comment](#)

**A SURVEY has been launched as part of work to produce an up to date needs assessment for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Denbighshire.**

Denbighshire County Council is assessing current accommodation need for Gypsies, Traveller and Travelling Show people and this does not include looking for locations for sites.

The process will include talking to Gypsy and Traveller families, key stakeholders and representative groups and will run until 7 October 2021.

It will include a review of local data, including the number of unauthorised



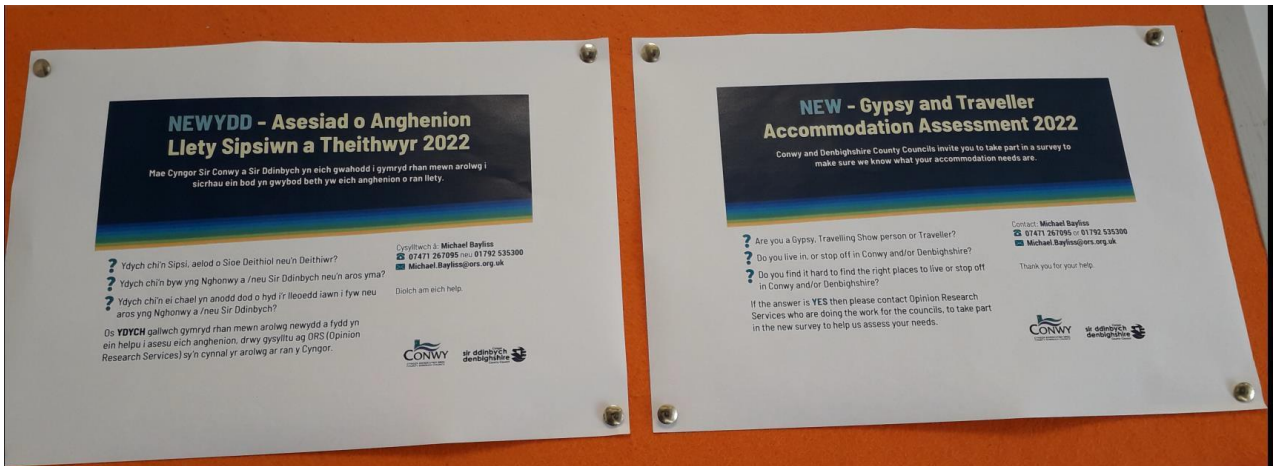
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# Appendix G: Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates



## Technical Note

# Gypsy and Traveller Household Formation and Growth Rates

June 2020

Opinion Research Services



As with all our studies, this research is subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of this research requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

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# Household Growth Rates

## Abstract and Conclusions

1. National and local household formation and growth rates are important components of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments, but until 2013 little detailed work had been done to assess their likely scale. ORS undertook work in 2013 to assess the likely rate of demographic growth for the Gypsy and Traveller population and concluded that the figure could be as low 1.25% per annum, but that best available evidence supports a national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum.
2. This analysis was produced as a separate document in 2013 and then updated in 2015 ([www.opinionresearch.co.uk/formation2015](http://www.opinionresearch.co.uk/formation2015)) in light of comments from academics, planning agents and local authorities. The 2015 document was complex because there was still serious dispute as to the level of demographic growth for Gypsies and Travellers in 2015. However, ORS now consider these disputes have largely been resolved at Planning Appeals and Local Plan Examinations, so we consider that much of the supporting evidence is now no longer required to be in the document.
3. This current document represents a shortened re-statement to our findings in 2015 to allow for easier comprehension of the issues involved. It contains no new research and if reader wishes to see further details of the supporting information, they should review the more detailed 2015 report.

## Introduction

4. Compared with the general population, the relative youthfulness of many Gypsy and Traveller populations means that their birth rates are likely to generate higher-than-average population growth, and proportionately higher *gross* household formation rates. However, while their *gross* rate of household growth might be high, Gypsy and Traveller communities' future accommodation needs are, in practice, affected by any reduction in the number of households due to dissolution and/or by movements in/out of the area and/or by transfers into other forms of housing. Therefore, the *net* rate of household growth is the *gross* rate of formation *minus* any reductions in households due to such factors.

## Modelling Population and Household Growth Rates

5. The basic equation for calculating the rate of Gypsy and Traveller population growth seems simple: start with the base population and then calculate the average increase/decrease by allowing for births, deaths, in-/out-migration and household dissolution. Nevertheless, deriving satisfactory estimates is difficult because the evidence is often tenuous – so, in this context in 2013, ORS modelled the growth of the national Gypsy and Traveller population based on the most likely birth and death rates, and by using PopGroup (the leading software for population and household forecasting). To do so, we supplemented the available national statistical sources with data derived from our own surveys.

## Migration Effects

6. Population growth is affected by national net migration and local migration (as Gypsies and Travellers move from one area to another). In terms of national migration, the population of Gypsies and Travellers is relatively fixed, with little international migration. It is in principle possible for Irish Travellers (based in Ireland) to move to the UK, but there is no evidence of this happening to a significant extent and the vast majority of Irish Travellers were born in the UK or are long-term residents.

## Population Profile

7. The main source for the rate of Gypsy and Traveller population growth is the UK 2011 Census. The ethnicity question in the 2011 Census included for the first time 'Gypsy and Irish Traveller' as a specific category. While non-response bias probably means that the size of the population was underestimated, the age profile the Census provides is not necessarily distorted and matches the profile derived from ORS's extensive household surveys.

**Table 1 - Age Profile for the Gypsy and Traveller Community in England (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)**

Age Group	Number of People	Cumulative Percentage
Age 0 to 4	5,725	10.4
Age 5 to 7	3,219	16.3
Age 8 to 9	2,006	19.9
Age 10 to 14	5,431	29.8
Age 15	1,089	31.8
Age 16 to 17	2,145	35.7
Age 18 to 19	1,750	38.9
Age 20 to 24	4,464	47.1
Age 25 to 29	4,189	54.7
Age 30 to 34	3,833	61.7
Age 35 to 39	3,779	68.5
Age 40 to 44	3,828	75.5
Age 45 to 49	3,547	82.0
Age 50 to 54	2,811	87.1
Age 55 to 59	2,074	90.9
Age 60 to 64	1,758	94.1
Age 65 to 69	1,215	96.3
Age 70 to 74	905	97.9
Age 75 to 79	594	99.0
Age 80 to 84	303	99.6
Age 85 and over	230	100.0

## Birth and Fertility Rates

8. The table above provides a way of understanding the rate of population growth through births. The table shows that surviving children aged 0-4 years comprise 10.4% of the Gypsy and Traveller population – which means that, on average, 2.1% of the total population was born each year (over the last 5 years). The same estimate is confirmed if we consider that those aged 0-14 comprise 29.8% of the Gypsy and Traveller population – which also means that almost exactly 2% of the population was born each year.
9. The total fertility rate (TFR) for the whole UK population is just below 2 – which means that on average each woman can be expected to have just less than two children who reach adulthood. We know of only one estimate of fertility rates of the UK Gypsy and Traveller community, in *'Ethnic identity and inequalities in*

*Britain: The dynamics of diversity* by Dr Stephen Jivraj and Professor Ludi Simpson (published May 2015). The authors use the 2011 Census data to estimate the TFR for the Gypsy and Traveller community as 2.75.

10. ORS used our own multiple survey data to investigate the fertility rates of Gypsy and Traveller women. The ORS data shows that on average Gypsy and Traveller women aged 32 years have 2.5 children (but, because the children of mothers above this age point tend to leave home progressively, full TFRs were not completed). On this basis it is reasonable to infer an average of 3 children per woman during her lifetime, which is broadly consistent with the estimate of 2.75 children per woman derived from the 2011 Census.

## Death Rates

11. Although the above data imply an annual growth rate through births of about 2%, the death rate has also to be taken into account. Whereas the average life expectancy across the whole population of the UK is currently just over 80 years, a Sheffield University study found that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy is about 10-12 years less than average (Parry et al (2004) *'The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers: Report of Department of Health Inequalities in Health Research Initiative'*, University of Sheffield).
12. Therefore, in our population growth modelling we used a conservative estimate of average life expectancy as 72 years – which is entirely consistent with the lower-than-average number of Gypsies and Travellers aged over 70 years in the 2011 Census (and also in ORS's own survey data).

## Modelling Outputs

13. If we assume a TFR of 3 and an average life expectancy of 72 years for Gypsies and Travellers, then the modelling, undertaken in PopGroup, projects the population to increase by 66% over the next 40 years – implying a population compound growth rate of 1.25% per annum. If we assume that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy increases to 77 years by 2050, then the projected population growth rate rises to nearly 1.50% per annum. To generate an 'upper range' rate of population growth, we assumed an implausible TFR of 4 and an average life expectancy rising to 77 over the next 40 years – which then yields an 'upper range' growth rate of 1.90% per annum.

## Household Growth

14. In addition to population growth influencing the number of households, the size of households also affects the number. Hence, population and household growth rates do not necessarily match directly, mainly due to the current tendency for people to live in smaller childless or single person households.
15. Because the Gypsy and Traveller population is relatively young and has many single parent households, a 1.25%-1.50% annual population growth could yield higher-than-average household growth rates, particularly if average household sizes fall or if younger-than-average households form. However, while there is evidence that Gypsy and Traveller households already form at an earlier age than in the general population, the scope for a more rapid rate of growth, through even earlier household formation, is limited.
16. Based on the 2011 Census, the table below compares the age of household representatives in English households with those in Gypsy and Traveller households – showing that the latter has many more household representatives aged under-25 years. In the general English population 3.60% of household representatives are aged 16-24, compared with 8.70% in the Gypsy and Traveller population. ORS's survey data shows that about 10% of Gypsy and Traveller households have household representatives aged under-25 years.

Table 2 - Age of Head of Household (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)

Age of household representative	All households in England		Gypsy and Traveller households in England	
	Number of households	Percentage of households	Number of households	Percentage households
Age 24 and under	790,974	3.6%	1,698	8.7%
Age 25 to 34	3,158,258	14.3%	4,232	21.7%
Age 35 to 49	6,563,651	29.7%	6,899	35.5%
Age 50 to 64	5,828,761	26.4%	4,310	22.2%
Age 65 to 74	2,764,474	12.5%	1,473	7.6%
Age 75 to 84	2,097,807	9.5%	682	3.5%
Age 85 and over	859,443	3.9%	164	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,063,368</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19,458</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>17</sup> The following table shows that the proportion of single person Gypsy and Traveller households is not dissimilar to the wider population of England; but there are more lone parents, fewer couples without children, and fewer households with non-dependent children amongst Gypsies and Travellers

Table 3 - Household Type (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)

Household Type	All households in England		Gypsy and Traveller households in England	
	Number of households	Percentage of households	Number of households	Percentage households
Single person	6,666,493	30.3%	5,741	29.5%
Couple with no children	5,681,847	25.7%	2345	12.1%
Couple with dependent children	4,266,670	19.3%	3683	18.9%
Couple with non-dependent children	1,342,841	6.1%	822	4.2%
Lone parent: Dependent children	1,573,255	7.1%	3,949	20.3%
Lone parent: All children non-dependent	766,569	3.5%	795	4.1%
Other households	1,765,693	8.0%	2,123	10.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,063,368</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19,458</b>	<b>100%</b>

18. The key point, though, is that since 20% of Gypsy and Traveller households are lone parents with dependent children, and up to 30% are single persons, there is limited potential for further reductions in average household size to increase current household formation rates significantly – and there is no reason to think that earlier household formations or increasing divorce rates will in the medium term affect household formation rates. While there are differences with the general population, a 1.25%-1.50% per annum Gypsy and Traveller population growth rate is likely to lead to a household growth rate of 1.25%-1.50% per annum

## Summary Conclusions

19. The best available evidence suggests that the net annual Gypsy and Traveller household growth rate is 1.50% per annum. Some local authorities might allow for a household growth rate of up to 2.50% per annum, to provide a 'margin' if their populations are relatively youthful; but in areas where on-site surveys indicate that there are fewer children in the Gypsy and Traveller population, lower estimates should be used.
20. The outcomes of this Technical Note can be used to provide an estimate of local new household formation rates by adjusting the upper national growth rate of 1.50% based on local demographic characteristics.
21. In addition, in certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are higher or lower than national data has identified, or the population age structure is skewed by certain age groups, it may not be appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement should be made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children identified in local household interviews. This should be based on the assumption that 50% of households likely to form will stay in any given area and that 50% will pair up and move to another area, while still considering the impact of dissolution. This is based on evidence from over 140 GTAA's that ORS have completed across England and Wales involving over 4,300 household interviews.




By virtue of paragraph(s) 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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# **Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment Scrutiny Task & Finish**

## **Terms of Reference**

Version: 1.1  
March 2023

## 1. Project Background and Context

- 1.1 Project scope is to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in line with Welsh Government methodology. This will i) **identify accommodation need** as required by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and ii) provide evidence (together with other needs assessments) to inform the replacement LDP. The project will work with other key partners to develop a communications and stakeholder engagement action plan and seek to deliver priority actions to improve the understanding of the need for a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. **NB:** The project will **not seek to identify locations** for GT accommodation provision.

## 2. Membership

- 2.1 The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Scrutiny Task & Finish Group will consist of:
- 6 elected members – representatives appointed by each of the Council's Member Area Groups (MAG) to ensure geographic spread

## 3. Officer Input

- Corporate Director, Economy and Public Realm
- Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services
- Service representatives
- Corporate Project Manager

Invitations will also be extended to Travelling Ahead (Third Sector Advocacy organisation for Gypsies and Travellers funded by WG), North Wales Police Diversity Team.

The consultancy Opinion Research Services (ORS) will also be invited to meet the Task and Finish Group members and to attend to present updates as necessary.

## 4. Purpose of the Work

To ensure that the approach taken to deliver the new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment complies with the Welsh Government methodology and that previous feedback is considered within the new document in line with Scrutiny requirements.

To monitor progress and advise as necessary on the delivery of the Assessment. To help to develop a suitable stakeholder engagement plan that will satisfy Scrutiny concerns and requirements.

This work will be responsible for supporting the delivery of the new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment document. This work **will not** include any site selection or respond to/review other ongoing operational matters around Gypsy and Traveller sites or encampments.

## **5. Sphere of Work**

For members to:

- gain an understanding of the work area including the statutory responsibilities for a GTAA
- contribute to the development of the GTAA work brief and monitoring that this will comply with the requirements and methodology set out by Welsh Government (including considerations around consultation with Gypsy and Traveller families) and address the previous recommendations raised through the Scrutiny process
- identify key stakeholders and contribute to the development of a Stakeholder Engagement plan (both for the Gypsy and Traveller community as part of the GTAA process and the wider stakeholders as part of the project communications plan)
- monitor and advise as necessary on the delivery of the Assessment and subsequent report to ensure compliance with both WG methodology and Scrutiny recommendations

## **6. Timescales**

Due to statutory deadlines for the submission of the GTAA it will be necessary for the Task and Finish group to meet several times over the first few months in order to develop and agree with Scrutiny Committee the delivery approach and stakeholder engagement plan for the work.

The group's focus will then move from assisting the development of the delivery approach to become one around monitoring. Meetings will be set in line with the project delivery plan (currently under development).

## 7. Governance

The Task and Finish Group will report its findings, conclusions and any proposed recommendations to Communities Scrutiny Committee.

## 8. Administration

An officer from Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services will provide administrative support to the Task and Finish Group. They will be responsible for keeping an appropriate record of the Group's proceedings which shall be made available upon request to Elected Members and/or Democratic Services staff.

## 9. Elected Members

**1 representative from each Member Area Group (MAG) to be confirmed:**

- **Dee Valley:** Cllr. Alan Hughes
- **Denbigh:** Cllr. Merfyn Parry
- **Elwy:** Cllr. Peter Scott     **(Chair)**
- **Prestatyn:** Cllr. Hugh Irving
- **Rhyl:** Cllr. Alan James     **(Vice Chair)**
- **Ruthin:** Cllr. Bobby Feeley

## 10. Officer Support to the Group

- Tony Ward (Corporate Director, Economy and Public Realm)
- Emlyn Jones (Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services)
- Angela Loftus (Strategic Housing and Planning Manager)
- Kimberley Mason (Corporate Project Manager)
- Appropriate Representative Travelling Ahead     - to be appointed
- Appropriate Representative North Wales Police     - to be appointed
- \*Lead Member(s) can be invited as expert witness(es)

Version Control:

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date of Amendment</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1.0	March 2021	First Issue	KW
1.1	March 2023	Revised	KM

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# **Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)**

## **Task and Finish Group Report October 2023**

### **1. Purpose of the Group**

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires that an assessment of accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers must be undertaken and submitted to Welsh Government (WG) every 5 years. The Council undertook the assessment between August and October 2021 and a Task and Finish Group (T&F) was established to work on the initial Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). The GTAA was submitted to WG on 24 December 2021.

Following Cabinet approval and WG submission of the previous GTAA, a family with an existing need who had previously declined to participate, contacted the Council, and asked to now be included.

Following a report to Cabinet Briefing on 9 January 2023, it was acknowledged that the previous T&F group had worked well in supporting the initial assessment, therefore it was agreed to re-establish this group to support work on the new assessment. The T&F Group has now concluded its work and this report provides the conclusions from the work of the group. This report provides an update on the work and presents the findings and recommendations of the T&F Group.

Welsh Government (WG) have published detailed statutory guidance '*Undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments*'.<sup>1</sup> This forms the basis for undertaking the GTAA and WG will assess the completed GTAA against this methodology.

The purpose of the T&F Group has been to provide quality assurance by ensuring that the approach taken to deliver the revised GTAA has complied with the WG methodology and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/undertaking-gypsy-and-traveller-accommodation-assessments.pdf>

that previous feedback has been considered within the new document in line with Scrutiny requirements. In addition, the group has monitored progress and advised as necessary on the delivery of the Assessment.

### **2. GTAA Project structure and management**

The WG GTAA methodology requires that a project Steering Group is established. There has however been a more comprehensive and robust project structure developed for managing the Denbighshire GTAA, including establishment of a member-led Project Board and a T&F Group. This is above the requirements set out within the methodology and has included a role for Elected Members within the project structure through a T&F Group.

#### **2.1 Project Board**

This is a project management requirement and is not a requirement of the WG GTAA methodology. A Project Board was originally established with the purpose of ensuring that this piece of work is Member-led through inclusion of the Leader of the Council and the Lead Member. The Board reconvened in late 2022 to complete the revised Assessment, at this point the Leader agreed with the Board that it was not imperative for them to attend for the additional work. The role of the Project Board has been to manage the delivery of the project, secure resources for the project, and ensure communication about the project.

#### **2.2 Task and Finish (T&F) Group**

This is not a requirement of the WG GTAA methodology. The role of the Task and Finish Group as defined in the agreed Terms of Reference has been to monitor adherence to the methodology and report to Communities Scrutiny Committee.

#### **2.3 Consultants**

The WG methodology allows for external consultants to be engaged to undertake the Accommodation Needs Assessment. Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned to undertake the assessment on behalf of Denbighshire County Council and Conwy County Borough Council. Separate reports have been developed for each authority and they have carried out the additional work at this time for Denbighshire.



## Task and Finish Group Report (October 2023)

### 2.4 Membership of the Task and Finish (T&F) Group

The T&F Group comprises one elected Member appointed by each of the Council's Member Area Groups (MAG), to ensure geographical spread. The group has been chaired by Councillor Peter Scott and has been supported by the Strategic Planning and Housing Manager and the Corporate Project Manager. The Lead Member, Councillor Win Mullen-James has also been part of the group. The group has met three times since reconvening in March 2023 and discussions have included all aspects of the Welsh Government methodology, project structure, data sources, engagement and communications, data analysis and draft revised GTAA findings.

A summary of the issues discussed at each group meeting is set out below:

<b>Summary of Task and Finish Group meetings</b>	
<b>Meeting 1 - 2 March 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewed and agreed Terms of Reference for the group</li><li>• Reviewed background, context, and statutory requirements</li><li>• Reviewed and agreed Project Structure and management</li><li>• Discussed timetable for GTAA and future group meetings</li></ul>
<b>Meeting 2 – 14 April 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussed the work programme and progress</li><li>• Reviewed the governance process for GTAA resubmission</li></ul>
<b>Meeting 3 – 21 September 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewed the draft revised GTAA</li><li>• Reviewed and agreed draft report to Communities Scrutiny providing an update of the work of the T&amp;F Group, seeking Scrutiny endorsement of the revised GTAA</li><li>• Agreed the Group would attend Scrutiny with Chair Cllr. Peter Scott presenting the report</li></ul>

### 3. Review of GTAA summary findings

A summary of the GTAA analysis and findings for residential and transit needs were presented to the T&F Group at its meeting on 21 September 2023. The findings conclude that:

- Based upon the evidence presented in ORS' study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the study period (2023/24 - 2028/29) is for **16 permanent residential pitches**.
- Based on the need by 2033, the end of the Denbighshire replacement LDP period, is for a further **2 permanent residential pitches** for future household growth.
- This gives a total need for the whole period across Denbighshire for **18 permanent residential pitches** which is **an increase of 6 permanent residential pitches from the previous GTAA completed in 2021**.
- To clarify, 1 pitch will meet the needs of 1 household.
- There is **no evidence of need for a permanent transit site**, due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, short term nature of these encampments and the fact that interviews with Gypsies and Travellers did not identify there was a need for permanent transit provision locally.

**The Task and Finish Group reviewed the GTAA data analysis and summary findings at its meeting on 21 September 2023 and agreed that they were satisfied that the WG methodology had been applied appropriately to the analysis of need.**

The T&F Group concluded that the arrangements and process undertaken by the group had worked well and requested that the same group membership be involved in the site selection for pitches, when required, in the next phase of this project.

### **4. Conclusion**

At its meeting on 21 September 2023 the T&F Group requested that comments and conclusions from the group should inform a report to Communities Scrutiny Committee on 19 October 2023, presented by the Chair of the T&F Group, Cllr. Peter Scott. It was agreed Members of the group could also attend Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting.

This report summarises the detailed in-depth discussions undertaken by the group and presents the key conclusions:

The Task and Finish Group reviewed the GTAA data analysis and summary findings at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 and agreed that they were satisfied that the WG methodology had been applied appropriately to the analysis of need in the revision of the GTAA.

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## **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2021, revised 2023: Well-being Impact Assessment Report**

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

**Assessment Number:** 896

**Brief description:** The Council is required under the Housing Act (Wales) 2014 section 101, to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers . The report provides an assessment of need to meet this duty. The Council is required to update the GTAA every five years. New assessments were originally required to be submitted to Welsh Government by Feb 2021 but this was extended to Feb 2022 in the light of Covid restrictions which impact on the methodology required to complete the assessment. Denbighshire's GTAA was submitted to Welsh Government in December 2021. This assessment has now been reviewed and updated and the revised GTAA is now in draft final form.

**Date Completed:** [TEXT HERE] Version: 0

**Completed by:** [TEXT HERE]

**Responsible Service:** Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services

**Localities affected by the proposal:** Whole County,

**Who will be affected by the proposal?** Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community in need of residential or transit accommodation. Residents of Denbighshire Elected Members.

**Was this impact assessment completed as a group?** Yes

## **Summary and Conclusion**

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

### **Score for the sustainability of the approach**

**3 out of 4 stars**

**Actual score : 27 / 36.**

### **Summary for each Sustainable Development principle**

#### **Long term**

Project is limited to a needs assessment at this stage and only identifies need. It does not propose mechanisms for meeting the identified need. Future stages will involve the consideration of physical assets, climate change etc but at this stage the report only assesses existing and predicted future growth.

#### **Prevention**

Through the identification of any housing needs for members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community the Council can actively take steps to address any need. This project is limited to the assessment of need. Any future actions to address the need will seek to ensure that the accommodation needs of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community are appropriately met and seek to reduce the occurrence of unauthorised encampments which may be in ecologically sensitive locations.

#### **Integration**

An up to date Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is a required piece of evidence for the progression of an LDP. Not having this assessment completed and approved by Council and Welsh Government will prevent the replacement LDP from progressing to Deposit, Examination and Adoption. This would leave the Council vulnerable to speculative development.

## Collaboration

The assessment process has been progressed jointly with Conwy CBC to Welsh Government Guidance to achieve benefits of collaboration. Denbighshire has received an individual needs assessment report for the county area. The Council has a duty under the Housing Act (Wales) 2014 to carry out this work.

## Involvement

The assessment is a factual price of work not subject to public consultation. There has been consultation with members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community and with representative organisations. Face to face interviews were offered as set out in WG Guidance. Criticism of previous assessments included insufficient engagement with members of the GRT Community, additional steps have been taken to increase involvement in this assessment. A Task and Finish Group has overseen engagement with the GRT Community and that the study is compliant with the WG methodology.

## Summary of impact

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
<a href="#">A prosperous Denbighshire</a>	Neutral
<a href="#">A resilient Denbighshire</a>	Positive
<a href="#">A healthier Denbighshire</a>	Positive
<a href="#">A more equal Denbighshire</a>	Positive
<a href="#">A Denbighshire of cohesive communities</a>	Neutral
<a href="#">A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</a>	Positive

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
<a href="#">A globally responsible Denbighshire</a>	Positive

### Main conclusions

The overall impact of carrying out and revising the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is positive. The assessment is required by law and forms a key piece of evidence for the replacement LDP. Gypsies and Travellers are a group often subject to discrimination and they have protected characteristics recognised in law. The GTAA forms an assessment and identifies any need for culturally appropriate accommodation for members of the Gypsy and Traveller community currently residing within Denbighshire or travelling through the County. A project management approach has been taken to progressing the study with regular briefings for elected members and senior officers. A member led Task and Finish group was established to oversee the consultation with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community to ensure that their views are understood and taken into account. The GTAA establishes need for culturally appropriate accommodation but does not make recommendations on site specific locations to address that need.



## **The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.**

### **A prosperous Denbighshire**

#### **Overall Impact**

Neutral

#### **Justification for impact**

The project was limited to an assessment of the accommodation needs of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. The assessment identifies any accommodation needs but the strategy for meeting any needs will form a separate piece of work. Having a clear picture of accommodation needs will be beneficial as having stable and suitable accommodation provides a secure base from which to learn, seek employment and access health care.

#### **Further actions required**

Awareness raising must be carefully managed to ensure that consistent messages are used across Council services and in dealing with comments from the public. The Council should take a clear stance on how it will respond to racist comments and take appropriate action. The benefits of having a clear picture of accommodation needs needs to be communicated to all groups.

#### **Positive impacts identified:**

##### **A low carbon society**

In conducting telephone, rather than face to face interviews there have been carbon savings. Although all households were offered the opportunity to have a face to face interview, preference for telephone interviews were given in all cases.

##### **Quality communications, infrastructure and transport**

Having a clear and agreed assessment of accommodation needs of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community for Denbighshire will enable the Council to plan effectively.

##### **Economic development**

Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community may be at greater socio-economic disadvantage when compared to the general population. Having a clear and agreed assessment of their needs may assist in reducing this inequality.

### **Quality skills for the long term**

Conducting the assessment and progressing it through approval by the Council and Welsh Government may provide opportunities for awareness raising and training both across the Council and the wider public.

There has been considerable experience gained in the project management of a sensitive study which must be delivered to a limited timescale.

### **Quality jobs for the long term**

The assessment required project management support which has generated income for this service that is reliant on fees.

### **Childcare**

There are no anticipated impacts on childcare arising from the assessment.

### **Negative impacts identified:**

#### **A low carbon society**

No known impacts identified.

#### **Quality communications, infrastructure and transport**

No known impacts identified.

#### **Economic development**

No known impacts identified.

### **Quality skills for the long term**

The assessment interviews were carried out by consultants who are experienced in this type of work. There were limited opportunities for shared learning around the technical side of the assessment but there was learning around the management of a sensitive project.

Awareness raising can generate negative comments linked to stereotypes of people with protected characteristics.

### **Quality jobs for the long term**

No known impacts identified.

### **Childcare**

There are no anticipated impacts on childcare arising from the assessment.

### **A resilient Denbighshire**

#### **Overall Impact**

Positive

#### **Justification for impact**

The GTAA is a report that identifies the accommodation needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Families in Denbighshire. The GTAA only identifies the quantum of any need, it does not propose sites to address any identified need. The GTAA identifies need and indicates broadly where within the County the need exists. The identification of any sites to meet this need will form a separate piece of work. Completion of a GTAA is a requirement under the Housing Act (Wales) 2014. The GTAA is also a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP and must be completed and approved before the replacement LDP can be progressed to Examination and adoption. A new LDP is required to provide an up to date development framework that contributes to a more resilient Denbighshire.

#### **Further actions required**

The GTAA is a report that identifies the accommodation needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Families in Denbighshire. The GTAA only identifies the quantum of any need, it does not propose sites to address any identified need. A project management approach is being used to try to ensure

that the progression and approval of the GTAA is completed in a timely fashion. Elected members and senior officers have been regularly briefed and updated on the project prior to it starting and this has continued throughout its development.

## **Positive impacts identified:**

### **Biodiversity and the natural environment**

The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP. Having an up to date and approved GTAA will enable the replacement LDP to progress towards adoption. This will ensure that development happens in a planned manner on sites where the impacts on biodiversity and the natural environment are minimised. The replacement LDP will also contain up to date policies that will seek to protect the natural environment.

### **Biodiversity in the built environment**

The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP. Having an up to date and approved GTAA will enable the replacement LDP to progress towards adoption. This will ensure that development happens in a planned manner on sites where the impacts on the built environment are minimised. The replacement LDP will also contain up to date policies that will seek to protect the built environment.

### **Reducing waste, reusing and recycling**

The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP. Having an up to date and approved GTAA will enable the replacement LDP to progress towards adoption. The replacement LDP will contain up to date policies that will seek to reduce and manage waste.

### **Reduced energy/fuel consumption**

The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP. Having an up to date and approved GTAA will enable the replacement LDP to progress towards adoption. The replacement LDP will contain up to date policies that will seek to reduce energy consumption through increased use of renewable technologies, requirements for the installation of renewable technology in new developments and the drive towards being a net zero carbon Council.

### **People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity**

No known impacts identified.

### **Flood risk management**

The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP. Having an up to date and approved GTAA will enable the replacement LDP to progress towards adoption. The replacement LDP will reflect the latest flood risk policies and mapping to ensure that any developments are not subject to flood risk and that the impacts of climate change are fully considered.

### **Negative impacts identified:**

#### **Biodiversity and the natural environment**

Any delay in approving the GTAA will impact on the progress of the replacement LDP as it is a required part of the evidence base. Denbighshire may be subject to speculative development on non allocated sites due to not having an up to date LDP and an identified land supply for housing, employment, retail etc.

#### **Biodiversity in the built environment**

Any delay in approving the GTAA will impact on the progress of the replacement LDP as it is a required part of the evidence base. Denbighshire may be subject to speculative development on non allocated sites due to not having an up to date LDP and an identified land supply for housing, employment, retail etc.

#### **Reducing waste, reusing and recycling**

Any delay in approving the GTAA will impact on the progress of the replacement LDP as it is a required part of the evidence base. If there is no up to date LDP then the Council will be reliant on old policies that do not fully reflect the aspiration for carbon reduction and addressing the environmental emergency declared.

#### **Reduced energy/fuel consumption**

No known impacts identified.

#### **People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity**

No known impacts identified.

### **Flood risk management**

Any delay in approving the GTAA will impact on the progress of the replacement LDP as it is a required part of the evidence base. If there is no up to date LDP then the Council will be reliant on old policies that do not fully reflect the latest position regarding flood risk policy and mapping.

### **A healthier Denbighshire**

#### **Overall Impact**

Positive

#### **Justification for impact**

Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have protected characteristics and need culturally appropriate accommodation to support their emotional and mental well-being. Completing a GTAA identifies families in need. Establishing contact with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families may enable other support services to build improved relationships and improve the health outcomes for members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community.

#### **Further actions required**

Throughout the GTAA process the scope of the assessment has been made clear in that it relates to an assessment of need and that the study will not make any recommendations on sites. This can help to manage the expectations of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community.

#### **Positive impacts identified:**

##### **A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being**

The identification of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families in need of culturally appropriate accommodation in Denbighshire may assist other services in better engaging with families to support their health and well-being. As a highly marginalised group in society with protected characteristics, improved engagement may enable services to be better delivered through improved

communication and the building of relationships.

### **Access to good quality, healthy food**

No known impacts identified

### **People's emotional and mental well-being**

The GTAA is restricted to the identification of housing need for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. In carrying out the assessment the Council is acknowledging that people with protected characteristics may have different accommodation needs that are culturally appropriate to them. The acknowledgement of this need may improve the well-being of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families if they feel that their needs are better understood.

### **Access to healthcare**

The identification of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families in need of culturally appropriate accommodation in Denbighshire may assist other services in better engaging with families to support their health and well-being. As a highly marginalised group in society with protected characteristics, improved engagement may enable services to be better delivered through improved communication and the building of relationships.

### **Participation in leisure opportunities**

No known impacts identified

### **Negative impacts identified:**

#### **A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being**

No known impacts identified.

### **Access to good quality, healthy food**

No known impacts identified

### **People's emotional and mental well-being**

Approving the GTAA will raise the profile of the issue and may increase concern amongst both the settled and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities about future stages.

### **Access to healthcare**

No known impacts identified.

### **Participation in leisure opportunities**

No known impacts identified

### **A more equal Denbighshire**

#### **Overall Impact**

Positive

#### **Justification for impact**

Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and frequently suffer from discrimination. Completing and approving the GTAA which will identify any accommodation needs is a step towards reducing the inequality in housing opportunity suffered by members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community. Improved health and education outcomes might also be a positive impact in the longer term.

#### **Further actions required**

Regular briefings for elected members to pass on to their communities to dispel common misconceptions and reduce discrimination should it arise. Emphasise that the GTAA does not make recommendations on sites to meet the need identified. The Council can ensure that the project aligns with its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equalities Act (2010).

#### **Positive impacts identified:**

**Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation**



Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have protected characteristics under the Equalities Act. Completing and approving the GTAA which will identify any accommodation needs is a step towards reducing the inequality in housing opportunity suffered by members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community.

### **People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage**

Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and frequently suffer from discrimination. Completing and approving the GTAA which will identify any accommodation needs is a step towards reducing the inequality in housing opportunity suffered by members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community.

### **People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes**

Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and frequently suffer from discrimination and socio-economic disadvantage. Completing and approving the GTAA which will identify any accommodation needs is a step towards reducing the inequality in housing opportunity suffered by members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

### **Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage**

The GTAA identifies families in need of culturally appropriate accommodation. The GTAA does not make any recommendations as to sites but the Council will have information on the location of families in any need. This can be mapped against areas of known socio-economic disadvantage.

### **Negative impacts identified:**

**Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation**

Carrying out the GTAA may raise the profile of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community currently resident in Denbighshire which may increase their vulnerability as a group with protected characteristics.

### **People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage**

Approving the GTAA may raise the profile of members of the Gypsy and Traveller community currently resident in Denbighshire which may increase their vulnerability as a group with protected characteristics.

### **People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes**

Approving the GTAA may raise the profile of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community currently resident in Denbighshire which may increase their vulnerability as a group with protected characteristics who are also subject to socio-economic disadvantage..

### **Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage**

No known impacts identified.

### **A Denbighshire of cohesive communities**

#### **Overall Impact**

Neutral

#### **Justification for impact**

The impact is considered to be neutral as there are positive impacts in terms of increased consultation with a group with protected characteristics but that raising the profile of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community may lead to division. Lack of consultation with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community was highlighted by Scrutiny Committee as a weakness in the current GTAA. This has been addressed via a Task & Finish group of elected members who have overseen and approved all of the engagement for the assessment.

#### **Further actions required**

Individual families have been interviewed as part of the preparation and consultation of the assessment. Their identities and address details will not be disclosed although general geographical area(s) of need are highlighted in the report . A Task and finish group was established to ensure that the consultation and engagement was robust. A detailed communication and engagement strategy was developed to ensure there was early engagement with key stakeholders to raise awareness of the project. Officers will continue to support understanding through reviewing good practice and

lessons learnt from across the UK.

### **Positive impacts identified:**

#### **Safe communities and individuals**

Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community currently living in culturally inappropriate accommodation may be subject to discrimination

#### **Community participation and resilience**

The Welsh Government methodology for preparing the GTAA which must be followed includes a requirement for face to face interviews with members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. This ensures that members of the community who may not normally be reached by consultations have an opportunity to input into the assessment which directly concerns them. All households identified through extensive engagement expressed a preference for a telephone interview where they agreed to participate in the assessment.

#### **The attractiveness of the area**

The GTAA itself only assesses housing need and has no impact on the physical environment at this stage. The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the LDP and without it, the LDP cannot progress. The replacement LDP will contain policies for environmental protection and enhancement, and safeguard green space.

#### **Connected communities**

No known impacts identified

#### **Rural resilience**

No known impacts identified

### **Negative impacts identified:**

#### **Safe communities and individuals**

Approving the revised GTAA may raise awareness within wider communities that members of the

Gypsy and Traveller community are resident within an area. This may lead to an increase in discrimination and the perception that a particular group in society are receiving more assistance than others.

### **Community participation and resilience**

This Needs Assessment is targeting a traditionally hard to reach group which even with additional efforts taken to engage may not wish to participate in this process.

### **The attractiveness of the area**

The GTAA itself only assesses housing need and will have no impact on the physical environment at this stage. The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the LDP and without it, the LDP cannot progress. With no replacement LDP there will be no up to date policies for environmental protection and enhancement, and the safeguarding of green space.

### **Connected communities**

No known impacts identified

### **Rural resilience**

No known impacts identified

### **A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language**

### **Overall Impact**

Positive

### **Justification for impact**

The GTAA assesses the need for culturally appropriate accommodation of members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. This is a vital aspect of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller culture and the assessment will inform the Council of the needs of the community in order to sustain their heritage and culture. The GTAA is also a required piece of evidence for the replacement LDP. Having an up to date LDP will ensure that the latest policies to protect and enhance the Welsh language and our

cultural heritage will be in force.

### **Further actions required**

A project management approach was taken to the GTAA to ensure that it was completed in a timely fashion. There are regular briefings for elected Members and senior officers to ensure that there is clarity over the requirement to produce a GTAA; the methodology that must be followed and the reporting and approval process. The need to have the GTAA in place in order to progress the LDP is also being clearly communicated.

### **Positive impacts identified:**

#### **People using Welsh**

Some members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community will be Welsh speakers. The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP and must be completed and approved before the replacement LDP can be progressed to Examination and adoption. Having an up to date LDP will ensure that appropriate policies for the protection and enhancement of the Welsh language are included in the plan.

#### **Promoting the Welsh language**

Some members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community will be Welsh speakers. The GTAA is a required part of the evidence base for the replacement LDP and must be completed and approved before the replacement LDP can be progressed to Examination and adoption. Having an up to date LDP will ensure that appropriate policies for the protection and enhancement of the Welsh language are included in the plan.

#### **Culture and heritage**

Some members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have protected characteristics linked to their cultural identity. The GTAA will assess the needs of members of this community in terms of culturally appropriate accommodation.

### **Negative impacts identified:**

#### **People using Welsh**

Any delay to the completion and approval of the GTAA will impact on the LDP preparation. The replacement LDP cannot be approved without an up to date GTAA. If the replacement LDP is not progressed then the policies used to determine planning proposals will be increasingly out of date and opportunities may be lost to encourage the use of the Welsh language.

### **Promoting the Welsh language**

Any delay to the completion and approval of the GTAA will impact on the LDP preparation. The replacement LDP cannot be approved without an up to date GTAA. If the replacement LDP is not progressed then the policies used to determine planning proposals will be increasingly out of date and opportunities may be lost to promote the use of the Welsh language.

### **Culture and heritage**

No known impacts identified

### **A globally responsible Denbighshire**

#### **Overall Impact**

Positive

#### **Justification for impact**

A jointly commissioned study has reduced costs and the need to travel to conduct interviews. Improved communication and links between members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community and service providers may lead to improved outcomes in terms of health and education.

#### **Further actions required**

No known negative impacts have been identified at this stage.

#### **Positive impacts identified:**

##### **Local, national, international supply chains**

The study has been jointly commissioned with Conwy CBC to reduce the impact of travel for

interviews and consultations. Each authority has received its own detailed report and evidence of need.

### **Human rights**

Members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have protected characteristics under the Equalities Act. The GTAA is a requirement under the Housing Act (Wales) 2014 to make an assessment of the need for culturally appropriate accommodation for members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community in Denbighshire.

### **Broader service provision in the local area or the region**

The GTAA requires interviews and consultation with members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. Establishing links with families currently resident in the County or passing through may assist other services concerned with health, education etc to build relationships with the families to better deliver services and improve outcomes across a range of partner organisations.

### **Reducing climate change**

No known impacts identified

### **Negative impacts identified:**

#### **Local, national, international supply chains**

No known impacts identified

### **Human rights**

No known impacts identified

### **Broader service provision in the local area or the region**

No known impacts identified

### **Reducing climate change**

No known impacts identified





<b>Report to</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of meeting</b>	November 21, 2023
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets  Helen Vaughan-Evans, Head of Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets
<b>Report author</b>	Emma Horan, Planning and Performance Officer
<b>Title</b>	<b>Corporate Plan Performance Update: July to September 2023</b>

## 1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. To present an update on the council's performance against its [Corporate Plan](#) as at the end of September (quarter 2), including Strategic Equality objectives and the seven key areas of governance, which are: corporate planning; financial planning; performance management; risk management; workforce planning; assets; and procurement.

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

- 2.1. Regular reporting is an essential monitoring requirement of the council's Performance Management Framework. Quarterly performance reports are routinely shared with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Cabinet and Performance Scrutiny to support constructive discussion about our performance and the identification of interventions where necessary.
- 2.2. These quarterly performance update reports capture the evidence that forms part of our Self-Assessment of performance against our functions, as required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

## 3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. It is recommended that Cabinet considers the report, and agrees any further actions required to respond to any performance related issues highlighted within the report.

3.2. Subject to any agreed changes, Cabinet confirms the content of the draft report for reporting to Performance Scrutiny, which will meet on November 30.

## **4. Report details**

4.1. The report contained within appendix 1 is our familiar quarterly Performance Update Report, which is our process for ongoing self-assessment, for the period July to September 2023. The Council is required to self-assess our performance against the delivery of our functions under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

4.2. It is the second of four Performance Self-Assessment updates that are produced throughout the year to self-assess our performance against the delivery of our functions. Broadly, the report is presented in two parts that seek to outline progress against the following key areas:

- Performance Objectives – comprised of our Corporate Plan / Strategic Equality Objectives (which also form our Well-being Objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015).
- Governance Areas – pre-determined by the statutory guidance on performance under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

4.3. The quarterly Performance Self-Assessment Update reports are all shared with the SLT, Cabinet and Performance Scrutiny (tabling quarters two and four with committees). Quarter 4 reports are also shared with the Governance and Audit Committee and County Council, including a Self-Assessment Summary for the year. The reports should be seen as tools to support constructive, open and honest discussion about our performance, helping to identify good practise and areas for intervention or further scrutiny.

4.4. This Performance Update Report presents the latest picture covering July to September 2023, and is in a slightly updated format to reflect discussions following the Corporate Plan Tranche Review in September and publication of our April to June report:

- This report now includes sections that give a summary of measures and projects supporting each pledge for each of the nine themes in the Corporate Plan.

- WIMD measures now appear at the end of each section.
- Stakeholder Survey measures now sit in their own table with data columns for those that answered 'agree', 'disagree' and 'no opinion/unsure', with a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree. We are, though, still considering Stakeholder Survey reporting.
- We have started to review, with Heads of Service, thresholds for some of our measures. We have noted where these have been updated.
- Pipeline projects are included.
- Following discussion by the new Well-Run, High Performing Council Board the wording of the pledges under theme 9 have been expanded. Approval for these wording changes will be sought from County Council as part of our Self-Assessment Report for the year in spring 2024. In the meantime, we will work on the basis that the expanded wording will be accepted.

4.5. Any further opportunities to continually improve the Performance Management Framework and Performance Update Reports, as always, will be taken by Strategic Planning Team.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?**

5.1. The Performance Update Report includes an evaluation of the council's success in delivering against its Corporate Plan themes.

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

6.1. There is no additional cost associated with this report.

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

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) is not required for this report. A WIA was undertaken on the Corporate Plan itself, and was presented to County Council when the plan was approved in October 2022. New projects / programmes of work within the Corporate Plan will be individually assessed, as any new actions will be going forward.

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

- 8.1. The report has been compiled by the Strategic Planning Team, in consultation with council services. The performance information contained within the document has been provided by services, and has been drawn from the Verto performance management system and reflects, where appropriate, discussion by Corporate Plan Boards or actions following the Tranche Review.
- 8.2. Discussion has already taken place at SLT, and following Cabinet (November 21), the report will be tabled at Performance Scrutiny (November 30).

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

- 9.1. There are no direct financial implications of this report. However, it should be noted that the overall financial position faced by the council for 2024 to 2025 and beyond, may put pressure on services in maintaining performance levels in some areas in the future.

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

- 10.1. Failure to publish our performance update reports, that contribute to our annual Self-Assessment, would likely result in statutory recommendations from Audit Wales, with implications for the reputation of the council.
- 10.2. There is a risk of poor performance being reported out of context, impacting on our reputation. We will therefore share the draft report with the Communications Team.

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

- 11.1. Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (chapter 1, section 89).
- 11.2. Part 2 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (section 13).
- 11.3. The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 (section 16); and The Equality Act (Authorities subject to the Socio-economic Inequality Duty) (Wales) Regulations 2021.

# Corporate Plan Performance Update: July to September 2023

This document presents the council's performance against its Corporate Plan themes and governance areas between July to September 2023, including our application of the Sustainable Development principle, the Public Sector Equality Duty, and Socio-Economic Duty.

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## Contact details and more information

For more information, or to let us know what you think about anything in this report, contact us:

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**By telephone:** 01824 706291

Rydym yn croesawu galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg / We welcome telephone calls in Welsh.

### **By post:**

Strategic Planning and Performance Team  
Denbighshire County Council  
PO Box 62  
Ruthin  
LL15 9AZ

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

### **To keep up-to-date:**

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## Summary position

The chapters below provide a summary of activity that has taken place during the last period beneath our Corporate Plan themes, with a round-up of contributing news and committee items. There will be aspects still in need of development and some gaps to fill; some of these will be confirmed in subsequent reports, others are more complex and will require further scoping – and often form part of the forward work plans for the new Corporate Plan Boards. Detailed comments for annual measures previously reported may be found in our [performance self-assessment update reports January to March and April to June 2023 to 2024](#).

## Corporate Plan theme summary

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

### A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

Our [Housing](#) theme continues to show positive progress in relation to projects supporting this theme. As reported previously, we are aware and already responding to address weaknesses in our performance, especially in relation to homelessness where outcomes for our communities are not as positive as we want and aspire them to be. We are starting to see more people supported by My Home Denbighshire (the homelessness early intervention service), with a greater proportion of those supported not requiring a referral into the homelessness prevention service. The energy efficiency of council homes project is 'At Risk', affected by a number of factors. Affordable and extra care housing projects continue and are 'On Target' and the number of people on the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) waiting list, whilst remaining a concern, shows some improvement with fewer people on the waiting list this period.

### A prosperous Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles



Shared Prosperity and Levelling Up funded projects are progressing in support of our [Prosperous Denbighshire](#) theme. However, we are facing some challenges regarding the Former North Wales Hospital project, whilst we await the section 106 agreement and funding. Some of our Rhyl-based projects are also experiencing delays (the Queen's Building) or funding shortages (project to reconnect Rhyl High Street with the beach). The Rhyl Business Improvement Districts, it is hoped, will contribute to further regeneration of the town. The latest tourism figures show some significant improvement in terms of visitor numbers and the economic impact of tourism. However, some of the critical measures (about incomes and employment) for this theme are a 'Priority for Improvement'. The new economic strategy for Denbighshire, which will, it is hoped, stimulate positive change for businesses, our economy and residents will be developed with support from the Well-being for Future Generations Commissioner's Office.

### **A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

In terms of a [healthier, happier and caring Denbighshire](#), this report refers to the findings of the Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report, which notes that the demand on social care services had increased, and that performance had not progressed as well as the services would have liked due to national challenges and budgetary constraints. We are concerned about the increase in referrals made under Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (allegations about practitioners and those in a position of trust). However, the safeguarding report has highlighted the high level of safeguarding enquiries completed for adults within 7 days. Embedding the 'Whole School Approach' to mental health and well-being remains a priority. While the figure is lower this period compared to last, the distribution of specialist equipment that might enable single handed care means that some individuals are now receiving full or partial single-handed care, with potential cost savings of £1,500 per week.

### **A learning and growing Denbighshire**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

Attainment measures in support of our [Learning and Growing](#) theme are still to be confirmed as we wait for Welsh Government to publish comparable core data sets around

school standards. The Modernising Education Programme continues to experience delays for several reasons, but particularly due to issues with the feasibility of preferred sites. Early Years support, Llwybrau and Working Denbighshire are achieving some positive outcomes with individuals accessing childcare and parenting support, work and volunteering experience, and support into employment. We need to continue to work with schools in relation to community focussed activities.

### **A better connected Denbighshire**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

In support of a [better connected Denbighshire](#) we have completed our annual Surface Dressing programme on a number of high priority roads and our annual Resurfacing Programme - on a number of roads across the county where the life has expired - is ongoing. The percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) remains a 'Priority for Improvement'. Discussions with Welsh Government to secure funding to deliver the most viable option to replace Llannerch Bridge are ongoing. We have also been making preparations for the upcoming 20mph speed limit coming into force from September 17. Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Projects will support this theme in terms of electric vehicle charging, public realm, active travel, and investment in community hub facilities, with an expected delivery date of March 2025.

### **A greener Denbighshire**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

Ensuring that we meet our [net carbon zero commitment](#) as an organisation by 2030 continues to be a challenge and will not be easily achieved. Becoming an Ecologically Positive Council by 2030 is looking more promising. We have robust governance in place to test our progress and the plans we have in place. The first official review and refresh of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy will be carried out this year, 2023 to 2024. Delivery of the strategy does not stop whilst this review is taking place; work continues at pace concurrently with the review to deliver Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council and reduction in supply chain emissions. Data for reducing carbon tonnage from

our supply chains is currently pending (as are previous years), whilst we revisit the data collation methodology.

### **A fairer, safe, and more equal Denbighshire**

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

Our overall judgement about our measures for a [fairer, safe and more equal Denbighshire](#) reflects the fact the majority of critical measures in this theme are a 'Priority for Improvement' and have been for some time. The obstacles and challenges in relation to poverty are perennial in some cases. Provision of Free School Meals continues to expand however, and it is hoped this will alleviate some of the effects of poverty on children. The number of repeat victims of domestic abuse has increased, so too the number of repeat offenders of domestic abuse. The significant spike in volumes is also evident for the rest of North Wales. Further work is required to understand the significant increase, but it is likely to reflect improvements in recording standards. Staff completion of key equality e-learning modules are a 'Priority for Improvement'; however, some modules may be more pertinent to certain job roles than others.

### **A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

In terms of our [vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language](#) theme, the reduction of learners receiving Welsh medium education in September 2020 makes the ambitious targets of our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), very far-reaching. Support and investment are in place to deliver the WESP, bolstered by the county's Welsh Language Strategy. A workshop is being planned for all elected members to brief them on what the council is doing to promote Welsh in the county. Our pledge to 'Develop a cultural and heritage strategy and a programme of events' remains on hold. Despite this, the council continues to support and promote a wide range of cultural projects and events.

### **A well-run, high performing council**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

The new [Well-Run, High Performing Council](#) Board, providing governance for this theme, will be established in October 2023. At the time of writing this update, the Board had met and agreed a way forward to progress the theme's five pledges, which are aligned to our council's five principles. Some changes to this theme's pledges have been requested, which offer an expansion and clarification on each pledge. Approval for these wording changes will be sought from County Council as part of our Self-Assessment Report for the year in spring 2024.

Our [self-assessment against the seven key governance areas](#) paints a largely positive picture of how well the council is performing. We have also provided an update on the significant funding gaps the council is facing. The council's Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet are working closely to deliver a balanced budget so that the council is financially stable now and in the future.

## A Note on Measuring Performance

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

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

Our data tables use this same language, except for 'Priority for Improvement', which is truncated to 'Priority to Improve'. Our data tables also show information about trend. Trend is identified as 'Better', 'Worse', or 'Same', and is based on a comparison with the previous period for which we have data. Where possible, we also show trend for projects and activities, which is determined by comparing the overall status of the project or activity with its status in the previous period. Project and activity statuses are identified as 'On Target', 'Experiencing Obstacles', 'At Risk' or 'Compromised'.

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

# **A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

## **Corporate Plan Update**

### **Ensure that there is quality housing that meets the needs of vulnerable people, assisting them to lead independent lives in appropriate accommodation for as long as possible**

Delivering the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan is an important programme of work for the council and one that integrates a number of actions from across many services. The project continues to make good progress against its aims and is considered to be 'On Target.' In September, Performance Scrutiny reviewed the [Housing and Homelessness Strategy](#), noting its progress. The Strategy and Action Plan will be scrutinised again in 12 months.

The Ruthin Extra Care Housing project that continues to progress 'On Target' and will contribute towards meeting the specialist housing needs of vulnerable people in Denbighshire. The Corwen Extra Care project is at business case stage and will enhance this provision further.

### **Prevent homelessness, and ensure that any instances of it are rare, brief, and unrepeated**

Preventing homelessness is a priority for the council, and a number of measures have started to be monitored to inform this service area. The number of referrals received into the homelessness Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) service increased from 43 at the end of June, to 64 at the end of September. During the period, there was also an increase from 69.77% to 92.18% in the percentage of Early Intervention and Prevention referrals that were prevented from presenting to the homelessness prevention service. The council is taking steps to ensure early engagement with people at risk of homelessness, and we can report that 39 people were supported by the Citizens Advice Denbighshire Homelessness Prevention Team link officer by the end of September.

The council will continue to focus on early intervention and prevention, working in collaboration with partners such as the Salvation Army. A project to reduce the reliance on unsuitable temporary accommodation by establishing some in-house emergency housing facilities for homeless citizens is progressing with plans in place for assessing further sites for suitability.

In August, it was reported that after listening to public feedback, plans to create temporary homeless accommodation at [Maes Emlyn in Rhyl](#) were no longer being pursued. The council now plans to redevelop the site to achieve the long-term goal of providing more social housing to meet demand. This is evidence of the council's commitment to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Sustainable Development Principle. By ensuring citizens are involved in decision making, the council hopes to foster good long-term relationships, prevent future problems from occurring and benefit those at a socio-economic disadvantage. A pre-planning consultation for the new development will be published where residents will have another opportunity to be involved and share their views on the new plans.

### **Upgrade the council housing stock**

Since the last reporting period, one project remains 'At Risk' and that is to improve energy efficiency in council houses. It is believed that the new and soon to be implemented Welsh Housing Quality Standard will create an extra financial pressure on the service as additional measures will be required to comply with the new standard. Inflated costs and the lack of qualified trades in the sector are also contributory factors to the status of the project. There is progress, however, in that the average Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating across the council's housing stock continues to rise.

In July, a project to improve the energy efficiency of the [Aberadda council flats](#) in Llangollen was reported to be near completion. Denbighshire Housing has replaced the roof, improved insulation and increased the energy efficiency of the building. Similar projects are planned across Denbighshire in the near future.

As well as pledging to upgrade the energy efficiency of council houses, the council has a duty to ensure they're maintained, safe and suitable for the needs of residents. The percentage of emergency housing repairs completed within target time for the period has remained at an 'Acceptable' rate of 96.90%. Also, a further 56 disabled adaptations have been carried out for council house tenants between July and September.

There has been a review of some performance thresholds which required updating in this theme. These relate to the Denbighshire [Housing Tenant Survey](#), which is launched every two years to inform service provision.

### **Signpost residents to opportunities to improve the efficiency of their homes**

A clearer picture of how people may be supported to improve the energy efficiency of their homes is emerging as new measures start to be monitored. We know that between July and September 2023, 143 households were signposted and helped through the ECO4 scheme - a government scheme providing funding for eligible homeowners to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes. The number of recorded page views of the energy efficiency page on our website reached 357 up until September. This number is likely to be higher as we can only record visits to the webpage where browser cookies have been accepted. Discussions are taking place to overcome capacity issues relating to promoting the energy efficiency page on our website through social media channels. We are 'On Target' to signpost residents to the Welsh Government's Nest scheme for energy efficiency support, with the awareness campaign complete and a mail out scheduled during the next few months.

### **Deliver more homes to meet local need and demand**

Several projects aimed at delivering more affordable, specialist and council homes are running 'On Target.' This includes the project to provide affordable housing at Edward Henry Street and the Additional Council Housing Developments Project, which has an improved delivery confidence.

An activity to 'Work with the Rhyl Regeneration Programme Board to Contribute to Progressing the Rhyl Residential Strategy' has been renamed to 'Progress the Rhyl Residential Strategy'. The project is awaiting the publication of Welsh Government guidance to be able to complete a Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment, and as such is still 'Experiencing Obstacles.'

The percentage of empty private properties brought back in to use through direct action by the council has increased from 2% during the last quarterly period to 7% for the period between July and September 2023, and performance is now considered 'Excellent'.

Also during the period, a public consultation whether to increase the council tax premium charges for both [long term empty and second homes](#) has taken place, with the majority of



respondents agreeing with proposals for additional charges. The proposals align with the council's long-term aims to encourage home owners not to leave their properties empty and bring them back into use to meet local need and demand. In July, Cabinet met to discuss the findings of the consultation and consider the [council tax premium proposals](#) to these homes, agreeing to progress the matter by seeking County Council approval. In September, County Council discussed the [proposals to increase council tax premium](#) charges and agreed by majority vote to accept the recommendations, with one additional amendment. The recommendations were to retain the 50% premium charge for April 2023, increase to 100% from April 2024, and to 150% from April 2025. Also that properties unoccupied and unfurnished for 5 years or more pay a higher premium at 50% more than the standard premium and that there be parity between the standard second home and long-term empty premium, to minimise avoidance by taxpayers. The additional recommendation was that any extra funding generated by the proposals would be allocated for use by local communities and to tackle homelessness.

**Ensure that our residents are informed about available housing options and routes to housing, seeking also to reduce the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) waiting list.**

The development of a tenant involvement framework for Denbighshire Housing is 'On Target' with a plan in place to inform tenants about housing matters and deliver a range of activities.

As at the end of September 2023, there were 1,760 people on the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) waiting list. The figure is yet to reach an 'Acceptable' threshold; however, it represents good progress when compared to the same period for the previous year (2,190).

The project to bring Denbighshire's SARTH system in-house has now been completed. The in-house system has been operational for five months and during that time, many obstacles have been successfully overcome by the programme team. The activity to develop performance and reporting systems following the implementation of the SARTH continues to be 'Experiencing Obstacles.' Work is now progressing with a planned system upgrade with full reporting expected to be available by the end of December 2023.

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity related to the support offered to those experiencing homelessness please see our [learning and growing theme](#) and for connections between energy efficiency and fuel poverty, please see our theme for a [fairer, safe and more equal Denbighshire](#).

### Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of emergency housing repairs completed within target time - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	95.85% Acceptable Better	94.72% Priority to Improve Worse	97.22% Acceptable Better	97.06% Acceptable Worse	96.90% Acceptable Worse
The number of disabled adaptations carried out for council house tenants – <b>Count Only</b>	66	64	56	53	56
The number of households helped through the ECO4 scheme – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	85	143
The number of page views of the energy efficiency page on our website – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	319	357
The percentage of empty private properties brought back into use through direct action by the local authority - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	8.5% Excellent Better	6.4% Excellent Worse	6.1% Excellent Worse	2% Acceptable Worse	7% Excellent Better

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The number of people on the SARTH waiting list - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	2,190 Priority to Improve Worse	2,235 Priority to Improve Worse	1,734 Priority to Improve Better	1,785 Priority to Improve Worse	1,760 Priority to Improve Better
The number of referrals received into Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	80	43	64
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that have been prevented from presenting to homelessness prevention service - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	89.36% Excellent	69.77% Acceptable Worse	92.18% Excellent Better
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that are for people in employment – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	22.5%	13.04%	7.81%
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that are a) Privately Rented – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	63.75%	53.49%	64.06%
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that are b) Local Authority – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	11.25%	6.98%	1.56%

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that are c) Housing Association – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	2.5%	0%	3.12%
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that are d) Owner occupied – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	5%	4.65%	6.25%
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that are e) Unknown – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to January 2023	No data. New to January 2023	17.5%	34.88%	25.01%
The number of people at risk of homelessness supported by the CAD-HPT (Citizens Advice Denbighshire-Homelessness Prevention Team) link officer – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	28	39
Of those people at risk of homelessness supported by the CAD-HPT (Citizens Advice Denbighshire-Homelessness Prevention Team) link officer, the % that are in employment – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	7%	29%

## Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The number of dwellings improved with a disabled facilities grant - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	106 Priority to Improve Better	66 Priority to Improve Worse
The number of people who were on the Complex Disabilities Specialist Housing Needs Register for whom supported housing has been secured - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	13 Excellent Better	16 Excellent Better
The percentage of households successfully prevented from homelessness (section 66) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	41.97% Priority to Improve Worse	38.35% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of households successfully relieved from homelessness (section 73) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	21.55% Priority to Improve Worse	15.96% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of households positively discharged from homelessness (section 75) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	44.75% Priority to Improve Worse	50.22% Priority to Improve Better
The total number of care leavers who experience homelessness during the year (As defined by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) within 12 months of leaving care - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	9 Good Better	3 Excellent Better
The percentage of council properties compliant with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	100% Excellent Same	100% Excellent Same
The percentage of Council House tenants that were satisfied with the quality of their home - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	84% Good Better	No data: does not apply
The percentage of tenants that were satisfied with the way Denbighshire Housing deals with repairs and maintenance - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	77% Acceptable Worse	No data: does not apply

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of existing and acquired Council housing stock achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of C or above - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	35.44% Priority to Improve Better	41.89% Acceptable Better
The additional supply of affordable housing, including social housing, provided during the year - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	271 Excellent Better	139 Excellent Worse
The additional supply of Council Houses provided - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	13 Acceptable Better	15 Acceptable Better

### Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that there is sufficient, good quality housing in Denbighshire, which meets people’s needs - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	31%	47%	22%	40% Priority to Improve

### Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Unless new data is published, we will not comment on WIMD but we will retain the measures in this report as they provide important context and help to inform our overall measures status for each theme. Welsh Government’s next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

Title	2014	2019
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Housing (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation) – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	14% Priority to Improve Better	16% Priority to Improve Worse

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

There are seventeen projects listed within this theme in the Corporate Plan. The number of these that are running 'On Target' has increased to eleven since our last report. One is complete, three are 'Experiencing Obstacles', one is 'At Risk', and one is at business case stage.

### Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Deliver and monitor the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan	On Target Same	No exception
Ruthin Extra Care Housing (Phase 2)	On Target Same	No exception
Corwen Extra Care	At business case stage	No exception
Reduce the reliance on unsuitable temporary accommodation by establishing some in-house emergency housing facilities for homeless citizens	On Target	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Improving Energy Efficiency in Council Houses	At Risk Same	The average Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating across our housing stock continues to rise. However, it is expected that the new and soon to be implemented Welsh Housing Quality Standard will create an extra financial pressure on the service as additional measures will be required to comply with the new standard. Inflated costs, limited funding for the Optimised Retrofit Programme, and the lack of qualified trades in the sector are all issues contributing to the 'At Risk' status of this project.
Work collaboratively with Flintshire County Council providing contact information and signposting on our website regarding homes' energy efficiency	On Target Same	No exception
Promote Energy Efficiency page on our website through our social media channels	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	Discussions are taking place to establish which teams are best suited and have capacity to deliver this activity.
Signpost to Welsh Government's NEST scheme through the post	On Target Same	No exception
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	On Target Better	No exception
Denbighshire replacement Local Development Plan	On Target Same	No exception
Edward Henry Street	On Target Same	No exception
Additional Council Housing Developments	On Target Same	No exception



Title	Status	Exception
Explore how we can protect housing through new Welsh Government legislation to regulate the impact of second homes	On Target Same	No exception
Progress the Rhyl Residential Strategy	Experiencing Obstacles Same	The team continue to await the publication of Welsh Government revised Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15 to enable completion of the Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment. The TAN15 is due to be published late 2023 or early 2024.
Develop performance and reporting systems following the implementation of SARTH and current Single Point of Access (SPoA) triage service to further understand citizens accessing housing information and SARTH	Experiencing Obstacles Same	There have continued to be system issues and full reports have been unavailable. Individuals have not been affected as the team have used manual processes and have been in regular contact with registered social landlords. Work is now progressing with a view to complete the system upgrade with full reporting available by the end of December 2023.
Develop a tenant involvement framework for Denbighshire Housing	On Target Same	No exception
SARTH: Bring in-house	Complete	As this has been operational now for five months with the large majority of issues resolved, the project is complete.

## A prosperous Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

### Corporate Plan Update

#### **Work collaboratively with communities and partners to deliver projects and initiatives that will stimulate economic growth**

The council is focused on delivering a number of initiatives to stimulate economic growth. The first of these to mention is the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). The overall programme is running 'On Target.' This was highlighted in news detailing that [20 Denbighshire projects](#) were awarded grants from the county's allocation of the funding. Nine projects that made the shortlist are regional or sub-regional projects and will proceed to the next stage of the application process when all North Wales local authorities have finalised their investment decisions. Information about the projects approved so far can be found at [www.denbighshire.gov.uk/UKSPF-projects](http://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/UKSPF-projects).

The council is also engaged with the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and has two overall programmes overseeing a number of sub-projects across service areas. The first programme is LUF Clwyd South, which is designed to improve connectivity and maximise the visitor economy resulting from the offer found at unique heritage and cultural assets in the areas around the Dee Valley. We report in this theme the progress of the programme overall, as well as that of a sub-project to regenerate Corwen High Street. The programme overall is 'Experiencing Obstacles'. A Project Amendment Request has been submitted to UK Government, which includes an extension of time, corrections to some output targets and a change to the prioritisation of the phasing of the Active Travel Route project. An outcome is imminent and once approved would change the delivery status to being 'On Target'. The detail of several sub-projects can be found in other themes relating to [better connected](#) and [culture](#). Regarding the project to improve [Corwen High Street](#), the work on the town centre's infrastructure has begun and is 'On Target.' The second round LUF programme has oversight of Clwyd West projects which are intended to protect the unique heritage of the areas in and around Ruthin, and the wellbeing of its citizens, as well as for its surrounding rural communities. The programme overall is 'Experiencing Obstacles.' At the request of UK Government, projects have undertaken a full review of their delivery and financial profiles. This has identified some projects which would benefit

from an extension of time. The LUF Programme Board is working with UK Government to formalise the changes. The detail of a number of sub-projects can be found in our [better connected](#), [greener](#), and [culture](#) themes. An [information event](#) was held at Ruthin Gaol in July to provide information to residents about the projects that have been successful in obtaining funding through the Clwyd West Levelling Up programme. In addition to the existing programmes of work, the council is actively developing funding bids for economic initiatives wherever possible. We await an update on a third round of Levelling Up funding.

Meeting in July, Partnerships Scrutiny considered the work and [progress of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board \(NWEAB\)](#) during the financial year 2022 to 2023.

Representatives from the Board presented their Quarter 4 and Annual Report and answered members' questions. It was reported that the NWEAB, formed in 2016, had secured £240 million investment into North Wales and had a total investment target of £1 billion over a 15 year period, creating 4,200 new jobs. Some of the challenges the Board had faced over the previous 12 months were explained, including the withdrawal and rescoping of three projects and the overall impact of cost inflation. The activity to enable and support North Wales Growth Deal projects in partnership with Ambition North Wales is therefore deemed to be 'Experiencing Obstacles'. A portion of funds released has been redirected to progress other Growth Deal funded projects, such as the Former North Wales Hospital in Denbigh. Some progress has also been seen in other projects, with the approval of three outline business cases, including the "Last Few %" project to provide minimum superfast broadband to poorly connected communities across North Wales.

The Former North Wales Hospital project remains 'At Risk' until the section 106 legal agreement is obtained, and the full funding is achieved. The project team continue to meet regularly to progress matters relating to planning and viability funding.

The Queen's Buildings Rhyl project continues to be 'Experiencing Obstacles'. There is a delay in the sub-station work being carried out which has pushed back the handover date for construction. However, this is not expected to impact on future operation. The development will provide a mixed-use hall offering a collection of artisan eateries, retail, and events space.

As part of the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Programme, the council is co-ordinating funding streams and developing town regeneration summaries (formerly referred to as Town Centre Place Making Plans). Both of these activities are 'On Target'.

As an indicator of economic activity, the percentage of out-of-work benefits claimants has shown marginal improvement up until August 2023 (September data is not yet published), though this remains higher than the Wales average, and is a 'Priority for Improvement' at 3.5%.

## **Develop an economic strategy**

We previously reported that a significant activity for the future within this theme will be to develop the council's new Economic Strategy. It is encouraging to see that this activity is 'On Target', with a specification being developed for procuring a consultant. The Strategy will focus on areas such as growing the green economy, supporting rural businesses, regenerating town centres, and enhancing tourism.

The development of Rhyl's town centre is an ongoing programme of work for the council, and a number of projects are being managed in this area. Plans to redevelop the Victorian Post Office are 'On Target.' The project to reconnect the top of Rhyl High Street with the beach remains 'At Risk' due to a funding shortage following the unsuccessful Vale of Clwyd Levelling Up Fund bid. We will ensure future proposals are well-developed in readiness for Levelling Up Fund 3 and that there is continued communication with the Rhyl Member Area Group. Two further projects to progress the Rhyl Public Realm Strategy and improve the appearance of poorly maintained Rhyl Town Centre properties are 'Experiencing Obstacles'. The obstacles facing the former relate to a shortage of funding, and regarding the latter, recruitment issues have resulted in delays. Two projects are in the process of being developed and are at project brief or business case stage, as seen in the tables below.

County Council was presented with a Notice of Motion in July, in respect of the potential reinstatement of [Rhyl Promenade kiosks](#), which are due to be demolished as part of the central Rhyl Flood Defence Scheme. It was agreed that the report would be taken to Scrutiny Committee in spring 2025 to consider an updated masterplan for the Rhyl Promenade including the option of creating new kiosks.

The tourism offer in Denbighshire is an important aspect of its economy. The delivery of Denbighshire's Tourism Strategy and Action Plan is 'On Target', as is the development of the AONB Sustainable Tourism Plan, which has been drafted. [STEAM](#) (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) data evaluating the economic impact of tourism for Denbighshire has been published showing that £628 million was generated in 2022, which is considered 'Excellent' and is a significant increase from the £432 million in 2021.

Figures shown in July regarding [Rhyl's town centre footfall figures](#) indicated an improvement in visitor numbers to the town's shops. An increase of over 110,000 visits were recorded for 2022, compared with figures for 2021. Rhyl's total figure for 2022 was 850,663 with the busiest period being between July and September.

### **Provide advice and support**

The council supports business growth in Denbighshire in a number of ways. Through its Working Denbighshire service, the council runs a project working with employers to identify hard to recruit jobs and develop sector routeways to fill the gaps. The project has been 'Experiencing Obstacles' though it is expected that from October, the team will be in a strong position to implement sector routeways, especially as the training co-ordinator vacancy has now been filled. The number of paid and unpaid work experience placements offered through Working Denbighshire for the quarter is 33, which is an increase from the last period, and represents 'Excellent' performance.

In September, the Working Denbighshire [employability service](#) offered free support and help to high school and sixth form leavers. Services included well-being activities and support to improve confidence and skills, as well as career development guidance such as CV writing. This is evidence of the council's commitment to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Sustainable Development Principle. By supporting young people to plan for their futures, the council is taking action to benefit its citizens in the long-term, preventing future problems from occurring and benefitting those at a socio-economic disadvantage.

Denbighshire's business community receives regular advice and support through the council's Economic and Business Development newsletter. The council is also 'On Target' towards taking action to raise awareness of the provision of Welsh training for adults who work in the business community.

We continue to await national data that will give an indication of the rates of business births and deaths in Denbighshire for 2022 to 2023. As soon as those figures are published, they will be reported under this theme.

In September, the [Rhyl Business Improvement Districts](#) (BID) Business Plan was approved by Cabinet. The BID second-term proposals were thoroughly [scrutinised by the Partnerships Scrutiny](#) Committee in July. [Backing the Rhyl BID](#), Cabinet confirmed it would

be using a single vote in the ballot to support a second term. The reason for supporting the Rhyl BID is that it is hoped it will contribute to the regeneration of the town.

The council strives to secure local community benefits wherever possible. The activity to develop a Community Benefits Framework has been upgraded in status and is now 'On Target'. The percentage of spend with suppliers based within Denbighshire has decreased from 33% to 15.9% (a 'Priority for Improvement') during this period. The percentage of Denbighshire contracts over £25k and under £1m containing community benefits has also fallen from 66% to 53.3%, which is now considered 'Good'.

## **Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update**

For further measures and activity in support of skills, training and employment please see our [learning and growing theme](#); for community development and benefits, see our theme for a [better connected Denbighshire](#). Finally, for further themes connected to the local economy, see [A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language](#) and [A well-run, high performing council](#).

## Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of working age people who are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	3.5% Priority to Improve Same	3.7% Priority to Improve Worse	3.8% Priority to Improve Worse	3.6% Priority to Improve Better	3.5% Priority to Improve Better
The number of paid and unpaid work experience placements offered through Working Denbighshire - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	19 Acceptable Better	38 Excellent Better	16 Priority to Improve Worse	26 Good Better	33 Excellent Better
The percentage of spend with suppliers based within Denbighshire – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	35% Good Worse	35% Good Same	35% Good Same	33% Good Worse	15.9% Priority to Improve Worse
The cumulative percentage of Denbighshire contracts over £25k and under £1m containing community benefits – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	64% Excellent Worse	64% Excellent Same	66 % Excellent Better	66 % Excellent Same	53.3% Good Worse

## Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
Average gross annual pay for people who live in the area and work full time (£) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	26,780 Priority to Improve Better	27,121 Priority to Improve Better
External funding (in pounds) secured for economic development – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of available funding awarded by Economic Business Development (EBD) for commercial property grants - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024
STEAM - Total Economic Impact of Tourism (£ million) - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	£432m Priority to Improve Better	£628m Excellent Better
The number of businesses taking part in training events - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. Suspended due to the pandemic	390 Excellent Better
Births of businesses per 10,000 of the population aged 16 to 64 - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	78 Good Better	National data pending
Deaths of businesses per 10,000 of the population aged 16 to 64 - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	89 Priority to Improve Worse	National data pending

### Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has a prosperous economy that provides access to the right skills, jobs, and income - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	32%	49%	19%	40% Priority to Improve

### Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Unless new data is published, we will not comment on WIMD but we will retain the measures in this report as



they provide important context and help to inform our overall measures status for each theme. Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

Title	2014	2019
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Income (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation) – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	14% Priority to Improve Same	12% Priority to Improve Better

### Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

Overall, good progress has been made with the twenty-three projects and activities identified in support of this theme. Twelve are 'On Target' and seven projects are 'Experiencing Obstacles'. Two projects are in development: one is at business case stage, and one is at project brief stage. Two projects are 'At Risk'.

### Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
<b>Programme:</b> Shared Prosperity Fund	On Target Same	No exception
<b>Programme:</b> Levelling Up Fund – Clwyd South	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Overall, the Denbighshire Round 1 Clwyd South LUF projects are making good progress. There have been some challenges to delivery identified by the 3 partners (Wrexham County Borough Council as lead applicant and Canal and Rivers Trust) which has led to an invitation from UK Government to submit a Project Amendment Request (PAR). This includes an extension of time, correction to some output targets and a change to the prioritisation of the phasing of the Active Travel Route project. An outcome is imminent and once

Title	Status	Exception
		approved would change the delivery status to 'On Target'.
Corwen High Street Project (Clwyd South LUF)	On Target Same	No exception
<b>Programme:</b> Levelling Up Fund – Clwyd West	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	Overall, round 2 Clwyd West LUF projects are making good progress. Following a formal request from UK Government, all projects have been required to undertake a full review of their delivery and financial profiles. This has identified some projects which would benefit from an extension of time. The LUF Programme Board is working with the UK Government to formalise the changes. No other issues to delivery are identified at this stage.
Develop funding bids for future rounds of Levelling Up and Growth Deal funding	On Target Same	No exception
Enabling and supporting North Wales Growth Deal projects in partnership with Ambition North Wales	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Issues faced include the withdrawal and rescoping of three projects and the overall impact of cost inflation. A portion of funds released has been redirected to progress the Former North Wales Hospital project in Denbigh. Approval was obtained for three outline business cases, including the "Last Few %" project to provide minimum superfast broadband to poorly connected communities across North Wales.
Former North Wales Hospital	At Risk Same	Until the section 106 agreement is obtained, the project remains 'At Risk'.

Title	Status	Exception
		The Project Delivery Group continue to meet regularly to progress matters relating to planning and viability funding.
Queen's Buildings Rhyl	Experiencing Obstacles Same	There is a delay in the sub-station work being carried out which has pushed back the handover date for construction. However, this is not expected to impact on future operation.
Coordinating Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding programme streams	On Target Same	No exception
Develop Town Regeneration Summaries	On Target Same	No exception
Develop the council's new Economic Strategy	On Target Same	No exception
Victorian Post Office (Rhyl)	On Target Same	No exception
Progress the Rhyl Public Realm Strategy	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Discussions continue to take place with the relevant Programme Board to agree a way forward in view of the unsuccessful LUF bid.
Reconnect the top of Rhyl High Street with the beach (Rhyl promenade)	At Risk Worse	Progress has halted and the team is considering how to fund pre-construction works which would have been funded through the LUF bid.
Seeking to improve the appearance of poorly maintained Rhyl Town Centre properties	Experiencing Obstacles Same	There have been delays to this project resulting from recruitment issues. New temporary posts have been approved and await funding. Two main sites are the focus of

Title	Status	Exception
		improvement works in the meantime.
Rhyl Gateway	At project brief stage	No exception
Co-Relocation of Rhyl Tourist Information Centre and Rhyl Museum	At business case stage	No exception
Develop the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Tourism Plan and integrate into Local Tourism Plans	On Target Same	No exception
Deliver the Denbighshire Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2022 – 2027	On Target Same	No exception
Work with employers to identify hard to recruit jobs and develop sector routeways to fill the gaps	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Employment co-ordinators have been working with employers to ensure that we are on target for work start placements. New sector routeways have not been developed due to the vacancy for the Training Co-ordinator and the late confirmation of funding from SPF for Years 2 and 3. The work with employers places us in a strong position to implement sector routeways from October 2023, now that the Training Co-ordinator has been recruited and started work.
Raise awareness of the provision of Welsh training for adults who work in the business community	On Target Same	No exception
Complete feasibility report for move-on accommodation at St Asaph Business Park	On Target Same	No exception
Develop a Community Benefits Framework to align with the Social Partnership and Procurement (Wales) Bill	On Target Better	No exception

## A round up of news

The following additional news and committee items took place in this last period in support of this theme:

In July of this year, the council announced it was prepared for the [increase of visitors](#) into the county during the summer holidays, with extra park rangers and increased street cleaning provision at key tourism areas and events. In August, the council reminded [bank holiday visitors](#) to respect the countryside and act responsibly. A series of measures was introduced by the council to reduce congestion at popular sites such as Moel Famau and Horseshoe Falls.

# A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

## Corporate Plan Update

### Ensure that the council's social care offer is of a high standard

At its meeting in July, Partnerships Scrutiny received the [Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report](#) which reviewed the effectiveness of the authority's social care services for both children and adults during the financial year 2022 to 2023. It was noted that the demand on social care services had increased, and that performance had not progressed as well as the services would have liked due to national challenges and budgetary constraints. Recruitment and retention continued to be a challenge within the social care sector.

The council aims to promote a strong culture of safeguarding children, young people and adults in the county. In July, Partnerships Scrutiny were presented with Denbighshire's [annual performance report for safeguarding adults](#) for the financial year 2022 to 2023. Highlighted in the report was the high level of safeguarding enquiries completed within 7 days. The quarterly figure for the period from July to September 2023 was 99% and is considered 'Excellent'. An area of concern in the report was the increase in referrals made under Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (allegations about practitioners and those in a position of trust). Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications also increased (by 11%) from the previous year. Court proceedings had continued to increase and were noted to be impacting the capacity of operational teams as well as the legal team.

A project to undertake a review of independent professional advocacy for all service provision continues and remains 'On Target'. The percentage of young people offered the active option of advocacy from Education and Children's Services during the period is a measure we are in the process of developing, and data for this reporting period is unavailable at present.

Providing care and support through its corporate parenting role is an important area of work for the council. At the end of September, there were 206 children looked after in Denbighshire. The percentage of those children experiencing three or more placements

during the year remained at a low rate of 1.94% which falls within the 'Excellent' threshold. Progress continues 'On Target' with implementing the requirements of Foster Wales, the national network of Local Authority fostering services.

The council plans to work with partners to develop a joint assessment centre for children in the region with complex needs. We also have a number of projects designed for supporting those with additional learning or complex needs, and updates on these are provided in the table below.

Recognising the importance of supporting unpaid carers, the council is working with its partners to provide enhanced respite opportunities and general advice and support. An activity in support of this aim is 'Experiencing Obstacles'. The total number of carers needs assessments for young carers undertaken during the period is data provided by a third party and we await up to date information. The total number of carers needs assessments for adults undertaken during the period was 203.

From our Community Equipment Store records, we can report that from July to September 2023, 31 individuals were issued with specialist equipment that might enable single handed care. We have confirmed from cost of care records available that 11 of these individuals are now receiving full or partial single handed care, with potential cost savings of £1,500 per week. It is possible that care packages for some of these individuals are still in transition or under review.

### **Support the well-being, mental-health and resilience of individuals within communities**

In August, Denbighshire County Council's [Play Ranger service organised a free event](#) as part of National Play Day. Rhyl's Oak Tree centre hosted the event, which was attended by over 2,800 people. The Play Rangers are running two projects designed to enhance child well-being and access to play. The projects remain 'At Risk' due to a shortage of funding, though efforts are being made to source alternative funding. The percentage of schools in the county embedding the 'Whole School Approach' to mental health and well-being for April to June 2023 was a 'Priority for Improvement' at 27%. An update for this measure for this reporting period is not yet available and will be reported in the next performance update report.

The council provides well-being support to all citizens in Denbighshire. The number of Single Point of Access (SPoA) contacts for information, advice and assistance decreased

slightly during this period to 4,911. The percentage of citizens receiving information, advice and assistance from Talking Points who did not need to be referred into Adult Social Care remained at a high rate of 87%. For enquiries relating to children, the number of referrals and enquiries recorded on Children and Family Support Gateway during the period is being calculated and will be reported in the next performance update report.

In July, the council hosted a drop in event at Denbigh Town Hall to promote the broad range of [support services on offer](#) to all its citizens, from mental health support to drug and alcohol well-being. Many projects and activities in support of this pledge - such as work towards becoming an age-friendly Denbighshire; delivery of intergenerational activities through the Story Pals project; and the Nature for Health Programme for example - are all 'On Target'.

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of housing and homelessness, please see our [Housing](#) and [Prosperous](#) themes respectively. For information about equality and deprivation, and safe environments, see our theme a [Fairer, safe and more equal Denbighshire](#). Finally, for further detail around our work to support education and well-being, see our [Learning and Growing](#) theme.

### Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of safeguarding enquiries from adults completed within 7 working days from the receipt of the reported alleged abuse - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	98.85% Excellent Better	98.84% Excellent Worse	98.8% Excellent Worse	100% Excellent Better	99% Excellent Worse
The percentage of young people offered the active option of advocacy from Education and Children's Services - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	Data pending	Data pending



Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The number of children looked after in Denbighshire – <b>Count Only</b>	Data pending	Data pending	200	203	206
The percentage of children looked after on who have had three or more placements during the year – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	3% Excellent Better	4% Excellent Worse	1% Excellent Better	2.46% Excellent Worse	1.94% Excellent Better
The total number of carers needs assessments for young carers undertaken during the year – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	Data pending	Data pending
The total number of carers needs assessments for adults undertaken during the year (cumulative) - <b>Count Only</b>	197	303	401	92	203
The number of care and support packages that have been right sized to single handed care with the right type of specialist equipment – <b>Baseline Year</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	48	11
The number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready for citizen care and support needs – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	20	22	25

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of schools in the county using the Public Health Wales Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Well-being Tool – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	27% Priority to Improve	Data pending
The number of referrals / enquiries recorded on Children and Family Support Gateway - <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	4,350	Data pending
The number of Single Point of Access contacts for information, advice and assistance – <b>Count Only</b>	4,988	4,586	5,134	5,307	4,911
The number of Talking Point contacts for information, advice and assistance (libraries, One Stop Shops and hosted by Community Navigators etc) - <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	231	218
The percentage of citizens receiving information, advice and assistance from Talking Points who did not need to be referred into Adult Social Care - <b>Baseline Year</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	87.5%	87%
The number of sport and recreation related projects / groups supported by the Community Resilience Team – <b>Baseline Year</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	42	34

## Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of new assessments completed for children during the year that were completed within statutory timescales - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	76.59% Priority to Improve	76.7% Priority to Improve Better
The percentage of child protection conferences held within statutory timescales - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	90.63% Priority to Improve	95% Good Better
The percentage of adults where independent professional advocacy was provided after assessment of need – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	72.5% Good
The number of contacts by adult carers received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided - <b>Count Only</b>	1,037	1,159
The cumulative number of new micro-provider businesses created for citizen care and support needs – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No Data. New to 2022 to 2023	30 Excellent
The number of schools that have achieved Trauma Informed School status by 2027 - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	1 Excellent
The number of young people who receive school-based counselling in Denbighshire – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	330 Acceptable	338 Acceptable Better
The average improvement in young people’s core score for children and young people who received school-based counselling in Denbighshire – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	8.5 Excellent
The number of projects supported by the Community Development Team, and funded, offering a positive impact upon loneliness and isolation - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The number of County Community Groups using in scope facilities Denbighshire Leisure Limited - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	137 Excellent	134 Excellent Worse
The number of alternative (out of scope) facilities/venues used for the delivery of services to DCC residents - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	107 Excellent	96 Excellent Worse

### Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that they can live safely, happily, and independently, in Denbighshire and also receive good support when needed to promote resilience and well-being - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	48%	39%	13%	55% Acceptable

### Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Unless new data is published, we will not comment on WIMD but we will retain the measures in this report as they provide important context and help to inform our overall measures status for each theme. Welsh Government’s next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

Title	2014	2019
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Health (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	10% Priority to Improve Same	17% Priority to Improve Worse

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

Of the twenty-one projects and activities listed under this theme, fifteen are 'On Target', three are 'Experiencing Obstacles', two are 'At Risk', and one is at project brief stage.

### Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Embed the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures into all aspects of Children's and Adults Services	On Target Same	No exception
Work with partners to deliver the annual joint strategic plan for the North Wales Safeguarding Board	On Target Same	No exception
Undertake a review of independent professional advocacy for all service provision.	On Target Same	No exception
Monitor and implement requirements of Foster Wales and monitor effectiveness of national approach.	On Target Same	No exception
Implement Post 16 of Additional Learning Needs work	Experiencing Obstacles	Work has started with this activity. Regional and national discussions are ongoing to progress the implementation of the Act regarding Additional Learning Needs and young people who are post-16.
Develop an in-county residential short breaks and emergency care provision for children with complex needs and disabilities within Denbighshire	Update pending	No exception
County Residential Break Review	At project brief stage	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Implement and embed the Autism Code of Practice requirements at local authority level across Children's Services.	Experiencing Obstacles Same	The Autism Code of Practice is still in progress. The lead manager is working closely with partners to support the action plan. There is a North Wales Regional Working Group, of which the Denbighshire team is a member.
Bwthyn y Ddol Phase 2 (Activity) Develop and implement, including staffing, a new Children's Assessment Centre jointly with Conwy County Borough Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	On Target Same	No exception
Ysgol Tir Morfa - Hydrotherapy pool	On Target Same	No exception
Enhance the intervention work at Plas Brondyffryn and Tir Morfa in terms of play opportunities from Play Rangers.	On Target Same	No exception
Work with local unpaid carers to identify the respite opportunities they need, and how barriers are overcome to enable this.	Experiencing Obstacles Same	The Carers Think Tank meetings have taken place every 6 weeks and have enabled a wide range of professionals to consider solutions. There have been examples of volunteers successfully supporting carers and Micro Providers providing respite breaks to carers.
Work in partnership regionally to embed the All Wales Dementia Pathway of Standards.	On Target Same	No exception
Embed the work of the Independent Living Team to support individuals through direct payments or Pre-Paid Cards, to increase efficiency	On Target Better	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Work to enhance and extend the Access to Play project throughout the county.	At Risk Same	A significant funding shortage continues to put this project at risk. Further external grants are being explored as demand for the service continues to grow.
Expand the Play Rangers offer Let's Play Out Programme throughout the county	At Risk Same	A significant funding shortage continues to put this project at risk. Further external grants are being explored as demand for the service continues to grow.
Work to reduce the Youth Services waiting list for support in Denbighshire.	On target Same	No exception
Work towards becoming an age-friendly Denbighshire, with World Health Organisation, in partnership with Ageing Well in Denbighshire multi-agency group.	On Target Same	No exception
Enhance the Story Pals Project and Arts programme to deliver intergenerational activities (delivered through the Denbighshire Arts Strategy).	On Target Same	No exception
Deliver a programme of activities and events to encourage children and adults to re-engage with their local library, to support engagement and wellbeing and to combat social isolation and loneliness.	On Target Same	No exception
Enhance the Nature for Health Programme within Denbighshire which offers multiple benefit – reducing isolation, improve health, rural skills, health and nature walks, arts and crafts)	On Target Same	No exception

## A round up of news

The following additional news and committee items took place in this last period in support of this theme:

The national [NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day](#) took place on July 5, and the council marked the occasion by raising a flag at County Hall in Ruthin in honour of the staff involved.

This summer, Denbigh's Dolwen Care Home residents created a [memorial garden to honour the memory of residents lost](#) during the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the summer holidays, Denbighshire County Council's libraries launched the [free equipment loan programme](#) with a range of sports equipment provided by Denbighshire Leisure Limited.

At its September meeting, the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee received a verbal report to update members on the progress of the [North Denbighshire Community Hospital Project](#). A representative from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board informed the Committee that the Royal Alexander Hospital redevelopment was a priority project which had an approved business case that was unchanged since its development. Approval for 20% funding via the Welsh Government's Integration and Rebalancing Capital Fund (IRCF) was to be sought from the Regional Partnership Board before being submitted to Welsh Government as part of their Capital Plans in October 2023. There was no timescale available for receiving a response from Welsh Government.

The [North Wales Regional Partnership Board Annual Report](#) for 2022 to 2023 was also presented at September's Partnerships Scrutiny meeting, and in September, Cabinet approved the [North Wales Regional Partnership Board 10 Year Strategic Capital Plan](#) and agreed Denbighshire's capital priorities for improved integrated health and social care to meet future needs.

Meeting in September, Communities Scrutiny received an update from the Adult Social Care and Homelessness Service on their [engagement with Care Forum Wales](#) (CFW) and Care Providers in Denbighshire. The report provided an account of efforts that had made to promote a positive dialogue and encourage the reengagement of CFW with the regional fee setting process. The Service is planning a programme of visits to care homes to proactively engage them in the care fee setting process for 2024 to 2025.

In September, an event was held at Ruthin Market Hall to encourage the public to come and talk to [Denbighshire County Council's Community Resource Team](#). The team includes health, social care and third sector staff.



In September, the Council, in partnership with DVSC and Denbighshire Age Friendly Communities, hosted a free performance of 'Over the Garden Fence' at Denbigh's Twm o'r Nant Theatre. The event was designed to raise [dementia awareness](#) and promote understanding.

## A learning and growing Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

### Corporate Plan Update

#### Promote the learning and development of our children and young people

Our Corporate Plan places a clear focus on support for early years development with a number of key measures in this area of work. The number of children taking part in the Childcare Offer in Denbighshire has continued to increase to 624. A new childcare facility was opened at [Ysgol Penmorfa](#), Prestatyn, in September. The extension has been funded by the Welsh Government Flying Start Capital Grant and has increased capacity of provision in the area, allowing more local families to benefit from high quality childcare.

Family Link workers continue their work to support families throughout the county, delivering language and play sessions and providing guidance to parents. The number of parents reporting a positive difference after working with the team has unfortunately fallen from 96% to 86% this quarter, but this is due to activities only taking place during term-time and not during the six-week summer holidays.

The number of Schools in Estyn review, Significant Improvement or Special Measures remains unchanged from the previous period (two schools). Following an Estyn monitoring visit in June, [Denbigh High School](#) has now been confirmed as having been removed from Special Measures, having made sufficient progress against the recommendations. Highlights of the [report](#) include the school having successfully refreshed its approach to rewarding and celebrating positive behaviour; teachers forming positive working relationships with their class; and a strengthened strategy to improve literacy skills. In September, [Performance Scrutiny](#) considered a report on progress made by Christ the Word School since being placed in Special Measures, following an Estyn inspection in May 2022. The committee resolved to be kept updated on progress.

At its meeting in [July](#) and [September](#), Performance Scrutiny also received a number of reports from the Head of Education Services concerning key pieces of work that seek to remove barriers to learning.

- The Curriculum for Wales – an update was provided on the progress made by schools on implementing the new curriculum since it became statutory in September 2022.
- Additional Learning Needs – a report providing information regarding the actions taken to ensure that schools were ready to meet statutory requirements under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act.
- Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-Being – An overview into the way in which schools are implementing the Welsh Government statutory framework.

Having considered and accepted these reports, members requested that updates be provided in the latter half of 2024.

As previously reported, there is one project within our Learning and Growing theme currently 'At Risk'. The Modernising Education Programme is experiencing delays for several reasons, but particularly due to issues with site feasibility (as described in more detail in the table below). A site for a new build of Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn was approved by Cabinet members in their [September meeting](#), with members agreeing to support the project's progression through the planning process.

In August, the council congratulated pupils across Denbighshire on their [GCSE](#) and [A Level](#) results.

**Support schools to transition to being Community-Focussed Schools, providing a range of services and activities to help meet the needs of pupils, their families, and the wider community**

A survey was undertaken during the summer to ascertain the number of schools within the estate that can provide community focussed spaces for events. Of the 25 schools that responded, 15 stated they were able to host activities. Further work will be done with those schools that did not respond to ensure a fuller picture emerges in relation to community focussed activities.

In the meantime, the Prestatyn High Pilot for Community Focussed Schools is 'On Target' and meetings to continue this progress are taking place each term. A growing number of projects have taken place during the pilot, including environmental projects to develop

green and eco spaces, adult mental health support groups, and summer holiday provision to provide free activities for over 12s in Prestatyn.

Several schools in Denbighshire are also part of a Wales-based research project, which includes developing an international partnership with the Centre for Community Schools in Florida. Funding has been secured to deliver future projects to support community engagement on school sites and work will continue throughout the school year.

**Work with partners (including colleges and universities) to ensure that people of all ages, including those who are vulnerable or in our care, are resilient and prepared for employment, further education, or training**

We are starting to receive encouraging data now as our new Llwybrau project gathers pace. Volunteering / work experience opportunities offered in this last reporting period increased to 13, which is excellent for this point in the academic year. Positive feedback has been received from learners and work is ongoing to secure future funding for the provision. However, only three opportunities have been offered by the council through its corporate website; and no employment opportunities were secured or jobs protected through our Community Benefits Policy during this period on the basis of there being no valid contracts. The percentage of businesses that have committed to work with Careers Wales to the benefit of our local schools and colleges also remains at none on the basis of there being no applicable contracts i.e. none over £1m.

The number of people with learning disabilities that have achieved a positive outcome as a result of support provided through the council's Work Opportunities services has fallen slightly from 43 to 40 during July to September. One person has also been supported into paid sustainable employment in this period as a result of the council's Work Opportunities Job Finding Service.

90% of people that are being supported through Working Denbighshire have travelled a positive distance on their journey towards or into employment during July to September, up from 82% in the last period. The team has been hosting a series of [free weekly drop-in sessions](#) across the county, to offer employment support and guidance. Support included CV skills, interview preparation, basic IT skills and support to fill in applications. A [free job fair](#) showcasing a wide variety of job opportunities was also held in September at 1891 Bar and Restaurant, following the success of three prior events

earlier in the year. Over 40 employers exhibited at the venue, including North Wales Police, Clwyd Alyn, Wynne Construction and the Armed Forces.

The cumulative percentage of young people reached by youth service interventions has increased to 4.4% during this period, down slightly on 5.1% for the same period the previous year.

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of well-being please see our [Healthier, Happier and Caring theme](#); for equity in education, including free school meal support, see our theme for a [fairer, safe and more equal Denbighshire](#). Finally, for further detail around our work to support volunteering and employment, see [better connected](#) and [prosperous](#) themes respectively.

### Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The number of children taking part in the childcare offer – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	477 Acceptable Worse	521 Acceptable Better	570 Acceptable Better	570 Acceptable Same	624 Good Better
The percentage of parents supported through the work of the Family Link Service that report a positive difference – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	95% Excellent	96% Excellent Better	86% Excellent Worse
The number of schools in either Estyn Review, Significant Improvement or Special Measures – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	2 Good Same	3 Acceptable Worse	3 Acceptable Same	2 Good Better	2 Good Same

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of pupils (using Pupil Attitudes to Self and School - PASS) who respond positively against pupils' feelings about school – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. No Survey	81.8% Good Worse	No data. No Survey	82% Good Better	No data. No Survey
The number of voluntary / work experience placements offered through Llwybrau – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	1 Priority to Improve	13 Excellent Better
The number of volunteering opportunities offered by the council through its corporate website – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	8	9	3
The percentage of young people in Denbighshire reached by Youth Services (Cumulative) – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	5.12% Priority to Improve Better	6.39% Priority to Improve Better	20.93% Acceptable Better	2.82% Priority to Improve Worse	4.36% Priority to Improve Better
The number of people with learning disabilities that have achieved a positive outcome as a result of support provided through the council's Work Opportunities services (Y Bont, Popty, Meifod, Garden Control, and Golden Group) – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	34	43	40

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The number of people with learning disabilities in paid sustainable employment as a result of the council's Work Opportunities Job Finding Service – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	3	2	1
The percentage of businesses contracted over £1m that have committed to work with Careers Wales to the benefit of our local schools and colleges (through our Community Benefits Policy) – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	100% Excellent	Does not apply: no contracts over £1m	Does not apply: no contracts over £1m
The number of employment opportunities secured / jobs protected through our Community Benefits Policy on projects over £1m – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New 2023 to 2024	No data. New 2023 to 2024	No data. New 2023 to 2024	Does not apply: no contracts over £1m	Does not apply: no contracts over £1m
The percentage of people that, through Working Denbighshire, have travelled a positive distance on their journey towards or into employment – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	81% Good Worse	82% Good Better	82% Good Same	82% Good Same	90% Excellent Better

## Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of children entering nursery that have been provided with a 'Me in a Nutshell' profile by Family Link Workers, supporting their effective transition – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	81% Excellent	82% Excellent Better
The percentage of parents that have reported a positive impact through attending Bookstart / Rhyme-time – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	99% Excellent
The percentage of parents that travel a positive distance by attending structured learning events through Families First and Flying Start – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	53% Acceptable	58% Good Better
<i>Attainment measure(s) to be determined</i>	<i>No data</i>	<i>No data</i>
The percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. Covid-19	90.8% Priority to Improve Worse (than 2019)
The percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. Covid-19	86% Priority to Improve Worse (than 2019)
The percentage of pupils engaged through Llwybrau that achieve a positive outcome, including level 1 or 2 qualifications – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	88% Acceptable
The number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	27 Excellent Same	27 Excellent Same
The percentage of schools able to host community focussed activities – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	Data pending
The percentage of Year 11 Leavers from schools know Not to be in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), at the preceding 31 August in Denbighshire – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	1.7% Priority to Improve Same	2.3% Priority to Improve Worse



Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of Year 11 pupils that do not have an identified Post-16 pathway in place – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	4.14% Priority to Improve	10.50% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of children or young people who are looked after that have a Personal Education Plan in place – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	100% Excellent	96% Good Worse
The percentage of initial Care Leaver Pathway Plans completed during the year that were within the statutory timescales, where the young person has care leaver status – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	20% Priority to Improve	71% Priority to Improve Better
The total number of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 13 -24 months since leaving care – <b>Count Only</b>	5	7

### Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that good quality learning and training is available in Denbighshire, allowing people of all ages to reach their personal and professional potential – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	48%	30%	22%	62% Acceptable

### Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Unless new data is published, we will not comment on WIMD but we will retain the measures in this report as

they provide important context and help to inform our overall measures status for each theme. Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

Title	2014	2019
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Education (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation) – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	9% Priority to Improve Better	9% Acceptable Same
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Employment (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation) – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	12% Priority to Improve Worse	12% Priority to Improve Same

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

There are sixteen projects and activities within this theme, eight of which are 'On Target', and five are 'Experiencing Obstacles'. As reported previously, the Modernising Education Programme remains 'At Risk'. The new Working Denbighshire Strategic Programme (a UK Shared Prosperity Fund project) is currently at the project brief stage.

### Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Implementation of the Childcare Offer for Wales Digital Platform	Complete	No exception
Flying Start Expansion	On Target Same	No exception
Recommissioning of Families First	On Target Same	No exception
Support the regional project on Emotional Health, Well-being and Resilience Framework, which will provide resources for parents	Experiencing Obstacles	Capacity issue – to be discussed with new principal education manager.
Review Early Years provision in the context of WG Early Years Transformation funding and the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) agenda	Experiencing Obstacles Same	There continues to be no progress due to current demand and a shortage of staff capacity.

Title	Status	Exception
Embed new posts in the Flying Start Childcare and Early Language Development Teams from January 2023 to support the Flying Start Childcare Expansion	On Target Same	No exception
In partnership with GwE, Support schools and non-maintained settings to deliver the new curriculum for Wales to ensure our learners become capable, ambitious, enterprising, ethical, healthy and confident adults.	On Target Same	No exception
Implement requirements of the of ALN Reform Act within Education and Children's Services to ensure compliance	On Target Same	No exception
Implement School Improvement Guidance: Framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability	On Target Same	No exception
Support schools in developing digital competency through educational leadership of the EdTech project	On Target Same	No exception

<p>Modernising Education Programme</p>	<p>At Risk Same</p>	<p>A number of delays have affected the progression of Band B projects. Extensive feasibility work has continued on sites for Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn (which has also delayed the Denbigh High School project) and for Ysgol Pendref. Discussions on preferred sites have now progressed to allow these projects to move forward. The Ysgol Bryn Collen and Ysgol Gwernant scheme was shortlisted but ultimately unsuccessful in its application to Welsh Government as part of the Sustainable Schools Challenge. A revised design brief based on a reduced capacity has been prepared and will be developed during the autumn.</p> <p>The internal section of the Oaktree Centre is now complete with the external work due for completion by the end of September.</p> <p>The approval for a virement to enable the Twm o'r Nant project to progress has been received, and a contractor has been appointed, with work starting in the autumn.</p> <p>The project at Ysgol Dewi Sant remains stalled over drainage issues. The timescale for completing the drainage work is around 30 months, meaning the project is unable to be progressed within the next funding round.</p> <p>Business cases are being prepared for three new</p>
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Title	Status	Exception
		childcare projects (Ysgol y Llys, Clawdd Offa, Ruthin) and five Welsh Medium Capital projects.
Community Focussed Schools: Prestatyn High Pilot	On Target Same	No exception
Engage with the North Wales Ambition Board and the Regional Skills Partnership to ensure that skills and training secured through our Community Benefits Policy is fit for the future and / or transferrable	Experiencing obstacles Same	This is subject to some delays as statutory guidance and social clauses are not yet in place. We are working with Welsh Government to develop the statutory guidance that will inform the Statutory Instrument that will support the new Act. The new Procurement Strategy has though been approved and plans are in place for procurement to feature in the 2024 March for Business campaign.
Through our Community Benefits Policy, secure business led strategy workshops for the benefit of residents seeking to upskill	Experiencing obstacles Same	This is also impacted by statutory guidance and social clauses not yet being place. Balfour Beatty though has committed to deliver workshops. A full update can be found in our governance section on <a href="#">procurement</a> .

Title	Status	Exception
Develop performance and monitoring systems for the Temporary Emergency Accommodation support contract as it develops, which will include various life, recreational and employability skills and benefits	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Statistics are reviewed though some key performance indicators are not possible to measure. We are working closely with the project to ensure we can monitor the performance through steering groups and operational groups. The Homelessness Prevention Team performance dashboard continues to monitor statistics across the service to ensure we can understand where projects are having an impact and where more focus is needed in line with Rapid Rehousing.
New: Working Denbighshire Strategic Programme (UK Shared Prosperity Fund Delivery)	At project brief stage	This has been affected by the delay in SPF funds being cleared. This has meant that for the first 2 quarters of the year staff were not in place and budgets were not available, so delivery was compromised. In the next reporting period, we will be able to give an assessment as to whether it is still possible to deliver this project given that the full funding will only have been available for roughly half the time it was originally planned for.

## A round up of news

The following additional news and committee items took place in this last period in support of this theme:

In September, Denbighshire County Council reassured school staff, parents and governors that it had taken steps to ascertain the structural integrity of its buildings in the face of

nationwide concern about the use of [Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete \(RAAC\) in public buildings](#). Surveys had previously been completed in 2021 in response to the issue being raised by the Local Government Association. After reviewing these, the only school site identified as having RAAC planks was [Ysgol Trefnant](#). However, surveyors have reported that they do appear to be in a stable and acceptable condition. The school was closed for one day in September whilst further investigations were carried out. Denbighshire County Council will be undertaking a review of the information it currently holds to determine whether further surveys are required and to better inform any processes put in place by Welsh Government. Please also refer to our [governance section about assets](#).

A campaign was launched in July to encourage more people to apply for the role of [school governor](#). Schools across the county are looking for volunteers to become part of the governor team with successful applicants having the opportunity to use their skills and experience to make a positive difference to the lives of young people. Free online induction and training will be provided. Further information and guidance on how to apply to become a school governor can be found on the council's [website](#).

Over the Summer, Denbighshire County Council's [Working Denbighshire Team](#) created a new short film celebrating the people they support and the work of the organisation. Professional filming and editing equipment was provided during the shoot by arts and media charity, TAPE. The project gave aspiring filmmakers a chance to share their ideas and be involved in an exciting opportunity to experience working in the creative industries, that may lead to other opportunities in the future. The film will later be used in Working Denbighshire's promotional materials going forward.

## A better connected Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

### Corporate Plan Update

#### Maintain a quality road network

Our annual road condition data for 2022 to 2023 for classified A, B and C roads was reported in our April to July report. We have now completed our annual Surface Dressing programme on a number of high priority roads where this represents the most cost-effective method of prolonging the life-span of the road. Our further annual Resurfacing Programme on a number of roads across the county where the life has expired is ongoing and we are on target to deliver the remaining 2023 to 2024 programme.

Throughout September we carried out [cyclic maintenance work](#) on a number of our roads which included grass cutting, litter picking, drainage cleansing and streetlight works. Advanced notice signage was installed and a letter drop to surrounding properties took place to inform residents of the works.

The average for the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) between July and September was 23.33% and remains a 'Priority for Improvement' and an area of concern. The service is working hard to improve performance in this respect.

Discussions with Welsh Government to secure funding to deliver the most viable option to replace Llannerch Bridge are ongoing. They are already supporting us in funding the detailed design part of the process, which has now started, however, funding for the construction phase still needs to be sought.

With the Welsh Government's default 20mph speed limit coming into force from September 17, we consulted with the wider public with the proposal to [retain five roads in the county as 30mph](#).



**Working through the regional body, and within the context of the Wales Transport Strategy, we will enable people to access education, employment, services and activities**

The project to Develop a Sustainable Transport Plan (STP) has now developed annual and quarterly measures for inclusion in this theme, the Team is currently gathering baseline data for these measures which will be included once available.

In July 2023, in partnership with Transport for Wales we [extended the current Fflecsi scheme](#) (demand responsive public transport) across Denbigh by introducing a second electric vehicle, a wheelchair accessible Nissan Dynamo E-NV200 EV micro bus. This will provide people with a greater range of pick-ups and destinations along the new Denbigh 77 route and [extends the scope of public transport for the Denbighshire communities](#) of Nantglyn, Prion, Peniel, Saron, Tremeirchion and Rhuallt.

We wanted people to enjoy the great attractions Llangollen and the surrounding area has to offer and during the summer we worked collaboratively with police officers to [manage and promote safe and responsible parking](#). We also encouraged visitors to save parking spaces every Saturday by using the Dee Valley Picturesque Bus (which will run up until November 4, 2023) that provides a circular route, linking Llangollen and the surrounding villages to Horseshoe Falls and popular local attractions including Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Wenffrwd Nature Reserve, Valle Crucis Abbey, Plas Newydd Historic House and the Horseshoe Pass.

We are currently working with Sustrans Cymru to understand how to make travelling actively in the local area more accessible, safer, and more enjoyable for the whole community, encouraging more journeys to be taken on foot or cycle instead of by car. On September 26, a survey was launched on future improvements for local walking, wheeling, and cycling around [Ysgol y Castell in Rhuddlan](#).

A further three Clwyd West Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Projects will support this pledge, for which Project Teams are currently being established. All with an expected delivery date of March 2025. The St Peter's Square project will deliver a scheme of public realm improvements to enhance pedestrian and traffic flows around the square and to facilitate a more flexible central events space. The Ruthin Cae Dol project will improve connectivity through the park and between the park and the town centre. The project to improve Moel

Famau Facilities and Cycle Paths will see new and improved toilet and refreshment facilities, with extended and sustainably managed cycle routes.

### **Support our county's green infrastructure**

As a result of funding from the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF), enhancements to [Green Lane car park in Corwen](#) will be of benefit to residents and visitors with the installation of five electric vehicle (EV) charging points at the site due to come online. Further enhancements at the site are scheduled to commence in September with the refurbishment of the toilet block, signage works and a new bus layby and associated markings. This increased our total number of [charging points across the county](#) to 80.

We also took the opportunity to highlight this increased [network of chargers ahead of the August Bank Holiday](#) to local and out of county EV owners as to their availability across the county to help support visits to tourist attractions, events and businesses.

In August, following a comprehensive public consultation process to ensure that the final plans for [Llangollen's 4 Great Highways project](#), (also funded by LUF) reflected local thinking, we were pleased to have initiated the tendering process to find a contractor to complete the works with a view to appointing one in early to mid-September. The aim of the project is to enhance the landscape and improve accessibility, interpretation and signage in Llangollen. It's important to us to ensure that the signage in the area reflects how local people want the town to be portrayed and feedback on people's preferred [design options for the new interpretation and wayfinding](#) that is due to be installed is currently being sought with a closing date of October 8.

### **Support communities with improved digital networks and skills**

With internet access becoming a vital part of everyday life, with many essential services and schemes now moving online, we urged anyone who may need some help in this area to contact or visit their local library for more information. We have been working with the Good Things Foundation, to help distribute free SIM cards and mobile data to local people [living in data poverty](#) through the National Databank Scheme in our Denbighshire's Libraries.

Telecare services are being digitised in readiness of analogue services ceasing in 2025. This theme includes an activity that reports progress towards achieving digitisation, and

we had previously intended on including a measure of the new digital service. However, a measure is no longer deemed necessary and has been removed.

For further measures and activity in support of skills, training and employment, please see our [learning and growing theme](#).

### Promote personal and community well-being

This theme also includes measures in relation to personal and community well-being. Our Community Resilience Team has seen the number of projects or groups supported steadily grow. In this period 73 groups and projects were supported which included 36 new enquiries and 37 receiving ongoing support from the previous reporting period.

The Gwyddelwern Community Hub LUF project has been included in this report this period. The project, with an expected completion date of March 2025, will provide a new energy-efficient community hub to increase the range of facilities available in the village.

### Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

Within this theme there are several nationally benchmarked measures that give an indication of performance compared to other local authorities in Wales. For further measures and activity in support of well-being please see our [Healthier, Happier and Caring theme](#); for community focussed school activity and developing digital competency please see our [Learning and Growing theme](#).

### Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
Year to date average for the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	18% Priority to Improve Same	16% Priority to Improve Worse	16% Priority to Improve Same	29% Priority to Improve Better	23.33% Priority to Improve Worse
The number of projects or groups supported by	55	53	61	78	73

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
the Community Resilience Team - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	Good Better	Good Worse	Excellent Better	Excellent Better	Excellent Worse
The number of tenants involved in community projects – <b>Count Only</b>	6	6	6	6	6
Number of journeys using Fflecsi bus services	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	Data pending
Number of journeys on service buses	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	Data pending
Number of concessionary journeys on service buses	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	Data pending

### Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
Number of cycle journeys per annum on designated Active Travel routes (Sample)	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	Baseline data being established
Number of pedestrian journeys per annum on designated Active Travel routes (Sample)	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	Baseline data being established
The percentage of principle A roads that are in overall poor condition – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	2.6% Excellent Better	2.2% Excellent Better
The percentage of non-principal/classified B roads that are in overall poor condition – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	3.8% Excellent Better	3.5% Excellent Better
The percentage of non-principal/classified C roads that are in overall poor condition – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	7.5% Excellent Better	16.4% Priority to Improve Worse

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of premises that receive less than 30Mbps - <b>Count Only</b>	No data	4.57%
The percentage of premises that receive less than 10Mbps - <b>Count Only</b>	No data	2.88%
The percentage of library users who say that using the library has had a positive impact on their digital skills and confidence - <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	65% Good
The percentage of people who borrowed a digital device from a library who said it had made a positive impact on their digital skills and confidence - <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024
The number of community projects co-produced with the community and third sector - <b>Count Only</b>	7	7
The number of volunteer hours supporting community resilience and development activity - <b>Count Only</b>	No data	700 (estimate)
The number of contacts provided through the council's Edge of Care volunteer service - <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	795

### Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the transport and road infrastructure to support thriving, cohesive, and well connected communities - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	30%	65%	5%	31% Priority to Improve
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the digital infrastructure (such as good broadband connectivity,	49%	45%	6%	52.2% Acceptable

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
good mobile internet or mobile phone signal) to support thriving, cohesive, and well connected communities – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>				
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the social infrastructure needed to support personal and community well-being – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	56%	34%	10%	62% Acceptable

## Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Unless new data is published, we will not comment on WIMD but we will retain the measures in this report as they provide important context and help to inform our overall measures status for each theme. Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

Title	2014	2019
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Access to Services (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation) – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	14% Priority to Improve Same	14% Priority to Improve Same

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

### Projects or Activities

This theme contains 18 projects and activities. Eight of which are 'On Target', three are 'Experiencing Obstacles', five are in development and two have now been completed.

Title	Status	Exception
Implement an annual Resurfacing programme on a number of roads across the county where the life has expired.	On Target	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Implement an annual Surface Dressing programme on a number of high priority roads where this represents the most cost-effective method of prolonging the life-span of the road	Completed	No exception
Aim to deliver the most viable option to replace the Llannerch Bridge	On Target Same	No exception
Contribute to the development of the new Regional Transport Plan	Experiencing Obstacles Same	The Corporate Joint Committee is focussing on establishing appropriate governance arrangements before moving to delivery.
Review, develop and modernise rural, urban and inter-urban transport services, where appropriate, working with partners within the Metro project and alongside the emerging bus reform	On Target Same	No exception
Develop a Sustainable Transport Plan (to include Active Travel)	At business case stage	No exception
Four Great Highways (Clwyd South Levelling Up Round 2)	On Target	No exception
Wenffrwd (Clwyd South Levelling Up Round 2)	On Target	No exception
Corwen to Cynwyd Active Travel Route. Phase 1 (Clwyd South Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	No exception
2a Moel Famau country park new cycle paths & visitor facilities (Clwyd West Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	No exception
1a St Peter's Square (Clwyd West Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	No exception
Green Lane Car Park Corwen (Clwyd South Levelling Up Round 2)	On Target Same	No exception
2d Gwyddelwern Community Hub (CW LUF)	At business case stage	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Traffic modelling and design traffic improvement works	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Project is on hold whilst funding is being sought to progress or develop it further.
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure - Public Charging Points	Completed	Awaiting two sites to become live.
Progress towards digitalisation of telecare services before the 2025 deadline for ceasing of analogue telephone services.	Experiencing Obstacles	Clear options appraisal will allow decisions to be made in order to progress.
Develop a community resilience action plan	On Target Same	No exception
Replace our current backup infrastructure to remove the reliance on legacy technologies and improve resilience.	On Target	No exception



## A Greener Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

### Corporate Plan Update

#### **Deliver our Climate and Ecological Change Strategy to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030.**

Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021 to 2022 and 2029 to 2030) is scheduled to be reviewed and refreshed every three years. The first official review and refresh of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy will be carried out this year, 2023 to 2024. Delivery of the strategy does not stop whilst this review is taking place; work continues concurrently with the review to deliver a Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council and reduction in supply chain emissions.

Ensuring the strategy remains relevant, up to date and bought into is integral to delivering upon the Council's Climate Change and Ecological Emergency declaration (2019) which committed the Council to become Net Carbon Zero by 2030 and improve biodiversity in Denbighshire.

There are a number of key annual performance measures that are being used to judge the performance of the council in achieving its 2030 goals including: reducing carbon emissions the council emits from various sources; increasing carbon sequestration of land the council owns, leases and manages; and increasing the species richness of the land the council owns, leases and manages, all of which were reported in our [January to March 2023 report](#).

Data for reducing carbon tonnage from our supply chains measure for 2022 to 2023 is currently pending (as are previous years). The data collation methodology is currently being revisited in order to provide accurate annual figures. These figures will be reported as soon as they are available.

A round up of all the great project work and activities progressed during July to September can be found in our ["A round up of news" section](#).

## **Improve recycling rates and reduce waste**

Throughout September, we invited school children to submit their [creative names for our 21 new recycling vehicles](#), including three electric vehicles in either Welsh or English. The new fleet has been bought to replace the old fleet and is part of a range of measures we are taking to reach the county's recycling target of 70%. We also sought more images to go on the livery for future vehicles in our waste and recycling fleet from [local photographers](#). We want our new vehicles to show our collective pride in the county.

## **Support communities to mitigate and cope with the impacts of climate change**

The two Coastal Defence Improvement Schemes for Rhyl Central and Prestatyn Central remain 'On Target'. The new Flood Risk Management (FRM) Strategy for the county of Denbighshire is still in its early stages with a meeting of the Task and Finish Group of nominated Members to take place towards the end of October to discuss the initial draft of the strategy.

At the beginning of July, following the successful installation of new security gates, the part of the promenade that had been closed between the Pavilion Car Park and Old Golf Road to allow for coastal defence works was [re-opened at weekends](#). This allows uninterrupted access for both cyclists and pedestrians between Splash Point and SeaQuarium. However, access to the prom for heavy plant will still be required during the working week, including tidal working hours, therefore the gates will be closed Monday to Friday.

The Clwyd West Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Loggerheads project will deliver internal improvements to the existing building, with an extended external undercover area and crucially, additional natural flood management measures. The project has an expected delivery date of March 2025.

This pledge also includes supporting communities to mitigate and cope with the impacts of climate change by increasing allotments and community food growing opportunities. During the period, Countryside Services staff and volunteers linked up with [Incredible Edible Denbigh](#) to help prepare allotment spaces donated to the group for planting and growing. The group is aiming to grow food with help from the local community, allowing people to access locally produced fruit and vegetable.

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of greener initiatives please see our [Housing](#) theme for energy efficiency and our [Better Connected](#) theme for sustainable travel and electric vehicle charging points.

### Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
Net Carbon Zero - Total carbon tonnage emitted and absorbed by the council (excluding supply chains) – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	12,205 Acceptable Worse	11,832 Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of DCC owned and operated land in highest categories of species richness – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	40.62% Acceptable Better	42.00% Acceptable Better
Total carbon tonnage emitted (Corporately) through fleet – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	2,699 Priority to Improve Worse	2,302 Acceptable Better
Total carbon tonnage emitted (Corporately) through business travel– <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	163 Excellent Better	251 Excellent Worse
Total carbon tonnage emitted (Corporately) through supply chains– <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	Data pending	Data pending
Capacity (in MW) of renewable energy equipment installed in our buildings (owned and operated) - <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2022 to 2023	1MW
The percentage of municipal waste reused, recycled or composted - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	67.67% Excellent	65.91% Good Worse
The number of properties with a high or medium risk of flooding (DCC wide) - <b>Count Only</b>	1,171	1,171
Area of moorland (heather, gorse and bracken) managed per annum – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	20 hectares	80 hectares Excellent Better

## Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire is resilient against the impacts of climate change and nature’s decline - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	44%	40%	16%	52% Acceptable

## Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Unless new data is published, we will not comment on WIMD but we will retain the measures in this report as they provide important context and help to inform our overall measures status for each theme. Welsh Government’s next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

Title	2014	2019
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Physical Environment (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation) – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	2% Good Better	2% Good Same

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

This theme is supported by the overarching Climate and Ecological Change Programme 2021 to 2030 and a further 18 projects and activities. Eight are ‘On Target’, eight are ‘Experiencing Obstacles’ and one is in development. One project is as ‘At Risk’: the Behaviour Change Workstream- Climate Action and Nature Recovery. This is due to staff resource and capacity, which is currently impacting on the progress and delivery of the project.

## Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Programme: Climate and Ecological Change Programme 2021 – 2030	Experiencing Obstacles Same	In year 2023 to 2024 status update: Delays in project delivery, which means benefit realisation will also be delayed.
Reducing carbon from buildings	Experiencing Obstacles Same	2023 to 2024 projects look likely to save approximately 300 tonnes of carbon which is less than the target figure of around 660 tonnes per annum (to meet the 60% reduction from buildings by 2030). Of the projects planned, preparations continue at pace to move these into delivery. There have been delays in mobilising projects even though work has taken place during school holidays.
Corporate Fleet EV Phase 2	On Target Same	No exception
Carbon sequestration on existing land holdings	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Delays in the purchases of Moel y Plas and Llys Brenig will impact on woodland creation.
Wildflower Meadow project	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Future of the project and plans for next year are to be finalised.
Nature Reserve at Green Gates Farm, St Asaph	Experiencing Obstacles Same	New cost estimates, resource capacity and availability constraints, could impact on project milestones, budget, scope of work and potentially funding.
Behaviour change for climate action and nature recovery	At Risk Worse	Staff resource and capacity is currently

Title	Status	Exception
		impacting on the progress and delivery of this project
Carbon reduction through procurement	On Target Better	No exception
Land acquisition for carbon and ecological purposes 2023 to 2024	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Three sites are in the process of being purchased and one new site is being pursued as a potential opportunity.
Implement Ash Dieback work as per the Action Plan across the county	On Target Same	No exception
Enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems in all of our Council service areas	Experiencing Obstacles	Our Ecological and Biodiversity Team are working hard across council services to improve biodiversity, however, instigating any change takes time.
Rhyl Green Infrastructure	On Target Same	No exception
Remodelling Waste Service Operations	Experiencing Obstacles Better	Operations at the new Waste Transfer Station are subject to the approval of a bespoke permit, which was submitted in January 2023 to Natural Resources Wales (NRW). The permit needs to be approved before the service change can take place.
We will work towards reducing the use of plastics within Denbighshire County Council, including School Catering and Procurement, along with any future work (including its Alternative Delivery Models (ADMs) such as Denbighshire Leisure Limited (DLL)	Experiencing Obstacles Same	We are continually looking for alternative drinks provision that would eradicate single use plastics. The trial period of selling drinks in reusable cups was unsuccessful.
Deliver improvement and expansion projects for Denbighshire County Council allotments	On Target Same	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Develop a new Flood Strategy for the county	On Target Same	No exception
Prestatyn Central Coastal Defence Improvement Scheme	On Target Same	No exception
Rhyl Central Coastal Defence Improvement Scheme	On Target Same	No exception
2b Loggerheads country park new visitor facilities and flood management (Clwyd West Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	No exception

## A round up of news

The following additional news and committee items took place in this last period in support of this theme:

Denbighshire County Council's Property Section Energy Team has completed over 90 working measures into 47 council-owned buildings in a drive to [reduce building emissions](#). To date we have improved the efficiency of a range of buildings, from schools to leisure centres across the county, which has included complete mechanical, heating and ventilation overhauls, modifications to heating controls, heat recovery systems, heatpumps, solar PV (panels), LED lighting, battery storage, loft and wall insulation as well as emission reductions through behaviour change and ICT infrastructure. Work at Ysgol Dinas Bran was mentioned in the House of Commons and nominated for a national award.

Earlier this year the Energy Team oversaw the installation of two air source heat pumps at [Ysgol Tir Morfa](#) and during the summer holidays they completed phase 2 with the installation of two solar PV arrays and battery storage to help generate electricity to power the pumps and store any excess. This work not only further reducing the fuel bills but also saving a further six tonnes of carbon emissions per year. More schools are set to receive work over 2023 along with plans for drive through changes in other council buildings.

September also saw the completion of phase two of work to improve [energy efficiency at Csgod y Gaer care home](#) in Corwen. This has resulted in around three quarters less water heating energy use a day. The gas consumption has reduced from an average of 750kwh to 200kwh daily on top of the impact of the previous work. This is a further reduction of around another five to six tonnes of carbon emissions per year. The total emissions at the

care home are now around 10 tonnes per year lower than they were before the carbon reduction project work.

In August, Marine Lake in Rhyl [achieved the Green Flag Community Award for the 12th consecutive year](#). The Green Flag Community Award delivered by environmental charity Keep Wales Tidy is the benchmark for parks and green spaces, which are managed with the help of volunteers.

Volunteers supported by Nature for Health alongside Countryside Service staff completed a [new bridge at Brickfield Pond Nature Reserve](#) to allow a much needed wildlife habitat to develop. The bridge helps take the pathway and visitors over the new water vole habitat, an animal on the UK's endangered list. Countryside staff and volunteers carried out [identification work of moths](#) at the allotments near Coed Morfa, Prestatyn. Developments of the land at [Parc Bodnant in Prestatyn](#) culminated in the creation of a new pond and a new outdoor classroom, which has a bat roof to give the nocturnal mammal a place to roost. Countryside staff have continued to work closely with Rhuddlan Reserve Management Advisory Group and during the period, the Rhuddlan Nature Reserve celebrated achieving an Outstanding 'It's Your Neighbourhood' Award again for 2023, alongside another [RHS National Certificate of Distinction](#). Vital new work is also underway to help [protect and support Denbighshire's curlew population](#).

At the beginning of July, we reminded residents to be aware of Tree Preservation Order (TPO) rules. The TPOs protect trees from [unauthorised pruning or felling](#), and anyone carrying out such work on a TPO tree is committing an offence. In August, we launched an appeal to help [preserve the lineage of ancient Denbighshire trees](#). In July, we thanked the [vibrant volunteer community](#) that supports the Tree Nursery at Green Gates Farm, St. Asaph. The Tree Nursery has [exceeded last season's results](#): producing nearly 8,000 plants during its first growing season last year; growing 13,000 wildflowers this year; and increasing the number of trees grown from 1,000 last season to 11,500 for 2023. In September, the Tree Nursery took onboard [an electric Avant loader and an electric van](#) to help out with manual work at the nursery and support the low emissions delivery of trees and plants.

In August, our Countryside Services had support from a 15 year old Gypsy Cob, Bill, as a traditional [horse powered method to help resource wood](#) to use following ash dieback prevention work at Loggerheads Country Park. This type of forestry management, which has horses move trees from a felled location to a collection area, is more carbon friendly



and is kinder to the forest ecology. Trees deemed a risk due to the disease were cut down at the park and left-over wood will be reused to create benches.

We started preparations to introduce a [natural process across eight county wildflower meadows to control grass](#) length by preparing the meadows for seeding of yellow rattle seeds. With the flowering season finishing, our [seasonal maintenance of our wildflower meadow sites](#) began in August across the county with specialist mowing equipment to carry out the second cut, the first is carried out on the meadows during February and March each year. The Council's Biodiversity team, working with volunteers and groups across the county, started a [programme of plug planting and enhancement work across ten meadows](#). Most recently, in September they were joined by volunteers from an [award winning group, Denbigh in Bloom](#) to add more colour and variety to a Denbigh roundabout. Plants donated by the Council's Biodiversity team, which maintains the tree nursery, supported volunteers of the [Friends of the Ffrith with the development of their own wildflower planters](#).

Schools continued to play an important role in looking after biodiversity and helping tackle the climate and nature emergency, during the period July to September. We highlighted the work of pupils of [Ysgol Penmorfa](#) in creating a multitude of outdoor areas for wildlife to thrive. Pupils of [Ysgol Caer Drewyn, Corwen](#) and our Biodiversity team created a new wildflower meadow in the corner of the school grounds to help local nature. Our Countryside team supported Rhos Street school by carrying out [traditional hedgelaying](#) on their site. In September, [Streetscene members joined the Mayor of Ruthin for a visit to Ysgol Borthyn](#).

In September, the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group Cymru together with the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) held a farm walk at Cefn-y-fedw, Pen-y-bryn, Pen-y-cae, Wrexham to highlight the theme of [integration of conservation within a commercial farming enterprise](#).

In September, we issued a [Fixed Penalty Notice \(FPN\) of £250 to an individual for fly-tipping waste on the street](#), violating Section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This demonstrates that such behaviour will not be tolerated and that action will be taken when it occurs.

## A fairer, safe, and more equal Denbighshire

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

### Corporate Plan Update

#### **Foster community cohesion by ensuring people are protected from harm, abuse and exploitation**

North Wales Police reported 368 repeat victims of domestic abuse for the period July to September 2023 (up from 99 between April to June), which compared to 266 for the same period last year. In terms of repeat offenders of domestic abuse reported for July to September, there were 73 offenders – up from 6 during April to June. The significant spike in volumes is also evident for the rest of North Wales. Further work is required to understand what has caused this anomaly. It is important to note that due to the way the repeat victims and offenders data are calculated means that volumes are liable to change as new offences are added to nominals, or as offences move out of the ‘last 12 months’ time period. North Wales Police has also revised the recording standards for these data, and the trend we are seeing (i.e. increased repeat offenders and victims), reflects these improvements.

[Denbigh town centre will have 5 new CCTV cameras](#) and upgraded existing ones as part of plans to enhance security, with funding from the UK Government’s Shared Prosperity Fund. Cameras across the Denbighshire CCTV Partnership, a collaboration with North Wales Police and the town councils of Prestatyn, Rhuddlan and Rhyl, and soon Denbigh, will benefit from 24-hour reactive monitoring.

Denbighshire’s Trading Standards team has been taking action to address [non-compliant vaping products](#) within the county. The council has urged business owners to be aware of the legal requirements that are in place to protect the health and safety of users as it is the responsibility of business owners to comply with the law. [Advice](#) is available from the Trading Standards team. In September, the team warned residents about [rogue traders and doorstep crime](#). Information about legitimate doorstep trading practices is available [here](#) on the council’s website.

## **Reduce inequalities**

87% of staff have completed violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence e-learning module (not mandatory), which is considered 'Good'. Our measure of the percentage of staff that have completed our modern-day slavery (not mandatory) e-learning module is annual, and we previously reported it as a 'Priority for Improvement'. Despite a slight improvement since June, it remains a 'a 'Priority for Improvement'. This e-learning module is more pertinent to some job roles than others, and we need to ensure that the staff who need this training, access it. This is also the case for hate crime e-learning.

One activity to 'Support diversity and engagement by embedding the framework on a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being' continues to be 'At Risk'. Following notification of a reduction of Welsh Government grant fund to support this work, the team is taking a more targeted approach. A number of training courses were commissioned between July and September for schools to access in the autumn term, and two clusters of schools have been approached to pilot two particular interventions and we will provide an update on those through future reports.

A contacts list for advocates of groups of people with protected characteristics has been developed with the Regional Community Cohesion Officer and will be tabled at the next meeting of the council's Strategic Equality and Diversity Group, both for information and to collectively consider how best to promote this list across the organisation.

The council has supplied 15 public locations across Denbighshire with [in case of emergency period products](#) display units which the public can access for free, funded through the Welsh Government Period Dignity Grant.

In September, the Deputy Minister for Social Partnership visited the [Ty Pride project in Rhyl](#), which supports LGBTQ+ young people who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The only one of its kind in Wales, the project is a partnership between Denbighshire County Council, homeless charity Llamau, and the charity West Rhyl Young People's Project and Viva LGBTQ+.

## **Alleviate poverty**

As reported previously, according to the latest data from the National Survey for Wales, the percentage of people living in households in material deprivation has increased from

9.1% in 2019 to 2020 to 14.8% in 2022 to 2023. On the basis of this deterioration - using our standardised methodology for calculating what poor and excellent performance looks like - performance is 'Acceptable'. During 2022 to 2023, Neath Porth Talbot had the highest percentage of people living in households in material deprivation at 21.5% and Monmouthshire the lowest at 8.4%.

19.3% of children in Denbighshire were living in workless households in 2022 and is a 'Priority for improvement'. This has improved slightly since 2021, at which point 21.1% of children were living in workless households.

The national basic income pilot has commenced and 100% of Denbighshire's eligible care experienced young people are taking part in the scheme, which is considered 'Excellent'.

We reported in our last report that we have made enquiries with colleagues in Data Cymru for suitable national measures of fuel poverty reported at a local authority level; however, it currently appears that none exist that are routinely reported upon. We are exploring whether any local measures exist or can be easily captured.

Since September 2022, the [Universal Primary Free School Meals \(UPFSM\)](#) offer in Denbighshire has been successfully rolled out to Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The [UPFSM offer has been extended to Years 3 and 4](#) from September 2023, and the phased delivery approach will see all primary pupils offered free school meals by 2024. In response to the UPFSM roll out, schools such as [Christ the Word in Rhyl have upgraded their dining capacity](#). The percentage of eligible primary and secondary school pupils taking Free School meals during the summer term of 2023 was 63% and 78% respectively.

Denbighshire County Council has been collaborating with the Design Council to 'design differently' and take preventative action to tackle issues such as waste. As part of the project, the council has been working with ReSource, the operators of [Ruthin community café Seconds](#). The café is sourcing local surplus food to prevent food waste and keep costs low for its customers, demonstrating an integrated approach to supporting people through the cost of living crisis whilst addressing long-term issues affecting the planet.

In July, the council reminded parents and guardians that the [School Essentials Grant](#) was open for applications. To qualify, parents needed to receive at least one benefit, such as income support, but they must not already receive Working Tax Credit. Up to £200 was available depending on the age of the child.

## **Continue to support and resettle refugees through the UK Global Resettlement Scheme, in support of Wales' declaration to be a Nation of Sanctuary**

Working Denbighshire has continued to offer one-to-one support for refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine, including delivering the social group for English language skills practice for Ukrainian participants. We have also assigned employment co-ordinators to work with local employers on specific opportunities for those with the poorest English language skills. In addition, we continue to run workshops designed to provide refugees from all areas with information on UK 'employer expectations'.

In August, an [event held for resettled families in Denbighshire](#) was organised by Denbighshire County Council, the British Red Cross and the North East Wales Community Cohesion Service. The free multi-cultural event provided activities and performances for families from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine.

We have recalculated the number of families resettled within Denbighshire during 2022 and 2023 and have made an amendment to the total (cumulative) number from 75 to 41. This discrepancy relates to the different schemes of support available. For clarity, the revised figure does not include families hosted through the Super Sponsorship Scheme.

## **Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update**

The majority of the measures below are new to this Corporate Plan and to the 2023 to 2024 financial year. Some data is pending for this report and will be obtained for our next report. Other information, such as 'the number of reported occurrences of prejudice related bullying in schools', is expected by November 2023.

For further measures and activity to support well-being, see our [Healthier, Happier and Caring](#) theme. There is additional information to support housing and homelessness in our [Housing](#) theme; measures and activities to support employment and deprivation our [Prosperous](#) theme and education and volunteering in our [Learning and Growing](#) and [Connected](#) themes.

## Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse reported including non-crime occurrences (3 or more in 12 months, measured as year to date) - <b>Count Only</b>	266	386	537	99	368
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse reported (3 or more in 12 months) - <b>Count Only</b>	28	42	56	6	73
The number of young people referred to the Youth Justice Service during the year from Denbighshire - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	70	Data pending
The percentage of eligible primary school pupils taking Free School meals (Denbighshire) – <b>Count Only</b>	No data: does not apply	68.3%	Data pending	Data pending	63%
The percentage of eligible secondary school pupils taking Free School meals (Denbighshire) - <b>Count Only</b>	No data: does not apply	80.52%	Data pending	Data pending	78%

## Annual or Biennial Measures

### 2019 to 2023 data

Title	2019 to 2020	2022 to 2023
The percentage of people living in households in material deprivation – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	9.1%	14.8% Acceptable Worse

### 2021 to 2023 data

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of personnel within DCC who have undertaken the hate crime e-learning module (not mandatory) - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data	7% Priority to Improve
The percentage of personnel within DCC who have undertaken modern day slavery e-learning module (not mandatory) - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data	25% Priority to Improve
The percentage of personnel within DCC who have completed violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence e-learning - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	New to 2022 to 2023	87% Good Better
The number of reported occurrences of prejudice related bullying in schools - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data	Data pending. Expected November 2023
The percentage of adults who say their library is an enjoyable, safe and inclusive place - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	93% Excellent Same	93% Excellent Same
The percentage of children in poverty in Denbighshire – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	34.9% Priority to Improve	28.1% Priority to Improve Better
The percentage of children living in workless households – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	21.1% Priority to Improve	19.3% Priority to Improve Better

<b>Title</b>	<b>2021 to 2022</b>	<b>2022 to 2023</b>
Measures of all households and vulnerable households living in fuel poverty in Wales (placeholder) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	Data pending	Data pending
The percentage of eligible young people leaving care in receipt of the basic income pilot from the Welsh Government - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	No data. Pilot Scheme across Wales to be undertaken	100% Excellent
The cumulative number of families resettled within Denbighshire – <b>Count Only</b>	6	41
The number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) in Denbighshire - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024
The number of customer complaints received by the council related to race – <b>Count Only</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	Data expected April 2024

### Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

<b>Title</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>No opinion or unsure</b>	<b>With an opinion, and agree</b>
The percentage of stakeholders who agreed that people in Denbighshire are treated fairly and equally, and have access to opportunities to promote their well-being and community cohesion - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	36%	44%	20%	46% Acceptable

### Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Unless new data is published, we will not comment on WIMD but we will retain the measures in this report as they provide important context and help to inform our overall measures status for each theme. Welsh Government’s next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026.



Title	2014	2019
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of <b>Community Safety</b> (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation - WIMD) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	14% Priority to Improve Worse	10% Priority to Improve Better
The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire in the 10% most deprived in Wales (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation - WIMD) - <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	14% Priority to Improve Worse	12% Priority to Improve Better

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

There are 20 projects supporting this theme of the Corporate Plan. 15 are 'On Target', 3 are 'Experiencing Obstacles' and one is 'At Risk', with exceptions for those reported below. One activity is being scoped.

### Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Undertake preventative work, in partnership with the Police Licensing and Local Authority Licencing, in relation to business premises (including sales to minors, alcohol, tobacco and e-cigarettes)	On Target Same	No exception
Develop and deliver Gypsy, Roma and Traveller awareness raising community events	On Target Same	No exception
Purchase of ANPR cameras - The purchase of six specialist ANPR specification redeployable surveillance cameras which will enable us to monitor and gather information in respect of environmental crime hotspots.	On Target	No exception
Commit to the Welsh Government's Anti-Racism Wales Action Plan through Service Business Plans	Experiencing Obstacles Same	The detail of some actions and lines of responsibility is still being agreed with services.
Deliver upon the pledge to promote zero racism in Denbighshire	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	Capacity pressure is slowing progress. This will

Title	Status	Exception
		be progressed during January and March.
<i>Promote to schools English as an Additional Language Programme in terms of tackling racism and ensure anti-racism policies at schools are up to date (this includes raising awareness of ARWAP)</i>	This activity is being scoped.	No exception
Engage and support tenants most likely to be experiencing social inequality to access services and take an active role in their community	On Target Same	No exception
Bruton Park, Rhyl (working with Bruton Park residents to maximise community well-being).	On Target Same	No exception
Develop Croeso Cynnes hubs throughout the County.	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	No indication as yet from Welsh Government of any funding being allocated this year to support local groups to set up hubs. Libraries have continued throughout the year to offer warm spaces along with free tea and coffee facilities. We continue to work with local community groups to assist in setting up new hubs, supporting existing ones and with promotion and branding to promote these spaces. We are looking for further funding to support this work.
Support diversity and engagement by embedding the framework on a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being	At Risk Same	A number of training courses were commissioned between July and September for schools to access in the Autumn term, using the authority Wellbeing Grant. Interventions are chosen for their evidence base and impact. Given that the WG Wellbeing grant has been reduced this has impacted on the breadth of training and school activity that

Title	Status	Exception
		could be offered. Two clusters of schools have been approached to pilot two particular interventions.
Review and revise the Youth Council for Denbighshire.	On Target Same	No exception
Embed the DCC Anti-Bullying Strategy throughout all schools	On Target Same	No exception
Period Dignity	On Target Same	No exception
Develop a network to engage people and groups with protected characteristics (through the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group)	On Target Same	No exception
Universal Free School Meals for all Primary School Pupils	On Target Same	No exception
Develop and deliver the county wide Food Strategy and Food Partnership Network (including social supermarket project – Cogog) around Denbighshire	On Target Better	No exception
Enhance the School Holiday Enrichment Programme to support children to eat well	On Target Same	No exception
Enhance the offer, through Working Denbighshire, for all refugees who have settled in Denbighshire to gain support of an employment mentor (all adults are actively involved in English as a Second Language (ESOL) classes	On Target Same	No exception
In partnership with Denbighshire Leisure Ltd and the Third Sector, secure funding for creative and cultural activities to work with resettled families in the county	On Target Same	No exception
Greener community infrastructure: Accessible Play Area Provision to deliver play areas in strategic locations across the county that are accessible to all by installing specialist	Started On Target	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
equipment and making improvements to footways and street furniture in the public realm and immediate vicinity		

## A round up of news

The following additional news and committee items took place between July and September in support of this theme:

[Emergency Services Day](#) took place on September 9, and the council marked the occasion by raising a flag in their honour at County Hall in Ruthin. Earlier in the month, Denbighshire County Council showed its support for [Merchant Navy Day](#) (September 1) by raising the Red Ensign flag.

## **A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

### **Corporate Plan Update**

#### **Play our part in achieving one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050, by delivering the Welsh Language Strategy with partners and communities**

We previously reported that the number of people who could speak Welsh (aged 3 or older) as at the end of March 2023 stood at 35,000, which was 38%, and that whilst the percentage had increased overall for the whole of Wales, this was not replicated in Denbighshire with 900 fewer people reporting they could speak Welsh (a 0.9% decrease) compared to the end of March 2022. It has been decided that it will be most helpful, going forward, to focus on the percentage of year one pupils receiving their education through the medium of Welsh, and so this indicator of self-reporting of Welsh will be removed henceforth from our Performance Management Framework. Furthermore, Menter Iaith Sir Ddinbych is currently analysing the most recent Census data to determine the vibrancy of the Welsh language in smaller areas. We are also keen to gather examples where the language is thriving and is connected to our culture and our economy (for example, farming and agriculture), which better demonstrate people's experiences of a thriving language in their community. We will identify ways to capture these experiences.

28.4% of year one pupils received their education through the medium of Welsh during the academic year 2022 to 2023, a 1% increase on the previous year. Our ambition, according to our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), is to increase this to 32% by 2027 (the end of this new Corporate Plan), working towards 40% by 2032. Our ambition was based on projections, which included assumptions regarding growth in demand in existing Welsh medium schools and the transition of existing English medium schools to offer a Welsh medium foundation phase. The main area of concern is a reduction in the percentage of learners who received education in year 2 in 2022 to 2023, in part as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This has reduced the baseline in the plan from 28% of learners receiving Welsh medium education in September 2020, to 26.4%. This reduction will make the ambitious targets of WESP very far-reaching. We had hoped to confirm our threshold for intervention, i.e. what will constitute a 'Priority for Improvement', in our previous report but the changing baseline has made determination of our thresholds

difficult. An additional issue is the expectation around schools' changing language category. At the time of developing the plan there was a greater expectation of the language outcome for schools transitioning from English to Welsh medium provision and it is unlikely that these pupils will contribute to this target now. Welsh Government is aware of the current position, and this will be kept under regular review. The council has also shared its annual progress report with the Welsh Government and we are awaiting their response. There is a clear, county-wide vision to develop Welsh in Education and effective collaboration is happening with committees working on specific projects and initiatives. The Welsh in Education Support Team now includes six members of staff who offer support and guidance to staff and schools in all sectors. The council's officers have met with school leaders and shared development plans with all primary schools to assist them in their endeavours to increase Welsh provision and develop Welsh oracy skills. Progress in relation to Welsh medium provision in schools was also discussed at [Performance Scrutiny](#) in September. The main area of concern (a reduction in the percentage of learners who received education in year 2 in 2022 to 2023) was discussed. However, positively, Welsh medium pre-school education was reported to be thriving and over the summer of 2023, the Council was invited to submit business cases for capital funding of £5.8m for five projects to assist with Welsh Medium provision. The projects in four primary schools and the development of an immersion provision in Ysgol Brynhyfryd will assist in progressing towards these targets. Strong retention of pupils in Welsh Medium schools throughout their education is key to delivery of the plan together with the expansion of provision either via re-designation of the language category of schools or the development of new Welsh Medium schools where appropriate. To support this, investment in training programmes to ensure there is sufficient capacity for Welsh Medium teaching provision, including enhancing the Welsh Language skills of current second language staff, is key to the delivery of the plan. We are in continual dialogue with Welsh Government and will review our targets regularly. Furthermore, we are developing a new webpage that will promote the benefits of Welsh medium education and offer support and resources to families, which include a list of schools under the new categorisation, Welsh medium education myth busting, case studies and videos. We are developing the website with the Welsh Language Forum, and we will include links to advice and resources from other organisations. Menter Iaith Sir Ddwyfach has agreed to fund the production of a postcard containing a QR code to link to the website. This is an action from our Welsh Language Strategy.

Following approval of the [Welsh Language Strategy 2023 to 2028](#) in June, officers have been developing ideas and guidance to inform recruitment of staff with Welsh essential and Welsh desirable skills. HR staff have attended a workshop with the Welsh Language Commissioner to get advice and guidance to help us comply with Welsh Language Standards. We would like to recruit more Welsh speaking staff, including more staff that are happy to identify some Welsh language skills and grow in confidence. The aim is to move to a position whereby every job has at least, as a minimum, a Level 1 Welsh language skills requirement (some positions will require a Level 5 skill). Guidance for managers is being produced and we are developing information for applicants outlining the skills required for each Level, and will outline the training and development opportunities we have in place to support and enable their progression. New starters and staff will be supported to develop their confidence and skills to achieve this. We want to see staff who would describe themselves as lacking confidence or fluency currently, having more informal conversations in Welsh and growing in confidence to write short emails in Welsh for example. Elected members and officers with fluent Welsh skills already discuss items at Committees through the medium of Welsh and we are seeing more members and officers who are learning making a commitment to introduce themselves and the item in question through the medium of Welsh. Furthermore, more staff have been learning entry level Welsh this year than any previous year, with 16 staff currently learning Welsh. Another course will start in October. Altogether there will be around 40 members of staff that have entered the entry level course. We have a learner's agreement for managers and staff, and we ask that these are signed before staff undertake additional training. We will bolster this agreement to include measures to encourage staff to ensure they use their new learning after their course has finished.

By the end of September 2023, 79.2% of staff had completed Welsh language awareness e-learning (a small decrease since June 2023) and is a 'Priority for Improvement'. New starters are required to complete the e-learning module within their six month probationary period. We have interrogated our data and based on the period January to July 2023, 499 staff had not completed the e-learning. 167 of those had joined in the period January to July 2023 and the remaining 332 had joined prior to 2023. This suggests that we need to ensure all staff undertake the training during their probationary period and support staff that have not yet completed it, to do so. Strengthening the induction process from a Welsh language perspective is a priority for the coming months.

During the period, we continued to run our 'Paned a Sgwrs' sessions, which are open, informal online meetings to give people an opportunity to practise using their Welsh. These will be suspended momentarily from October, due to staffing. On October 16, Diwrnod Owain Glyndwr, we created a fun quiz about Owain Glyndwr, Welsh, culture and heritage and shared a [video](#) we created about Owain Glyndwr and his association with Corwen and Denbighshire more widely. During the period, a meeting of the Welsh Language Champions took place. The Group has agreed to develop a video featuring children from across Denbighshire schools with the theme of the Rugby World Cup for [Shwmae Su'mae Day](#) on October 15.

A workshop, due to take place before the end of the financial year, is being planned for all elected members to brief them on what the council is doing to promote Welsh in the county, e.g. through the Welsh Language Strategy and the Welsh in Education in Strategic Plan.

### **Develop a cultural strategy and programme of events**

Our pledge to 'Develop a cultural and heritage strategy and a programme of events' remains on hold. We will develop a plan about how a cultural strategy, in the broadest sense, could connect and contribute to wider outcomes in terms of our economy and personal well-being for example. Despite this being on hold, the council continues to support and promote a wide range of cultural projects and events. For example, we are continuing to develop a planning application as part of the project to develop Bodelwyddan Castle as a Country Park and a gateway to Denbighshire.

From October, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) will be inviting feedback on an initial Area of Search map for a proposed new National Park in North East Wales. The engagement period will run from October 9 until 23:59 on November 27, 2023. Welsh Government has commissioned NRW, as the Designating Authority in Wales, to evaluate the case for a new National Park based on the existing Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The case for a new National Park will be considered within the existing Senedd term (2021 to 2026). A questionnaire to capture feedback is now live on the project [website](#).

We are also progressing with the Denbighshire Heritage Service Forward Plan for 2023 to 2026 and are about to start wider staff consultation on the draft Plan. The Plan sets out our objectives, the resources we need, links to current heritage projects (including those funding by the Levelling Up Fund, the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Heritage Lottery



Fund) and the costs of future projects. Throughout there is a focus on long term sustainability for all our heritage sites, in line with the Sustainable Development Principle. During the period, [Nantclwyd y Dre](#) was accredited as a Quality Assured Visitor Attraction and awarded, once again, Hidden Gem status following an assessment by Visit Wales.

The Denbighshire Tourism Ambassador scheme gave a presentation to Llangollen Eisteddfod Welcome Host students in July and plans are progressing for Wales Ambassador Week, which is due to take place during 20 to 26 November. Activities will include an online event and sponsorship of the Skills Award at the Go North Wales Tourism Awards 2023. There are now 375 Bronze, 290 Silver and 265 Gold Level Ambassadors. 6,030,000 tourists visited Denbighshire in 2022, which is a significant increase on the 2020 figures (reflecting the disruption due to Covid-19 social distancing restrictions). The figure is the highest yet, since we started data collection in 2013. [Ruthin Gaol](#) has seen record high visitor numbers since its re-opening earlier in the year, with over 7,000 visitors so far (as at September 2023). The Gaol reopened on April 1st after two years' flood renovation works.

Whilst the activity to “Develop a new Library Strategy for Denbighshire reflecting the priorities and ambitions of the Corporate Plan and the Welsh Government Culture Strategy” is ‘Experiencing Obstacles’, Denbighshire Libraries continues to support this theme. At the start of the summer, Denbighshire Libraries launched an LGBTQ+ timeline, depicting important moments from history from the 1600s until the present day. The timeline was developed following training commissioned by the Welsh Government in 2021 to encourage the celebration of local stories of sexual orientation and gender identity. The Timeline is now available [online](#). During the summer holidays Denbighshire Libraries held another successful [Summer Reading Challenge](#), themed around play, sport, games and physical activity. The Summer Reading Challenge has been running since 1999 and helps to improve children’s reading skills and confidence over the summer holidays. Materials are available bilingually and the council encouraged families to take part to help children keep up with their Welsh skills over the summer holiday. In September, Denbighshire Libraries welcomed Waterstones Children’s Laureate (2022-2024) Joseph Coelho to Denbigh Library as part of his nationwide ‘Library Marathon’ mission. The tour included a special event at Denbigh Library, where Coelho became a member of Denbighshire Libraries, borrowed a book, and read and performed his works for pupils of Ysgol Pendref. Library users can now borrow five brand new ‘[Memory Boxes](#)’, all set in the 1950s, which can be borrowed just like a book. Created by Making Sense

CIO, and funded by Dementia Aware Denbighshire, these boxes contain carefully chosen items from the 1950s, designed to spark conversations and rekindle memories.

Of importance to this theme are some of the successful Levelling Up Fund Projects relating to culture and heritage. Clwyd South Round 1 projects are already underway. The majority of works as part of the project at Plas Newydd, Llangollen to 'Enhance the visitor experience to include improvements to the grounds' are complete. Some remaining path work, planting, signage and interpretation is in progress. The Horseshoe Falls project will be undergoing its procurement phase between September and October. Clwyd West projects continue to be under development and remain at Project Brief stage. All projects have reviewed their delivery and financial profiles, and this has provided a more realistic timeframe for projects as requested by the UK Government. Most projects have design teams in place, initial surveys are underway and, in some cases, complete and awaiting final reports. Project Boards are in place for each of the projects with first meetings due to take place over the next quarter. Public engagement is slightly delayed and will start in November to December. Expected construction start dates are noted below.

### **Working in partnership to deliver an improved and sustainable archive service for North Wales**

The Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project continues to be 'At Risk', on the basis that funding has yet to be secured and therefore the funds are not in place to proceed as planned with the accommodation solution and the activity plan. Subject to the necessary approval from Cabinet, who now also wish to review alternative options in Denbighshire (Flintshire County Council's Cabinet has endorsed the project in Mold), a funding application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (Welsh capital grant funding) will be submitted in November 2023, and the outcome should be known some four months later. In the meantime, both archive services will continue to work collaboratively and develop the service under the North East Wales Archive brand.

### **Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update**

For further measures and activity in support of Welsh language and culture (for example, our pledge to be close to our communities), please see our [Well-Run, High Performing Council](#) theme.

## Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of staff that have completed Welsh Language Awareness e-learning - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	No data. New to quarter 4 2022 to 2023	73% Priority to Improve	80.3% Acceptable Better	79.26% Priority to Improve Worse
Measure: The number of Denbighshire Artisans supported (DLL Contract KPI) - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data	No data	55 (annual figure) Excellent	30 Excellent	39 Excellent Better

## Annual or Biennial Measures

### 2019 to 2023 data

Title	2019 to 2020	2022 to 2023
Heritage income generated over the year (£) - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	44,224 Count only	12,861 Count only

### 2021 to 2023 data

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of year 1 pupils receiving Welsh medium education - <b>Count Only</b>	27.4%	28.4% Thresholds pending
STEAM - The number of tourists visiting Denbighshire - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	4,350,000 Acceptable Better	6,030,000 Excellent Better

## Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire is a county where the Welsh language is a living, thriving language - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	55%	33%	12%	62% Acceptable
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the rich cultural heritage and natural assets of Denbighshire are being used to their full potential - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	44%	42%	14%	51% Acceptable

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

This theme contains 18 projects and activities. Four have not yet started and are at project brief stage; one is on hold; ten are 'On Target'; two are 'Experiencing Obstacles' and one is 'At Risk'.

### Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Implement the WESP to support 1 million speakers by 2050	On Target Same	No exception
Deliver the Welsh Language Strategy 2023-28 to promote and increase the use of Welsh in the county	On Target Better	No exception
Deliver the service delivery, policy making and operational standards of the Welsh Language Policy	On Target Better	No exception
<b>SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:</b> <i>Develop a cultural and heritage strategy and a programme of events</i>	On hold	To be scoped during 2023 and 2024
Develop phase 1 Bodelwyddan Castle as a Country Park and a gateway to Denbighshire	Experiencing Obstacles Same	The original planning application received objections from CADW and Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust for certain elements of the project. A revised planning

Title	Status	Exception
		application is being developed before moving the delivery of the project from Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 2 onto RIBA Stages 3 and 4. These stages are scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2024 so that work on the ground commences in April 2024 and is completed by December 2024.
Work with partners on the proposed designation of a National Park in North East Wales	On Target Same	No exception
Seek the designation of the AONB as a Dark Sky Community	On Target Same	No exception
Develop and deliver the Denbighshire Heritage Service Forward Plan 2023 to 2026	On Target Same	No exception
Develop and deliver the Ambassador Scheme in Denbighshire and across Wales in partnership	On Target Same	No exception
Develop a new Library Strategy for Denbighshire reflecting the priorities and ambitions of the Corporate Plan and the Welsh Government Culture Strategy	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Welsh Government's Cultural Strategy has not yet been published and is expected during 2024 to 2025.
Support and implement the National Music Service	On Target Same	No exception
Plas Newydd, Llangollen: Enhance the visitor experience to include improvements to the grounds (Clwyd South Levelling Up Round 1)	On Target	No exception
Horseshoe Falls (Clwyd South Levelling Up Round 2)	On Target	No exception
Ruthin Clock Tower: Renovation of Clock Tower exterior (Clwyd West Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	Works expected to commence from May 2024.

Title	Status	Exception
Ruthin Gaol/46 Clwyd Street, Ruthin: Premises restoration including new access and improved public facilities (Clwyd West Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	Works expected to commence from November 2024.
Nant Clwyd-y-Dre, Ruthin: Restoration to the Grade 1 listed building (Clwyd West Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	Works expected to commence from November 2024.
Cae Ddol, Ruthin: Public Realm Upgrade and connect to the heritage theme (Clwyd West Levelling Up Round 2)	At project brief stage	Works expected to commence from July 2025.
Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project	At Risk Same	Funding has yet to be secured. Funds are not in place to proceed as planned with the accommodation solution and the activity plan.

## A round up of news

The following additional news and committee items took place between July and September in support of this theme:

In August, the council showcased some of its campaigns and services at the [Denbigh and Flint 2023 show](#). The Climate Change Programme team were on hand to talk about how the council is working to tackle the impact of climate and ecological change. Tourism teams promoted their sustainable work in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Working Denbighshire promoted their role in helping young people get into work; and Archives staff offered people the opportunity to see how the county had changed over time. Flintshire County Council staff were also on hand promoting fostering, early years support and support for people with disabilities.

In August, families were invited to attend a free event to turn [marine sourced litter into artwork](#). The session was led by artist Tim Pugh, an environmental artist based in Flintshire who works with a wide range of mixed materials and media to create drawings and temporary installations.

An exhibition, part of the [Our Picturesque Landscape project](#) funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, opened at the Dory Gallery in Llangollen this September. Following a rich tradition of the Dee Valley inspiring artists, poets and tourists for centuries, the

exhibition will host over sixty contemporary works of art inspired by the picturesque scenery of the Dee Valley.

In August, a member of the public donated a [portrait of the family of Private Henry Jones, of Mwrog Street, Ruthin](#), who lost his life during The First World War. The North East Wales Archives in Ruthin already held a collection of postcards and letters sent by the Royal Welsh Fusilier from The Front and researchers can now put a face to a name with a picture of his wife and children.

In September, North East Wales Archives in Ruthin hosted a free '[open doors](#)' event welcoming visitors to explore some of the historical photographs in the collection. The event included activities for families, including Cyanotype printing with a local artist. A guest exhibition by local photographer Jac Williams was also held, named "Honest Agriculture".

## **A well-run, high performing council**

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

### **Corporate Plan Update**

This section relates to our Corporate Plan pledges for this theme. There is, inevitably, some cross over with the seven governance areas. For transparency, our self-assessment as to how well we are performing specifically in each of the seven governance areas can be found in the [Self-Assessment: Governance Areas](#) section.

As we explained in our previous report, we have held discussions to determine the right strategic set of measures and activity to monitor through these performance reports. There is though, still some work to do before a final indicator set, which should include qualitative measures better suited to this theme, which is about our organisational culture.

The new Well-Run, High Performing Council Board, providing governance for this theme, will be established in October 2023. At the time of writing this update, the Board had met and agreed a way forward to progress the theme's five pledges, which are aligned to our Council's five Principles. A full update on that will be included in our next update report, but for now, some changes to this theme's pledges have been requested. These changes offer an expansion and clarification on each pledge. Approval for these wording changes will be sought from County Council as part of our Self-Assessment Report for the year in spring 2024.

### **Embed a positive culture of ambition, transparency and continuous improvement**

For this pledge, the Board is requesting to add additional wording (Instilling a "one council" ethos), which it believes captures the overall ethos of theme 9.

In July, the Chief Internal Auditor (CIA) attended [Governance and Audit Committee](#) to present the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022 to 2023. The council has a statutory duty to publish an AGS and forms part of the Statement of Accounts. The AGS is drawn up following evaluation of the council's governance functions, using information from the self-assessment and reports presented to committees throughout the year. The following key improvement actions were identified:



- Review and update the Officers' Code of Conduct and the process for recording and capturing the response taken to declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality.
- Workforce capacity and resilience and reliance on key positions.
- Review the Whistleblowing Policy.
- Address exceptions, exemptions and variations from Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs).
- Continuing budget pressures and uncertainty over funding. Also, address any actions arising from the review of the Financial Management Code.
- Uncertainty over future funding arrangements following EU Exit.

The delivery of these actions will be monitored by the Governance and Audit Committee, and the Corporate Governance Officers Group.

In September, the Corporate Director: Governance and Business presented a [draft annual report of the Governance and Audit Committee](#) for the same committee's approval, prior to the report being submitted to Council for approval in November 2023. The report covers the periods 2020 to 2021, 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023 and summarises the composition of the committee and its work. The edition of this report to be presented next year (in respect of 2023 to 2024), as well as setting out how the Committee has met its terms of reference, will also include the results of the Committee's annual self-evaluation of its effectiveness against the 'Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police' and associated guidance, which was published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy in 2022. This will enable the Committee to raise any concerns it may have had during the year, what it has done to escalate these and/or make recommendations as necessary.

Again in September, the annual report of the council's Scrutiny Committees 2022 to 2023 was presented to [Council](#) for approval. The report outlined processes, summarised the work undertaken during the year, outcomes from Scrutiny and requests from residents. One of the main objectives of the scrutiny process is to add value and to try and ensure that decisions taken by the Council have a positive impact on the lives of people who live, work and visit Denbighshire. The report gave an example of a positive outcome whereby a Moorlands Management Officer role was established as a direct result of a recommendation made by Communities Scrutiny Committee. This post was established in 2020 following the Committee's Review into the Llantysilio Mountain Fire 2019. An update report was presented to the Committee in March 2023 highlighting the positive impact of having a Moorland Officer fostering good relationships and co-ordinating multi-agency and

stakeholder working in relation fire response plans and habitat/fuel load management over key areas of the Clwydian Range, Llantysilio Mountain and Llandegla Moor.

Robust whistleblowing arrangements support good governance throughout the council, which in turn enables effective delivery of priorities. To support this the Monitoring Officer gave a report in September to the [Governance and Audit Committee](#) about the operation of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy during January 2021 and April 2023. During this period, six new concerns had been raised. The report was sensitive and restricted.

We have, in this period, confirmed arrangements for the Panel Performance Assessment with Governance and Audit Committee. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places a duty on councils to arrange for a panel to undertake and respond to a corporate, organisational level assessment, of the extent to which the council is meeting its performance requirements. Responsibility for these assessments has been agreed as sitting with the Corporate Executive Team and a constitutional amendment is being sought to reflect the duty. We will be meeting with the Welsh Local Government Association in October to discuss practical arrangements for the Panel Performance Assessment.

### **Be close to our communities**

The Board has requested that an additional sub-pledge be added here ("Empowering and enabling our communities by encouraging community leadership and community resilience"), to capture the support the council offers to communities across the county.

During the period, we have been finalising our draft Public Participation Strategy and Engagement Policy ready to seek approval from the Special Democratic Services committee in November. The Public Participation Strategy is a legislative requirement under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021, which requires principal authorities to have a strategy promoting ways to raise awareness of the council's functions, how to become a councillor, and how to get involved in local decision-making processes. Our Engagement Policy will set out best practice and the Strategy will focus our efforts on areas for improvement, which should complement other objectives such as equalities and diversity.

The council's new Procurement strategy was approved by Cabinet in September. Five collaborative procurements were awarded during the period, and no collaborative

procurement opportunities were missed. For more detailed information about performance in relation to procurement (the council's spend with local suppliers and contracts containing community benefits), please see our [prosperous theme](#) and [governance section about procurement](#).

Following the tranche review, thresholds for the percentage of negative news stories about the council have been reviewed and adjusted. 'Priority for Improvement' was previously considered to be 7% or below, which is felt to be unrealistic given news tends to have a negative bias. The threshold has therefore been changed to 31% or above. These new thresholds have been applied to data points since the start of the new Corporate Plan (October 2022). The percentage of negative news stories about the council (taken as a proportion of all news stories about the council) has decreased from 12.5% to 5.3% this period, and is considered 'Excellent'.

The percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter has increased from 29% to 55%. This represents 33 from 60 complaints upheld or partly upheld and is considered 'Acceptable'. In July, the Head of Adult Social Care and Homelessness presented the Your Voice Complaints report for 2022 to 2023 to [Governance and Audit Committee](#). The report captures any compliments, suggestions and complaints received by Denbighshire County Council under the council's customer feedback policy. The report also included Social Services complaints received under its statutory complaints procedure. The Committee was briefed on the role of the Complaints Standards Authority, which has responsibility for monitoring all complaints received about councils in Wales. The council had recently received the Ombudsman's draft report for Denbighshire that stated they had received 32 complaints in the previous year but had only intervened in two of those complaints; both of which were resolved informally.

Whilst 'On Target', the activity to 'Implement the new requirements of the UK Elections Act 2022 and other electoral reform' is worth noting as challenging. The pace, scale and diversity of the electoral reform programmes from the Welsh and UK Governments pose a considerable challenge and risk to every principal council. The council has taken steps to strengthen its core electoral team and is keeping pace with the various timescales for implementation of the measures including voter identification and reform to absent voting and oversees voters. During this period, the electoral team has continued to undertake training and engage in national and regional discussions on electoral reform implementation activities. The second tranche of the Elections Act reforms will be implemented from October 2023, and these bring with them significant complications and

risks. For this reason, we will monitor this risk closely through our Corporate Support Service: People Risk Register.

## **Have clear performance expectations**

Following resumption of our Service Performance Challenge, the Board has suggested we add delivery of those challenges to this pledge.

The challenges are instrumental in ensuring accountability of and support to services, and for shaping a collective understanding of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. An action to improve the way services work with our customer service system was agreed following the Service Performance Challenge for Highways and Environmental Services. Continuing to engage with members and ensure they are kept informed was identified as continually important during the Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Service Performance Challenge. These align with the other pledges within this theme and will be explored further by our new Well-Run, High Performing Council Board.

We have received no formal recommendations for improvement from external regulators (Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales). There have been no low assurance reports in this period from Internal Audit. Between April and September, seven of the ten Internal Audit reviews published had a high assurance level; the remaining three had a medium assurance level. The Annual Governance Statement for 2022 to 2023 found that none of the referrals made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during the year were upheld.

The Head of Education attended [Governance and Audit Committee](#) in September to discuss the [report](#) following the joint Inspectorate Review of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA) that took place in Denbighshire in February 2023, involving Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW), and Estyn. The report was presented to the Committee as a confidential Part 2 item.

Audit Wales shared with [Governance and Audit Committee](#) its Assurance and Risk Assessment report for the audit year 2021 to 2022. The review focused on the implications of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (including self-assessment arrangements), and carbon reduction plans. Audit Wales made the following recommendation: "The Council needs to fully cost its action plan to ensure the plan is

achievable. This should include detailed costings for the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Plan and broader estimates for the remainder of the plan.”

Our measure on budget variance for the period (i.e. what we have and receive versus what we are spending) was £3.119million. The council's reserves remained at £5.531million.

As reported previously, we have started to monitor the revenue outturn expenditure per head of population, which we benchmark nationally. Data for 2022 to 2023 has not yet been published nationally and will be available in our next report. Whilst this is a single crude measure that could warrant being examined alongside council tax rates for example, it does offer a lens into a debate about value for money, which is one of the pledges within this theme; a pledge that will be scoped further by the new Board.

Our [Corporate Risk Register](#), as at February 2023, had a total of 20 risks on the register, 11 of which are inconsistent with our risk appetite (55%). This is considered to be a 'Priority for Improvement'. Our review of the Register commenced in September 2023, with reports scheduled to be presented to Cabinet Briefing, Governance and Audit Committee and Performance Scrutiny in November. Whilst not yet signed off, as at September, 54% of our corporate risks are inconsistent with the council's risk appetite statement.

All projects were updated during the period, and performance is 'Excellent'. This is an improvement of 1.9% on the last reporting period. There were no projects presenting as 'Compromised'. Just under half (46.2%) of all Corporate Plan measures were showing as a 'Priority for Improvement' during July to September, which is considered 'Acceptable'.

### **Promote strong staff and elected member relations**

On reflection, a fundamental element of this pledge is missing from our description and for this reason, the Board has requested the following additional wording: “Having good communication and close working relationships between elected members and officers”.

In July, County Council was asked for its view and direction on the requirements for [member training](#). The report asked for Council's support for mandatory training in respect of the Members' Code of Conduct, any other training that should be mandatory; timescales for completion; and sanctions for non-compliance (and exemptions). It was agreed that member training be added to the next Group Leaders meeting and be brought back to a future Council meeting.

The [Standards Committee](#) assured Council in September that it had taken a proactive role over the year in ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct and ethical behaviour along the Nolan Principles of Public Life, which also reflect our four values. A key role for the Committee going forward will be receiving an annual report from each Group Leader on the efforts being made that contribute to compliance with their new duty to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of their members under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. A new group, the [Ethical Liaison Group](#), has been established and will meet regularly to discuss behaviour as part of the new duty placed upon political group leaders to promote ethical behaviour.

### **Ensure Denbighshire County Council is a good employer and is an excellent place to work**

As at September 2023, the percentage of staff who were eligible for and who had at least one or three one-to-one meetings in the last 12 months stood at 56%, down from 58% in the last period. This is a rolling total. Following the Service Performance Challenges that have already taken place, it is apparent we need a wider action to ensure all staff have regular one-to-one meetings. It may be that these meetings are taking place but are not being recorded. This will be explored further by our new Well-Run, High Performing Council Board. Given the importance of one-to-one meetings the Board has asked for an explicit reference to “ensuring all staff have regular one-to-one meetings with their line manager” within this pledge.

Sickness absence data for the period April to June 2023 is now available and stood at 8.83 days per full time equivalent. Performance remains a ‘Priority for Improvement’ this period, at 8.82 days. We will review our performance thresholds once national benchmarking data is available with one year’s worth of data unaffected by Covid-19-related restrictions.

The percentage of employees that have completed all 9 mandatory e-learning modules (excluding schools) stood at 49.8% at September (slightly less than the 51% in the previous period) and remains a ‘Priority for Improvement’. From this period onwards we will monitor this annually instead of quarterly. We are anticipating that this data will start to look very different as we start to look at whether courses are overdue and not just completed. For this reason, we anticipate that the percentage of staff that have completed the mandatory e-learning will dip. HR will monitor completion rates closely through their monthly reporting systems.

This theme has, up until now, included two measures of staff turnover: the percentage of employees who leave Denbighshire as a percentage of the total workforce excluding schools, and the percentage including schools. On the basis that the latter measure, which includes schools, has been harder to obtain national comparative data for, we will focus in future on the measure that excludes schools. As for sickness absence, we will review our thresholds for performance in relation to staff turnover in April 2024.

## Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of procurement and community benefits, please see the [Prosperous](#) theme.

### Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The percentage of Corporate Plan Measures showing as 'Priority for Improvement' – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	51% Priority to Improve Same	No data: does not apply	49.5% Acceptable Better	48.3% Acceptable Better	46.2% Acceptable Better
The number of projects on the project register showing as 'Compromised' – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	2 Acceptable Worse	1 Good Better	1 Good Same	0 Excellent Better	0 Excellent Same
The percentage of projects whose delivery confidence was updated in the last three months – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	100% Excellent Better	95% Good Worse	96% Good Improved	96% Good Same	100% Excellent Better
The percentage of corporate risks inconsistent with the council's risk appetite statement – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	55% Priority to Improve Better	No data: does not apply	55% Priority to Improve Same	No data: does not apply	54% Priority to Improve Better

Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The cumulative number of negative reports from external regulators – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	0	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same
The cumulative number of Internal Audit low assurance reports, financial year to date – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	0	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same
Corporate and Service Budget Variance (£k) – <b>Count Only</b>	2,661	2,189	1,585	3,348	3,119
Council reserves (£k) – <b>Count Only</b>	7,135	7,135	5,531	5,531	5,531
Negative news stories as a percentage of all news stories about the council – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	11% Priority to Improve Worse	12% Excellent Worse	14% Excellent Worse	12.5% Excellent Better	5.3% Excellent Better
The percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	67% Priority to Improve Worse	53% Acceptable Better	42% Good Better	29% Excellent Better	55% Acceptable Worse
The percentage of Members that have completed Code of Conduct training – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	100% Excellent	98% Excellent Worse



Title	Quarter 2 2022 to 2023	Quarter 3 2022 to 2023	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024
The rolling average The number of working days / shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	10 Priority to Improve Worse	9.8 Priority to Improve Better	9.8 Priority to Improve Same	8.83 Priority to Improve Better	8.82 Priority to Improve Better
The percentage of staff who are eligible for one or three one-to- ones and who have had at least one or three one-to-ones in the last 12 months (by person) – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	52% Priority to Improve Better	53% Priority to Improve Better	61% Priority to Improve Better	58% Priority to Improve Worse	56% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of staff for whom we have equality monitoring information – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	76% Excellent Better	72% Excellent Worse	71.5% Excellent Worse	67% Excellent Worse	69.4% Excellent Better
The percentage of employees that have completed all 9 mandatory e-learning modules by the end of the year (excluding schools) – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	No data	No data	49% Priority to Improve Better	51% Priority to Improve Better	49.8% Priority to Improve Worse
The number of actual collaborative procurements – <b>Count Only</b>	2	1	2	0	5
The number of missed collaborative procurements – <b>Count Only</b>	0	0	1	1	0

## Annual or biennial measures

### 2019 to 2022 data

Title	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022
The percentage of new appointees from applications where it was disclosed that they are either from a racial or religious minority group, have a disability, are gay or bi-sexual, or had their gender reassigned – <b>Count Only</b>	15%	4%	21%

### 2021 to 2023 data

Title	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage difference in the mean hourly rate of pay for women – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	6.7% Acceptable	-13.4% Excellent Better
The percentage of the lowest paid salaries (bottom quarter) that are women – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	79.3% Priority to Improve Better	80.7% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of attendance by elected members (expected and present), year to date - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	89%	84% Good Worse
The percentage of employees who leave Denbighshire as a percentage of the total workforce (excluding schools) – <b>Benchmarked Nationally</b>	10.6% Good Worse	12.4% Acceptable Worse
Revenue outturn expenditure per head of population (£s) - <b>Count Only</b>	2,913.25 Thresholds pending	Data pending. Available November 2023

### Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

We have amended the way we analyse Stakeholder Survey responses to include a status for those who expressed an opinion and agree (we previously included “Don’t know” and “No Opinion or Unsure” responses in our analysis).

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council is transparent, well-run, and high performing – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	41%	42%	17%	49% Priority to Improve
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council works well with partners – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	41%	15%	44%	74% Good
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that there is a good working relationship between political leaders and senior management – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	29%	24%	47%	55% Acceptable
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council manages its performance well – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	42%	38%	20%	53% Acceptable
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council manages its risks and challenges well – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	42%	34%	24%	55% Acceptable
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council manages its finances well – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	37%	41%	22%	48% Priority to Improve
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council has effective long-term plans in place – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	38%	30%	32%	56% Acceptable
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council treats its workforce well – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	48%	16%	36%	76% Excellent
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council makes best use of its assets and resources – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	28%	52%	20%	35% Priority to Improve

Title	Agree	Disagree	No opinion or unsure	With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council purchases its goods and services in a fair and efficient way – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	28%	25%	47%	54% Acceptable
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council acts on the concerns of residents – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	39%	42%	19%	48% Priority to Improve
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council treats all people fairly – <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	42%	31%	27%	58% Acceptable
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council's Corporate Plan and priorities reflect the needs of the local community - <b>Benchmarked Locally</b>	37%	36%	27%	51% Acceptable

## Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Projects Update

There are 20 projects of activities in support of this theme. Currently, nine activities are 'On Target', six are 'Experiencing Obstacles', two are complete and three are on hold. Our next report will include an update on progress of the Well-Run, High Performing Council Board in respect of the theme's five pledges.

### Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Prepare for Peer Review for Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021	On Target Better	No exception
<b>SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:</b> <i>Develop and launch a new customer service framework (linked to our Welsh Language Strategy and Policy)</i>	On hold	This is on hold. Task and finish groups for each of the five pledges within this theme have been established and will be considering this over the coming six months.

Title	Status	Exception
<b>SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:</b> Procure a new corporate CRM (timescale 2025)	On hold	This is on hold. Task and finish groups for each of the five pledges within this theme have been established and will be considering this over the coming six months.
Implement the Public Participation Strategy	On Target	A draft strategy will be taken for approval to the Special Democratic Services committee in November.
Develop a co-production strategy (DCC wide)	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Currently looking at models used by other local authorities and seeking to make contact with co-production network Wales from October 2023. We are looking at how this links to, and can support delivery of, the Corporate Plan themes.
Update the procurement strategy (to become a new project: Implement the new procurement strategy to deliver decarbonisation and the principles of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill)	Complete	No exception
Develop and secure Asset Management Group adoption of new Asset Management Strategy	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	The first revised portfolio plan was planned to be reported to the Asset Management Group in September but has been postponed until November. Portfolio plans will inform the development of the new Asset Management Strategy. It is anticipated that the next phase of the project will look at the council's office estate, i.e. what it needs and where, as part of the New Ways of Working project.
Develop and deliver portfolio plans to determine the shape, size and future use	Experiencing Obstacles	Work has commenced on the remaining portfolio

Title	Status	Exception
of assets for each of the council's asset management portfolios	Worse	plans and these will be presented to Asset Management Group over the remainder of the year. This is also subject to delay following postponement of the report to Asset Management Group from September to November.
Undertake an annual review of the Corporate Workforce Plan 2022 to 2027	On Target	Workforce planning will commence once all new Heads of Service are in post, which is expected to be November 2023.
<b>SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:</b> <i>Ensure value for money is embedded within our organisational culture, and that decisions are balanced by considering service quality and social value.</i>	On hold	This suggested activity is on hold. Task and finish groups for each of the five pledges within this theme have been established and will be considering this over the coming six months.
Establish the Ethical Liaison Group	Completed	The Group has been established and will be meeting on a regular basis.
Update the Members' Code of Conduct to include a timeframe within which Members are expected to have completed Code of Conduct training	Experiencing Obstacles Better	A report will be taken to Council in the autumn of 2023.
Develop a framework to guide councillors in handling harassment, abuse and intimidation	On Target Same	No exception
Implement the new requirements of the UK Elections Act 2022 and other electoral reform	On Target	No exception
Ensure that the Constitution is fit for purpose following the changes brought about by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021	On Target	No exception
Raise awareness of mental health issues across the council through delivery and	On Target Same	No exception

<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Exception</b>
embedding of the Time to Change action plan		
Embed the new agile working policy and support any learning and development needs from it	On Target Same	No exception
Improve the information we have about our workforce, including equality information, to support more detailed analyses in future Public Sector Duty Reports	Experiencing Obstacles Same	A data collection survey will be launched during October to December to ensure that we have as much data in the HR system as possible.
Deliver the action plan of the Social Care Recruitment and Retention Operational group	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	Continuing to formalise 'Home grown' route for Occupational Therapy with partners, and working with colleges to provide local authority and provider placements as a route into employment. Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme Partnership Coordinator post is currently being advertised and some activity is on hold.
3rd Generation - North Wales Construction Framework	On Target	No exception

## Self-Assessment: Governance Areas

The following is our self-assessment against the seven key governance areas and seeks to paint a picture of how well the council is performing, how we know that (linking to evidence where it is available), and what we can do to improve. Our news round up is included in each governance section.

### Corporate Planning

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Corporate Planning is about how the council sets out and makes arrangements to deliver on its strategic objectives.

## **Corporate Plan Governance Arrangements**

Final arrangements concerning the governance of the 2022 to 2027 Corporate Plan were shared with [County Council](#) in July. Subsequently, the Strategic Planning and Performance Team have been working with the Chief Executive, corporate directors and cabinet members to agree programme definition documents and a forward programme of meetings for the five Boards, namely:

- Housing and Homelessness Board
- Prosperous Denbighshire Board
- Greener Denbighshire Board
- Fairer, Safe and more Equal Board
- Well-Run, High Performing Council Board

For those themes that are not overseen by a Board (Healthier, Happier and Caring Denbighshire; Learning and Growing Denbighshire; Better Connected Denbighshire; and A Denbighshire of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language) quarterly meetings have been arranged between Strategic Planning and Performance Officers and the relevant Cabinet member and Corporate Executive Team leads to monitor performance and identify areas for improvement. These arrangements are in addition to regular quarterly reporting through the Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet and Performance Scrutiny, our annual Self-Assessment to Governance and Audit Committee and County Council, and six monthly tranche reviews with all Heads of Service and Cabinet members.

## **Corporate Plan Tranche Review**

In September, Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team held its second tranche review on the Corporate Plan, which focussed on reviewing performance information put forward in the annual Self-Assessment of Performance Report (the first report based on the new Corporate Plan Performance Management Framework). The meeting identified a number of actions for the new Corporate Plan Boards and strategic leads to explore and take forward, but discussion focussed primarily on the need to be clear about our performance expectations and the accuracy of our reporting. In the present financial context, it is important that the council keeps under review the relevance of the performance measures that it uses, the appropriateness of agreed thresholds, and particularly the viability of projects.



## **Senior Leadership Team**

Further appointment panels took place in July for the three remaining vacant Head of Service posts. Catrin Roberts was confirmed as the new Head of Corporate Support Service: People; Helen Vaughan-Evans as the new Head of Corporate Support Service: Performance Digital and Assets; and Elizabeth Thomas as the new Head of Finance and Audit. These appointments conclude the restructure of the Senior Leadership Team. For more information on the new structure, [visit our website](#).

## **Agree and implement a whole council approach to New Ways of Working**

Following the restructure of the Senior Leadership Team, responsibility for the New Ways of Working project has now moved to the Corporate Director for Governance and Business. It is anticipated that the next phase of the project will look at the council's office estate, i.e. what it needs and where.

## **Respond to the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.**

Following the publication of the WLGA's methodology in June, and our initial discussions around arrangements for the Panel Performance Assessment with the Corporate Executive Team and Cabinet, we have in this period tabled a paper with the [Governance and Audit Committee](#) to seek their recommendation to amend the council's constitution. This is to provide clarity around the matter of local choice allowed in the legislation concerning responsibility for the assessment process - i.e. whether it sits with the Executive team or with County Council. The proposal that the Executive be responsible was accepted, and a recommendation for a constitutional amendment will be tabled with County Council in November. In the meantime, having also had a steer on preferred timetabling and approach, we can now progress discussions with the WLGA around practical arrangements. An initial meeting has been scheduled for late October. A procurement exception is also being sought through legal and procurement teams.

## **Financial Planning**

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Financial planning relates to the management of our income and expenditure.

## Finance Update Reports

At its [meetings in July](#) and [September](#), Cabinet received an update on the council's financial position. The net revenue budget for 2023 to 2024 was £250.793million (up from 233.696million in 2022 to 2023). The position on service and corporate budgets was a forecast overspend of £3.119million (2.395million overspend last month). The increase was mainly due to additional pressures within children social care and homelessness. Services were prompted to review all the expenditure and income in their areas to mitigate the impact of the overall budget overspend. The budget mitigation reserve could cover this overspend in the current year, however that would reduce the resources available to meet unforeseen pressures in future years. The 2023 to 2024 budget required service savings and efficiencies of £8.172million to be identified and these are assumed to have been achieved. At the end of August, the council's borrowing totalled £264.454million at an average rate of 4.28%. Investment balances were £10.7million at an average rate of 3.53%.

In the report, the budget for Education and Children's Services remained as an area of concern as the forecast overspend was £1.041million, mainly due to pressures in children's social care. The Adult Social Care and Homelessness Service budget also remained a high-risk area; with the outturn prediction being £2.152million due to pressures in placement costs (£1.3million) and (£0.9million) in homelessness. For schools, the budget agreed by the County Council for 2023 to 2024 included a total net additional investment (excluding increases in Welsh Government grants) in schools delegated budgets of £3.03million. The latest projection for school balances to be carried forward into 2024 to 2025 is a net credit balance of £2.624million, which represents a decrease of £6.315million on the balances brought forward into 2023 to 2024 of £8.939million. The high opening balances were mainly due to receipt of one-off funding to be spent on catch-up and recovery programmes in school. There is a small underspend of £162,000 on non-delegated school budgets. Corporate budgets were projected to break-even in the report, however, risks around pay settlements, energy and other inflationary pressures were highlighted as requiring close monitoring in future months due to it being difficult to quantify them at this early stage of the year.

With regards to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the latest revenue position assumed a decrease in balances at year end of £804,000 compared to £922,000 at the time the budget was approved. The decrease related to a reduction in estimated rental income, offset by a reduced contribution to the HRA capital programme. HRA balances are

therefore forecast to be £764,000 at the end of the year. The Capital budget of £24million is largely allocated between planned improvements to existing housing stock (£12million) and new build developments and acquisitions (£12million).

The report also gives a summary of the council's Capital Plan. The approved capital plan is £113.2million, with expenditure to date of £25.1million.

## **Statement of Accounts**

The council has a statutory duty to produce a statement of accounts that complies with approved accounting standards. As explained in previous performance update reports, the task of ensuring that the [Statement of Accounts for 2021 to 2022](#) could be signed off by Audit Wales had taken longer than expected. However, at September's meeting, an audited final set of accounts for 2021 to 2022 was approved by the Governance and Audit Committee.

The first draft of the Annual [Statement of Accounts for 2022 to 2023](#) has been submitted to the external auditors and was submitted to the Governance and Audit Committee in September for information. After consulting with Audit Wales, it is currently planned that the audited accounts will then be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in spring 2024 for formal approval.

## **Annual Treasury Management**

At [meetings in July](#) and [September](#), Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet reviewed the Annual Treasury Management report, which outlines the council's investment and borrowing activity for 2022 to 2023. The report also provides details of the economic climate during that time and shows how the council complied with its Prudential Indicators. The council's outstanding borrowing at 31 March 2023 was £261.5million at an average rate of 4.15% and the council held £24.2million in investments at an average rate of 3.41%. Members were reminded of the three priorities when investing funds, of these three, the key factors for Denbighshire were security and liquidity.

Governance and Audit Committee also scrutinised the Treasury Management Update Report, which provides details of the council's treasury management activities during 2023 to 2024 to June. The update set out the borrowing strategy of the authority, which would likely be required to take out additional borrowing. The main reason for the increase in borrowing was due to the Rhyl Flooding scheme. The project would have to be funded by

the council to later reclaim the funds from Welsh Government. Interest rates were currently high, this impacted borrowing costs. The council did try to borrow short term where possible from other authorities, and was receiving advice from Arlingtonclose Ltd Treasury Management consultants. The budget position and the Capital Plan would be monitored in the light of the worsening financial outlook for the medium term. A review of the money laundering policy had begun, with a draft of the new policy available.

## **Other developments in the last period**

### **Budget pressures**

The council is facing significant funding gaps in future years. This funding gap (or budget pressure) has come about due to high rates of inflation (everything is costing us more), pay settlements and increased demand for our services, particularly in relation to children's and adult's social care. The council's Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet are working closely to deliver a balanced budget so that the council is financially stable now and in the future. We are looking at all options as to how best to find the savings next year that can cover this funding gap, so we can set a balanced budget. Senior managers have been asked to identify potential efficiencies and savings within their services so that we can come up with a comprehensive list of potential savings across everything we do. This is going to involve many difficult decisions about the level of services we currently offer. We are no different to all other local authorities in this regard. We have invited staff to contribute ideas for areas of savings or efficiencies that could help contribute to ensuring that the council can set a balanced budget over the coming years. The suggestions will be considered by the Finance and Audit Service, the Corporate Executive Team and Cabinet during October and November. During the period we implemented a series of measures to introduce corporate budget controls including vacancy control procedures, and a requirement for Head of Service authorisation for use of agency staff, overtime and credit card payments.

### **Performance Management**

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Performance management means the structures and processes we have in place to ensure that we deliver what we said we would, whilst encouraging active involvement and challenge from across the council, our elected members, and residents.

## **Internal Audit Reviews**

The Chief Internal Auditor (CIA) attended [Governance and Audit Committee](#) in July, to update the committee on the Internal Audit Team's progress as well as providing summaries of Internal Audit reports. The report confirmed that seven audits had been completed since April, none of which received a low assurance rating. Please also see our section on [clear performance expectations](#).

## **Self-Assessment of Performance**

At its meeting in July, [County Council](#) approved its Self-Assessment report for 2022 to 2023. Identified Improvement Actions will be taken forward through Service Plans and, where appropriate Corporate Plan Boards or strategic leads. Progress will be monitored through our quarterly reports. Additionally in this period, the Strategic Planning and Performance Team has published the council's first quarter Performance Update Report for 2023 to 2024, which will be available to view with our earlier reports on [denbighshire.gov.uk/performance](#). Combined with this present report, these are the first two of four that make up our ongoing Self-Assessment for the year.

## **Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: Performance Management Framework**

By the time of this, our third report on the new Corporate Plan performance management framework, the flow of data and information is becoming steadily smoother as the framework becomes more embedded. The Strategic Planning and Performance Team continue to work closely with Services to address any gaps or aspects still in need of development.

## **Update the Performance Management Guide**

Following agreement of the new Corporate Plan's Performance Management Framework and governance arrangements, as well as changes to the Senior Leadership structure, it is timely to review the council's Guide to Improving Services – the guide that explains the council's approach to performance management. Work has been ongoing on this through the summer, and should be finalised by the autumn.

## **Annual Stakeholder Survey**

In this period, we have launched our [Stakeholder Survey for 2023 to 2024](#), inviting feedback on how the council is performing. The Survey will run until February 29, 2024,

and may be completed online or through paper copies available on request at our libraries. It will also be promoted through our partner networks, social media and the press. The results of the survey will again feed into our end-of-year Self-Assessment report, and will be shared with our managers to inform service improvement.

## **Service Performance Challenge**

The Service Performance Challenge Programme continues, with Education and Children's Services having been through the process in this last period. Some challenges were also rescheduled in this period to accommodate newly appointed Heads of Service. Key actions arising from these discussions are discussed in the [clear performance expectations section](#) and will be noted with the [Improvement Actions](#) below, and progress will be captured in future performance update reports.

## **Risk Management**

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Risk management refers to our planned approach to identify, assess, control and monitor risks and opportunities facing the council.

## **Corporate Risk Register**

As reported above, our review of the Register commenced in September 2023. Whilst not yet signed off, as at September, 54% of our corporate risks are inconsistent with the council's risk appetite statement. The current review has included a significant rationalisation of the Register with some risks being merged and removed, some being deescalated back to be managed through service risk registers and two new risks being added. This has enabled a greater focus on the risks associated with not being able to deliver a balanced budget, or where insufficient funding leads to a withdrawal or scaling back of services, even when a balanced budget is delivered.

## **Workforce Planning**

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Workforce planning means the process by which we analyse, forecast and plan workforce supply and demand, and assess gaps to ensure that we have the people and skills - now and in the future - to deliver our services and fulfil our strategic objectives.

## **Staff Training, Development and Mental Health**

Since the [Agile Working policy](#) was approved in July, four training sessions for managers have taken place, which have been attended by over 60 managers. HR Business Partners have attended all service management team meetings to discuss the new policy.

The Time to Change action plan is nearly complete. The only remaining action is to ensure that Mental Health Champions are in place. The Champions will have a role in ensuring that support for mental health and well-being is embedded across the council. We have also changed our Employee Assist Programme to a new provider, to ensure we can offer support services through the medium of Welsh.

## **Improve the information we have about our workforce**

This information includes equality information to support more detailed analyses in future Public Sector Duty Reports. Due to continual changes in staff, the equality information we have about our workforce tends to fluctuate. By the end of September, we had equality information for 69.4% of staff. A data collection survey will be launched during October to December to ensure that we have as much data in the HR system as possible. It should be noted however that some staff choose not to disclose information about themselves.

## **Workforce planning**

As reported previously, workforce planning was identified as a continually important area of work for the Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Service, during its Service Performance Challenge. HR Business Partners work closely with all services on a regular basis by issuing monthly reports.

A fresh workforce planning process will commence in the new year, by which time the new senior leadership structure will be in place, with all new Heads of Service in post from November. Furthermore, a follow up review of the Internal Audit Review of workforce planning undertaken in May, is due to take place between January and March 2024.

In the meantime, there continues to be a significant focus on recruitment, especially in social care and health roles. In July, a report was presented to [Performance Scrutiny Committee](#) providing information and progress on the workforce plan including recruitment and retention activities, together with turnover and sickness absence data for 2022 to 2023. A further report will be presented to the Committee in 12 months' time detailing the progress made in relation to workforce planning and recruitment and retention. The

Committee requested that Heads of Service for those services where staff recruitment and retention are proving to be a persistent challenge be invited to that meeting to discuss the potential impact of those challenges on service delivery and how they are addressing staff shortages in the short to medium term, until long-term solutions are found.

As reported for our [Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language theme](#) above, following approval of the [Welsh Language Strategy 2023 to 2028](#) in June, officers have been developing guidance to inform recruitment of staff with Welsh essential and Welsh desirable skills. The aim is to move to a position whereby every job has, as a minimum, a Level 1 Welsh language skills requirement (some positions will require a Level 5 skill).

Progress in delivering the action plan of the Social Care Recruitment and Retention Operational group continues. Two places have been awarded on the Open University full BA (Hons) programme, and a further three candidates are starting the Higher Certificate pathway. Furthermore, several care homes are employing Ukrainian refugees with great success and both Denbighshire County Council care homes are providing placements to Working Denbighshire citizens.

### **Service Challenge Action: DBS Compliance**

Safer recruitment remains a high priority for the council and continued efforts to increase compliance means this action is now complete. We will continue to monitor compliance on a monthly basis as part of our core HR business as usual work.

### **Assets**

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. By assets we are referring to our management of the council's estate (including office buildings and highway infrastructure owned and / or controlled by the council) and digital assets.

### **Asset Management Strategy**

During this period, the council has taken steps to ascertain the structural integrity of its buildings in the face of nationwide concerns about the use of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in public buildings. Discussion about RAAC in relation to school buildings has been reported in our [Learning and Growing theme](#). The Asset Management Team has been reviewing data from previous RAAC Surveys and this has been prioritised



above all other work. Welsh Government has asked for information about the presence or risk of RAAC in non-school buildings.

The first revised portfolio plan was planned to be reported to the Asset Management Group in September but has been postponed until November. Portfolio plans will inform the development of the new Asset Management Strategy. The New Ways of Working project was established to look at the capacity and use of offices to seek ways to maximise the use of space across the council's portfolio. This will be reviewed with the Corporate Executive Team over the coming months.

## **ICT strategy**

Having a good robust ICT infrastructure that can innovate as well as handle growing pressures from across the council was discussed during the Highways and Environmental Service Performance Challenge. It was agreed that the service should work with ICT to improve the way the service delivers its functions and that the ICT Strategy should prioritise service needs in the face of limited resources.

## **Procurement**

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Procurement is the process by which the council meets its needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money and good outcomes for society, culture and the economy, whilst contributing to decarbonisation and nature's recovery.

### **Denbighshire Procurement Strategy**

A new and updated Denbighshire Procurement Strategy was approved by [Cabinet](#) in September. It reflects and supports the council's corporate priorities and the seven well-being goals and aligns with the upcoming UK Government Procurement Bill and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act. Expectations about what we buy and how we buy it are increasing, and we will be expected to deliver not only value for money but also have a positive impact on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of our communities, known as socially responsible procurement.

New procurement regulations, that streamline over 300 current individual regulations, will be introduced and we need to prepare, raise awareness and train all officers affected. New powers, responsibilities and obligations are included in the Procurement Bill and this

currently includes obligations to consider small businesses, including local businesses; produce a pipeline of future procurements that is visible and easily accessed; and publish contract reports.

A joined up and streamlined approach to commissioning, procurement, contract management and reporting will be required to ensure Denbighshire gains the best possible outcomes from new procurement regulations. This will involve working across the council to support Denbighshire's local supply chain.

Governance arrangements to manage implementation of the new strategy are being determined.

### **Decarbonisation Procurement Expertise**

The Business Partner – Carbon, funded by Denbighshire and Flintshire Councils including Denbighshire's Climate Change Team, commenced in post on Sept 4. The postholder will revisit regional contracts as they expire with the aim to, where possible, reduce carbon emissions in the future and identify community benefits in council contracts that reduce carbon and increase carbon absorption. They will also work with business and suppliers in the county to encourage lower carbon practice, starting first with the Design and Print framework. The postholder has been attending Service's management team meetings to raise the importance of reducing carbon in our spend. They are working on a more robust methodology to enable us to accurately report on (and impact) actual carbon emitted via procurement, rather than use the Welsh Government model that aligns carbon emissions to spend. Future reports will focus on decarbonisation via procurement, and progress in implementing our new Procurement Strategy.

### **Biodiversity Protection and Decarbonisation in Procurement**

As reported previously, biodiversity protection and improvement is considered in all council procurements, and to enhance this we are working with our Climate Change team to develop specific questions to include in procurement notices. Biodiversity protection and improvement also forms part of our approach to community benefit 'asks' of contractors, which can range from improved planting schemes to protect or improve biodiversity to working with school children to raise awareness of ecology and biodiversity. To this end this is considered business as usual and the Procurement and Climate Change teams will continue to work closely together to determine the 'asks' we seek via procurement.

## **Contract Procedure Rules**

It remains the case that Contract Procedure Rules will be updated to reflect new UK Public Procurement legislation, which is due in 2023 to 2024. We will continue to report on progress through this report in the meantime. We are planning a cross-council workshop to take place in October, which will include a presentation from an official from Welsh Government on the changing procurement landscape, followed by a shorter presentation from the same official to our Senior Leadership Team in November.

## **Supporting Businesses and Partners to Adapt**

As reported previously, the new and developing legislation from Welsh and UK governments will represent a change on current practice for the council and its procuring services, businesses and the supply chain. The aim is for smaller local businesses to be more engaged in, and to benefit from, procurement. To this end, procurement will feature in the 2024 March for Business campaign, planning for which is already underway. A communications plan is also being developed and will be shared with the council's Senior Leadership Team in October.

Balfour Beatty, as part of the coastal defence schemes, has committed to deliver workshops to community-led organisations on how to develop strategy early in 2024. They will be supported by Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council to deliver a workshop in the north of the county and are aiming to work with the South Denbighshire Partnership to offer an additional workshop in the south.

## **North Wales Construction Framework Phase 3**

In May, Cabinet approved the initiation of a project to procure the North Wales Construction Framework Phase 3 (phase 2 is due to end in May 2024). The project is now live. The tender period finishes on October 2 and we will seek Cabinet's approval in December to appoint successful contractors. This is a framework for all North Wales local authorities. The Framework has been a catalyst for engagement and upskilling of local contractors operating within the regional supply chain, and this will encourage local contractors to become part of phase 3.

## **Improvement Actions**

There have been no improvement actions identified through this report.

A Service Performance Challenge took place for Education and Children's Services and no new improvement actions were identified.

<b>Report to</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of meeting</b>	21 November 2023
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets / Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
<b>Report author</b>	Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
<b>Title</b>	Finance Report (October 2023/24)

## 1. What is the report about?

The report gives details of the council's revenue budget and savings as agreed for 2023/24. The report also provides a summary update of the Capital Plan as well as the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Plan.

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

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the council's current financial position and confirm the agreed service budgets for 2023/24.

## 3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 Members note the budgets set for 2023/24 and progress against the agreed strategy.

## 4. Report details

The report provides a summary of the council's revenue budget for 2023/24 detailed in Appendix 1. The council's net revenue budget is £250.793m (£233.696m in 22/23). The position on service and corporate budgets is a forecast overspend of £3.316m (£3.446m overspend last month), reduced this month due to release of corporate contingency offset by additional pressures mainly within Adult Social Care and Homelessness. Services need

to review all the expenditure and income in their areas to mitigate the impact of the overall budget overspend. The budget mitigation reserve can cover this overspend in the current year, however that will reduce the resources available to meet unforeseen pressures in future years. Narrative around the current risks and assumptions underlying this assessment are outlined in Section 6 and Appendix 2.

The 2023/24 budget required service savings and efficiencies of £8.172m to be identified and agreed as detailed below:

- Capital Financing Budget & Corporate contingencies budget reduced (£2.267m)
- Impact of the triennial actuarial review of the Clwyd Pension Fund (£3.828m)
- Savings from bringing Revenues & Benefits service back in house (£0.300m)
- Fees and Charges inflated in line with agreed Fees and Charges policy (£0.423m).
- Operational efficiencies (£0.538m) mostly identified by services throughout the year and within Head Service delegated responsibility in consultation with Lead Members.
- Schools were also asked to plan for 1% efficiencies (£0.816m).

The corporate and operational savings, and fees and charges increases are assumed to have been achieved.

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

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

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

Significant service narratives explaining variances and risks are detailed in Appendix 2, however the following should also be noted:

**6.1 Corporate Budgets** – It is estimated that corporate contingencies amounting to £391k will be available to be released:

- Pay settlements for 2023/24 have now been agreed, with the exception of craft-workers, and an estimate made of the contingency that can be released and the funds that will be vired to services.

- Energy costs have been analysed to estimate the contingency that can be released and the funds that will be vired to services.

Call on other contingencies and inflationary pressures will be monitored closely over the coming months.

**6.2 Education and Children's Service** – Although an additional pressure of £2.7m was included in budget for 2023/24 this service area remains a risk. The current outturn prediction is £1.774m overspend (previously £1.853m) due to pressures in children's social care (£1.737m), and in Education services (£37k). The movement this month is due mainly to confirmation of grant income.

**6.3 Adult Social Care and Homelessness** – Although an additional pressure of £8.187m was included in the budget for 2023/24 this service remains an area of concern. The current outturn prediction is £2.170m overspend (previously £1.793m) due to pressures in Adult Social Care (£1.189m) and in Homelessness (£0.981m), with costs in both services increasing this month

**6.4 Schools** - The budget agreed by Council for 2023/24 included a total net additional investment (excluding increases in Welsh Government grants) in schools delegated budgets of £3.03m. The latest projection for school balances to be carried forward into 2024/25 is a net credit balance of £1.848m, which represents a decrease of £7.091m on the balances brought forward into 2023/24 of £8.939m. The majority of the movement is as expected as the high opening balances were mainly due to receipt of one-off funding to be spent on catch-up and recovery programmes in school. Education and Finance colleagues will work closely to help ensure that these balances are used in a timely and effective manner, and monitor closely the schools projecting deficit balances. There is a small underspend of £162k on non-delegated school budgets.

**6.6 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA).** The latest revenue position assumes a decrease in balances at year end of £800k compared to £922k at the time the budget was approved. This movement relates to a reduction in estimated rental income, offset by a reduced contribution to the HRA capital programme. HRA balances are therefore forecast to be £768k at the end of the year. The Capital budget of £20m is largely allocated between planned improvements to existing housing stock (£12m) and new build developments and acquisitions (£8m).

**6.7 Treasury Management** – At the end of October, the council’s borrowing totalled £277.152m at an average rate of 4.36% and our investments were £11.9m at an average rate of 5.16%.

**6.8** A summary of the council’s **Capital Plan** is enclosed as Appendix 3. The approved capital plan is £109.6m with expenditure to date of £39.1m. Appendix 4 provides an update on the major projects included in the overall Capital Plan.

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

A Well-being Impact Assessments for the Council Tax rise was presented to Council on 31 January 2023.

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

In addition to regular reports to the Corporate Governance Committee, the budget process has been considered by SLT, Cabinet Briefing, Group Leaders and Council Briefing meetings. The School Budget Forum have been included in the proposals through-out the year. Trade Unions have been consulted through Local Joint Consultative Committee. The budget process for 2024/25 includes plans to consult and engage with the public and other stakeholders.

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

The substantial level of overspend across services is a grave concern in the current year and for the medium term. The services will need to review all the expenditure and income in their areas to mitigate these budget overspends. Similar to last financial year, CET will review the overall position to consider what specific actions are required by services. Significant investment has gone into these specific service areas in recent years and it is expected that that need will continue. Initial pressures have already been included in the Medium Term Financial Plan and these will be kept under review, while the pressure for these services will need to be reviewed in the coming months. The contingencies held corporately look to be sufficient to cover the service pressures for this financial year, but



further risks and pressures in the coming months may require positive management action to reduce in-year expenditure.

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

This remains a very challenging financial period and these specific service issues, along with inflationary pressures across all services, are becoming increasingly hard to finance as our funding fails to keep up with inflationary, service and demographic pressures. The level of budget pressures in year is likely to reduce our level of contingencies to a level that will need to be replenished within the budget process for 2024/25. Although the financial outlook looks uncertain, the Council has a robust Budget Process in place which will help identify these pressures and identify savings and methods of funding which will help maintain the Council's financial health going forward. The significant budget pressure in-year will reduce the level of reserves held by the Council and this will be taken into account during the budget process.

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

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

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## Appendix 1

### DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

Oct-23	Net Budget	Budget 2023/24			Projected Outturn							Variance
	2022/23	Expenditure	Income	Net	Expenditure	Income	Net	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Previous Report
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
Housing and Communities	2,755	3,466	-764	2,702	4,062	-1,453	2,609	596	-689	-93	-3.44%	-22
Education and Children's Service	19,160	37,720	-16,288	21,432	36,297	-13,091	23,206	-1,423	3,197	1,774	8.28%	1,853
Corporate Support: Performance, Digital, Assets	6,966	11,493	-3,822	7,671	12,616	-4,860	7,756	1,123	-1,038	85	1.11%	7
Corporate Support: People	3,868	6,014	-1,953	4,061	5,869	-1,899	3,970	-145	54	-91	-2.24%	-128
Finance and Audit	3,323	5,082	-2,124	2,958	5,138	-2,358	2,780	56	-234	-178	-6.02%	-217
Highways and Environmental Services	17,275	29,859	-12,562	17,297	32,060	-13,813	18,247	2,201	-1,251	950	5.49%	958
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside	11,168	19,145	-7,414	11,731	18,573	-6,997	11,576	-572	417	-155	-1.32%	-43
Adult Social Care and Homelessness	44,174	73,400	-21,931	51,469	71,032	-17,393	53,639	-2,368	4,538	2,170	4.22%	1,793
Leisure - Retained Budgets	3,654	3,402	0	3,402	3,397	0	3,397	-5	0	-5	-0.15%	-5
<b>Total Services</b>	<b>112,343</b>	<b>189,581</b>	<b>-66,858</b>	<b>122,723</b>	<b>189,044</b>	<b>-61,864</b>	<b>127,180</b>	<b>-537</b>	<b>4,994</b>	<b>4,457</b>	<b>3.63%</b>	<b>4,196</b>
Corporate	17,699	51,594	-29,271	22,323	51,203	-29,271	21,932	-391	0	-391	-1.75%	0
Precipos & Levies	5,381	6,064	0	6,064	6,064	0	6,064	0	0	0	0.00%	0
Capital Financing	15,943	15,243	0	15,243	14,493	0	14,493	-750	0	-750	-4.92%	-750
<b>Total Corporate</b>	<b>39,023</b>	<b>72,901</b>	<b>-29,271</b>	<b>43,630</b>	<b>71,760</b>	<b>-29,271</b>	<b>42,489</b>	<b>-1,141</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-1,141</b>	<b>-2.62%</b>	<b>-750</b>
<b>Council Services &amp; Corporate Budget</b>	<b>151,366</b>	<b>262,482</b>	<b>-96,129</b>	<b>166,353</b>	<b>260,804</b>	<b>-91,135</b>	<b>169,669</b>	<b>-1,678</b>	<b>4,994</b>	<b>3,316</b>	<b>1.99%</b>	<b>3,446</b>
Schools & Non-delegated School Budgets	82,330	93,575	-9,135	84,440	95,435	-4,066	91,369	1,860	5,069	6,929	8.21%	6,929
<b>Total Council Budget</b>	<b>233,696</b>	<b>356,057</b>	<b>-105,264</b>	<b>250,793</b>	<b>356,239</b>	<b>-95,201</b>	<b>261,038</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>10,063</b>	<b>10,245</b>	<b>4.09%</b>	<b>10,375</b>
Housing Revenue Account	4	19,302	-18,380	922	18,689	-17,889	800	-613	491	-122		-130

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## Appendix 2 - Service Variance Narrative

Service	Variance Last Month £000	Variance This Month £000	Change £000	Description
Housing and Communities	-22	-93	-71	Underspend, and increase this month, due to vacancies, minor variances and maximisation of grants.
Education and Children's Service	1,853	1,774	-79	See body of report for summary. Overspend in children's social care (£1.737m) due to placements costs, further increasing this month. All placements have been costed to realistic timescales, however no allowance has been made for any further placements throughout the year. Projected overspend in Education services (£37k) reduced this month by confirmation of grant income.
Corporate Support: Performance, Digital, Assets	7	85	78	Overspend due to premises costs of surplus assets and further increased this month by reduced forecast income for the project management team.
Corporate Support: People	-128	-91	37	Underspend due to vacancies and minor variances offset this month by reduced projected income for the Registrar' service and cost of IT software updates.
Finance and Audit	-217	-178	39	Underspend due to vacancies offset this month by minor variances.
Highways and Environmental Services	958	950	-8	Budget pressure due to increasing fleet costs in streetscene and pressures within the waste service, reduced slightly this month.
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside	-43	-155	-112	The pressures in planning and parking have reduced this month with an increase in income projected and underspend due to vacancies further offset by drawdown of reserves. Current School Transport contracts are included in the projection, but risks remain as there is no allowance for any further emergency or discretionary transport requirements.
Adult Social Care and Homelessness	1,793	2,170	377	See body of report for summary. The £2.170m overspend is due to an overall pressure in Adult Social Care (£1.189m) due to increased costs in Domiciliary Care and Community Living, higher costs for residential, nursing and specialist placements, and reduced projected care income, and in Homelessness (£0.981m). The pressures in Adult Social Care have increased this month due to additional demand and pressures within the mental health service.
Leisure - Retained Budgets	-5	-5	0	Minor variances
Corporate & Miscellaneous	0	-391	-391	Release of contingencies held for pay and energy inflation. See body of report for details
Precepts & Levies	0	0	0	See body of report for details
Capital Financing	-750	-750	0	Reduced capital financing costs in-year due to delayed expenditure on some capital projects. The position on capital financing is very much related to progress on capital projects and variances do not fully crystallise until the final outturn is known. Whilst in previous years any underspend on this budget has been carried forward to help support the capital programme, this will not be possible this year due to the level of overspend currently being reported.
<b>Council Services &amp; Corporate Budget</b>	<b>3,446</b>	<b>3,316</b>	<b>-130</b>	

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# Denbighshire County Council - Capital Plan 2022/23 - 2025/26

## APPENDIX 3

### Position to end October 2023

	2022/23 OUTTURN POSITION £000s	2023/24 ORIGINAL ESTIMATE £000s	2023/24 LATEST ESTIMATE £000s	2024/25 LATEST ESTIMATE £000s	2025/26 LATEST ESTIMATE £000s
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>					
Total Estimated Payments - Other	25,658	22,464	48,312	10,783	486
Total Estimated Payments - Major Projects:					
Housing Improvement Grants	1,303	1,500	1,912	0	0
Highways Maintenance	4,713	4,713	4,505	1,004	0
Central Prestatyn Coastal Defence Scheme	496	16,420	10,225	7,618	7,755
Central Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme	626	35,052	30,522	22,864	12,014
Rhyl Queens Market Redevelopment	3,662	2,848	2,709	175	0
Waste Service Remodelling	4,372	8,847	11,106	0	0
Contingency		500	329		
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,830</b>	<b>92,344</b>	<b>109,620</b>	<b>42,444</b>	<b>20,255</b>
<b>Capital Financing</b>					
External Funding	26,922	21,253	39,604	7,129	386
Receipts and Reserves	2,329	3,980	7,500	0	0
Prudential Borrowing	11,579	67,111	62,516	35,315	19,869
Unallocated Funding	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Capital Financing</b>	<b>40,830</b>	<b>92,344</b>	<b>109,620</b>	<b>42,444</b>	<b>20,255</b>

Note: 2023/24 Original Estimate is the position as approved by Council on 28 February 2023

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## Major Capital Projects - Update as at October 2023

<b>Rhyl Queens Market Redevelopment</b>	
Total Budget	£13.253m
Expenditure to date	£12.670m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	£0.408m
Future Years' estimated spend	£0.175m
Funding	WG £8.060m DCC Asbestos £0.272m. DCC £4.921m
<b>Narrative:</b>	
<p>Construction commenced on Monday 15 August 2022 by Wynne Construction and was scheduled to finish July 2023. An issue has arisen with the works to energise the site ready for commissioning and testing. Issues with getting the required approvals in place have meant that the work cannot commence until mid-October. The impact of this is that the facility won't be handed over until November 24<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>Approval to award a contract to the preferred supplier was received from June 27<sup>th</sup> 2023 Cabinet Committee. We are now working with the supplier (Mikhail Hotel and Leisure Group) to agree the contract, complete the fitout and secure vendors ready for opening next year.</p>	
Forecast In Year Expenditure 23/24	£2.709m

<b>Waste Service Re-modelling</b>	
Total Budget	£21.992m
Expenditure to date	£13.483m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	£8.509m
Future Years estimated spend	£0
Funding	WG £12.022m, DCC £9.970m
<b>Narrative:</b>	
<p>A number of work streams are being taken forward including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is ongoing with Phase 2 of the construction of the new waste transfer station (WTS) at the Colomendy Industrial Estate in Denbigh. Completion is currently anticipated by December 2023.</li> <li>• At present working towards a go live of the new recycling collections model in June 2024 subject to progress by NRW on issuing a Permit for the new WTS and recruitment of new Staff required to serve the new model. In advance of the main service change, a roll out of AHP weekly collections for those who wish to sign up has been launched at the end of September 2023 in an initial Pilot area before launching County wide in 2024.</li> <li>• Specification and procurement of the new fleet required to support the new model has been completed with delivery of this new fleet anticipated to commence in autumn 2023 ahead of the roll out of the new service to allow for commissioning and training on the new fleet before it goes operational.</li> <li>• Procurement of the new containers required for the new collections model are ongoing with procurement of the remaining containers required occurring through 2023 in the run up to the service change.</li> <li>• A number of mobilisation and communication activities are ongoing to prepare for the service change and include developing the new collection routes; planning for any staffing changes/requirements and ongoing engagement and communication with stakeholders and residents.</li> </ul>	
Forecast In Year Expenditure 23/24	£11.921m

<b>Sustainable Communities for Learning – Band B</b>	
Total Budget	£51.9m
Expenditure to date	£1.118m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	£0.475m
Future Years' estimated spend	£50.307m
Funding	WG £36.1m, DCC £15.8m
<b>Narrative:</b>	
<p>The various schemes included within Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme in partnership with Welsh Government are progressing as follows.</p> <p>The Outline Business Case for the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn project was approved by Welsh Government and the pre planning consultation with the community on the proposed design of the new school has now taken place. The statutory notice for the proposed extension in capacity was published on the 8<sup>th</sup> November and the period for objection ran until the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Two objections were received and Cabinet approved the proposal to increase the capacity of the school in February 2023. In September 2023 Cabinet approved to proceed to submit a planning application for development on the Ystrad Road site. Work on the project is progressing with a view to a formal submission of the planning application.</p> <p>The Denbigh High project is linked to the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn scheme. The design brief is currently being developed with the view of commissioning concept designs for the site. As part of the process discussions are taking place with the school.</p> <p>The findings of the feasibility report for Ysgol Bryn Collen / Ysgol Gwernant in Llangollen have been assessed and a way forward for this project identified. Further design work is being commissioned in the context of the constraints regarding phosphates around the Dee Valley area which could impact on planning approvals.</p> <p>Design and Construction have completed initial feasibility works that identified and assessed options for Ysgol Pendref. The findings were presented to the Modernising Education Programme Board in September. Further feasibility work has now been commissioned on the potential options which will involve input from the school with a view to a creating a concept design which identifies the preferred solution for the project.</p> <p>The projects under Band B are required to meet Net Carbon Zero requirements and Welsh Government have agreed to meet these additional costs to an agreed benchmark. Discussions have also taken place with Welsh Government regarding likely cost pressures for individual projects and how this will impact on the overall programme affordability. The 4 Band B projects will need to be considered as part of the next phase of the delivery of Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme whereby a rolling programme of projects will need to be submitted to Welsh Government in early 2024.</p>	
Forecast In Year Expenditure 23/24	£0.640m

**Central Prestatyn and Central Rhyl  
Coastal Defence Schemes –  
Construction Phase**

Total Budget	Prestatyn £26.094m Rhyl £66.026m
Expenditure to date	Prestatyn £7.226m Rhyl £14.192m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	Prestatyn £3.495m Rhyl £16.956m
Future Years' estimated spend	Prestatyn £15.373m Rhyl £34.878m
Funding	Prestatyn: WG £22.18m; DCC £3.914m Rhyl: WG £56.122m; DCC £9.904m
<b>Narrative:</b>	
<u>Prestatyn</u>	
Construction has commenced by Balfour Beatty and is scheduled to finish September 2025.	
Aggregate has been placed to embankment. There was a design requirement that after the first metre of fill had been placed there was then a nine-month period to allow for settlement before re-commencing with fill operations. As there has been no settlement this requirement has now been waived which should, ultimately create a saving on the overall contract time and cost. Other works undertaken include: remedial works to the existing promenade stepped revetment; construction of manhole and connection to the NRW culvert; and installation of offices at the east end of the scheme.	
<u>Rhyl</u>	
Construction has commenced by Balfour Beatty and is scheduled to finish October 2025.	
The promenade rock toe protection, eastern Rhyl, has been constructed. An exclusion zone has been enforced 100m from the Seal Cove. Piling is now complete until the exclusion zone is lifted. There is a reinforced concrete toe beam being constructed from the west end of the pile installation. Construction on the promenade of the crane pad has been undertaken, as has installation of the Cofferdams for the beach access steps foundations. Other works undertaken include construction of revetment mass concrete and stone foundations and the installation of the precast stepped revetment units has commenced.	
Works within the exclusion zone are still suspended but will hopefully be able to restart in January 2024 but if this isn't possible then there will be an inevitable delay to the contract with a consequent increase in costs.	
Agreements with SC2 and the Kiosk owners have now concluded and the associated payments are included within the expenditure to date figure. It's likely further compensation will have to be negotiated prior to the end of the financial year in respect of the SeaQuarium as these discussions reach a conclusion.	
Forecast In Year Expenditure 23/24	Prestatyn £10.225m Rhyl £30.522m

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
<b>19 December</b>	1	Library Savings Proposal	To outline how savings could be achieved by reducing Library Services	Yes	Cllr Emrys Wynne Lead Officer/Report Author – Liz Grieve
	2	North Wales Construction Framework (NWCF) Phase 3	To approve the NWCF following the procurement exercise	Yes	Cllr Julie Matthews Lead Officer – Lisa Jones Report Author – Karen Bellis
	3	Housing Rent Setting & Housing Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25	To seek approval for the proposed annual rent increase for council housing and to approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2024/25 and Housing Stock Business Plan	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author Geoff Davies
	4	Contract for Haulage, Sorting and Brokerage of Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR)	To consider a contract variation/extension of DMR	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer/Report Author – Simon Lammond
	5	Keep my Home Project	To seek Cabinet approval to go out to tender for the project to support people living in Denbighshire to sustain their accommodation and prevent homelessness	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Nigel Jones/Sharon Whalley/Hayley S Jones
	6	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			current financial position of the Council		Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas
	7	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators
<b>23 January</b>	1	Budget 2024/25 - Final Proposals	To consider the implications of the Local Government Settlement 2024/25 and proposals to finalise the budget for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas
	2	North Wales Velodrome Business Case	To consider the business case for the North Wales Velodrome Project	Tbc	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author Tony Ward / Jamie Groves
	3	Care Home Fee Setting 2024/25	To seek Cabinet approval for the Fee Structure 2024/25	Yes	Cllr Elen Heaton Lead Officer/ Report Author Nicola Stubbins/Ann Lloyd
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
<b>20 February</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators
<b>19 March</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators
<b>23 April</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

### Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<b><i>Deadline</i></b>	<i>Meeting</i>	<b><i>Deadline</i></b>	<i>Meeting</i>	<b><i>Deadline</i></b>
<i>19 December</i>	<b><i>5 December</i></b>	<i>23 January</i>	<b><i>9 January</i></b>	<i>20 February</i>	<b><i>6 February</i></b>

Updated 07/11/2023 – KEJ  
Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc