

To: Members of the County Council

Date: 21 February 2024

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COUNTY COUNCIL** to be held at **10.00 am** on **TUESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2024** in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN LL15 1YN AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**.

Yours sincerely

G Williams
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

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

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

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

4 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 12)

To receive the minutes of the meeting of County Council held on 30 January 2024 (copy attached).

5 COUNCIL TAX 24/25 AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS (Pages 13 - 28)

To consider a report by the Head of Finance and Audit (copy attached).

- 6 CAPITAL PLAN 2023/24 - 2026/27 AND RECOMMENDATION OF CAPITAL SCRUTINY GROUP** (Pages 29 - 60)
To consider a report by the Head of Finance and Audit (copy attached).
- 7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT (TMSS) 2024/25 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2024/25 TO 2026/27 (APPENDIX 1)** (Pages 61 - 90)
To consider a report by the Head of Finance and Audit (copy attached).
- 8 REVIEW OF CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES** (Pages 91 - 158)
To receive a report by the Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader (copy attached).
- 9 REVIEW OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE RECRUITMENT PANEL** (Pages 159 - 162)
To receive a report by the Legal Services Manager (copy attached).
- 10 NOTICE OF MOTION** (Pages 163 - 164)
To consider a Notice of Motion by Councillor Jon Harland (copy attached).
- 11 NOTICE OF MOTION** (Pages 165 - 166)
To consider a Notice of Motion by Councillor Merfyn Parry (copy attached).
- 12 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 167 - 172)
To consider the Council's forward work programme and the Council Workshop forward work programme (copy attached).

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Councillor Peter Scott (Chair)

Michelle Blakeley-Walker
Joan Butterfield
Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones
Ellie Chard
Kelly Clewett
Ann Davies
Karen Edwards
Pauline Edwards
Gwyneth Ellis

Councillor Diane King (Vice-Chair)

Brian Jones
Delyth Jones
Paul Keddie
Geraint Lloyd-Williams
Julie Matthews
James May
Jason McLellan
Barry Mellor
Terry Mendies

James Elson
Chris Evans
Hugh Evans
Justine Evans
Bobby Feeley
Gill German
Jon Harland
Elen Heaton
Huw Hilditch-Roberts
Martyn Hogg
Carol Holliday
Alan Hughes
Hugh Irving
Alan James

Raj Metri
Win Mullen-James
Merfyn Parry
Arwel Roberts
Gareth Sandilands
Rhys Thomas
Andrea Tomlin
Cheryl Williams
David Williams
Elfed Williams
Eryl Williams
Huw Williams
Emrys Wynne
Mark Young

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COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the County Council held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin LL15 1YN and via video conference on Tuesday, 30 January 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Michelle Blakeley-Walker, Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Ellie Chard, Kelly Clewett, Ann Davies, Karen Edwards, Pauline Edwards, Gwyneth Ellis, James Elson, Chris Evans, Hugh Evans, Justine Evans, Bobby Feeley, Gill German, Jon Harland, Elen Heaton, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Martyn Hogg, Carol Holliday, Alan Hughes, Hugh Irving, Alan James, Brian Jones, Delyth Jones, Paul Keddie, Diane King (Vice-Chair), Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Julie Matthews, James May, Jason McLellan, Barry Mellor, Terry Mendies, Raj Metri, Win Mullen-James, Merfyn Parry, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, Peter Scott (Chair), Rhys Thomas, Andrea Tomlin, Cheryl Williams, David Williams, Elfed Williams, Huw Williams, Emrys Wynne and Mark Young

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (GB); Corporate Director: Governance and Business (GW); Corporate Director: Economy and Environment (TW); Corporate Director: Communities (NS); Head of Finance and Audit (ET); Head of Children's Services (RM); Head of Highways and Environmental Services (PJ); Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader (IMcG); Democratic Services Manager (SP); Zoom Host (SJ) and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hugh Irving declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 as he receives a small pension from the Clwyd Pension Scheme.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent items.

- (i) Councillor Rhys Thomas confirmed the future opening of a Police Station in Prestatyn. Councillor Thomas referred to the Notice of Motion put forward by Councillor Hugh Irving in 2023 which had been supported by Full Council to put pressure on the necessary Authorities and North Wales Police for a police station to be reinstated in Prestatyn. A number of meetings had taken place and the previous week, the Police Strategic Board approved a plan for the police station in Prestatyn. A full report to Prestatyn Member Area Group would be presented in February.
- (ii) Councillor Terry Mendies informed members that on 12 January 2024, Arriva had terminated the bus service 51 going into Llandegla village. It has now

been confirmed that Arriva had reinstated a skeleton service to the village. Councillor Mendies offered thanks to Councillor Barry Mellor and also to Sara Palmer for assisting to find a solution to the issue.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of Full Council held on 14 November 2023 were submitted.

Matters Arising –

Page 9 – Councillor Chris Evans stated that to date, he had not received a written response to his question.

Page 11 – Councillor Kelly Clewett stated that the Addiction Recovery Agency could be added to the Single Point of Access register as this had not been confirmed in the minutes.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of Full Council held on 14 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

5 COUNCIL BUDGET 2024/25

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, introduced the Council Budget 2024/25 report (previously circulated).

The report set out the implications of the Welsh Government's (WG) Provisional Funding Settlement for Local Government 2024/25 and the proposals to set a balanced budget for 2024/25.

The Council was legally required to set a balanced and deliverable budget before the start of each financial year and to set the resulting level of Council Tax to allow bills to be sent to residents.

There was a statutory duty on the Head of Finance and Audit (Section 151 Officer) to report to Full Council, at the time the budget was considered and the Council Tax was set, on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of financial reserves.

The unprecedented financial challenges facing the council, along with all other local authorities, meant a different process to budget setting was required and it had been an extremely difficult and uncomfortable process. Councillor Ellis thanked all involved in that process which had resulted in the submission of a balanced budget.

Councillor Ellis and the Head of Finance and Audit provided an overview of the budget process and latest financial position and elaborated on the proposals for consideration to set the budget for 2024/25. In brief, the provisional settlement had resulted in a cash increase of 3.6% (£6.720m) and following a council tax base adjustment was higher than the cash comparison at 3.7% (compared to the Welsh average of 3.1%) with a final settlement expected in early March. The settlement included all pay increases for teaching and non-teaching posts and responsibility to

pay care workers the Real Living Wage. Pressures amounting to £24.682m had been detailed and the provisional settlement generated £6.720m leaving a funding gap of £17.962m with proposals to bridge that gap identified in the report and further explained at the meeting. A Council Tax rise of 8.23% plus an additional 1.11% (change to the indicative figure of 1.3% in the report) for the increase in the levy to North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority equating to an overall uplift of 9.34% was proposed to generate £7.580m additional revenue.

The proposed use of earmarked reserves was also highlighted to assist the budget setting. The risks of not achieving a balanced budget had also been set out together with mitigation measures and further work required going forward. The medium-term financial outlook looked equally as challenging.

The Chief Executive, Graham Boase, confirmed to Full Council that this would be the most difficult and challenging budget members had had to set and the budget would also be difficult in the years ahead. Work had taken place to assist schools and also provide an additional £10 million for social care.

Work was taking place across all service areas to look for savings and efficiencies whilst limiting impact on services.

Budget Workshops had taken place to engage with all members. The Chief Executive confirmed his commitment to continue to engage with members through Budget Workshops and video meetings.

Group Leaders were requested to address the meeting.

Councillor Jason McLellan spoke on behalf of the Labour Group. Thanks were offered to Liz Thomas, Head of Finance, Steve Gadd and the team as they had all worked extremely hard regarding the budget.

It was agreed it had been a long process and an unprecedented situation Local Authorities found themselves in. No members wanted to vote for cuts and discussions had taken place at length but there was a need to vote for a balanced budget. Services were to be protected for those most vulnerable within the community. Councillor McLellan urged members to vote for the balanced budget.

Councillor Delyth Jones spoke on behalf of the Plaid Cymru Group. Councillor Jones reiterated that the problem was not just for Denbighshire but was nationwide. There had to be a process to deal with the budget and savings were required. Members had attended various Budget Workshops where decisions were challenged. A balanced budget was required to offer services which the council were extremely proud of.

Councillor Jones queried the announcement of additional monies being offered to English Councils.

The Head of Finance, Liz Thomas, confirmed that the previous week, an announcement had been made that the UK Government were to pay an additional £600million. It was understood that the Welsh Government would receive an

additional consequential £25million. Discussions were ongoing as WG had to make a decision what they do with the consequential. £25million across Wales would not make a big difference which was a reason to increase the amount in recommendation 3.4 from £500k to £1million.

Councillor Hugh Irving spoke on behalf of the Welsh Conservatives. Councillor Irving thanked Councillor Ellis and Liz Thomas for all their work.

Councillor Irving offered a differing view as he was critical of the report and did not agree a balanced budget would be possible during the difficult financial times the council were facing and he queried the superannuation fund.

The Head of Finance, Liz Thomas, confirmed that during a Budget Workshop it had been discussed and there was a reserve labelled superannuation fund and in the recent 3 years which have just been gone through the contribution has gone down and a deficit of fund overall. This had enabled the creation of a reserve which had been set aside.

Councillor Irving stated that the budget put demands on each Head of Service. If a balanced budget were not to be agreed, what would be the outcome. Councillor Irving urged members to vote against the report.

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis confirmed that the Budget had been discussed in numerous Council Workshops. It was stressed that there was a need to avoid going down the route of not having a balanced budget.

The Head of Finance, Liz Thomas, confirmed that not all reserves would be utilised as it would be a controlled use of reserves ensuring as much as possible was protected.

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts spoke on behalf of the Independent Group. It was stated that budget cuts were to be made, a high council tax rise and less services. That was a difficult situation and therefore, could not vote in favour of a balanced budget as the budget was not balanced.

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis confirmed council tax needed to be increased and disagreed with Councillor Hilditch-Roberts that it was a balanced budget.

Councillor Martyn Hogg spoke on behalf of the Green Party. It was confirmed it would be getting harder to balance the budget. Members did not want to make cuts but it was complicated. All members had been involved in the process and had opportunity to suggest alternatives. Councillor Hogg confirmed he supported the Budget and trusted the process going forward.

At this juncture, the Monitoring Officer, Gary Williams, confirmed that recommendation 3.4 of the report have the figure amended from £500k to £1million. The amendment was proposed and seconded and unanimously voted in favour of the amendment.

During discussions, the following issues were raised –

- (i) Information was requested regarding the collective impact of cuts. Schools were in deficit and concern was expressed how they were to find additional savings. Concern was also raised for the economy of local towns due to budget cuts.
It was clarified that the council supported local towns and local economy. Representatives from DCC continued to sit on the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB). Three Levelling Up Fund applications had been successful and external funding was always maximized.
Schools managed their own budgets which would increase overall but there would be a reduction in the funding formula which goes out. Schools could apply for a licensed deficit and there was a recovery process in place. Meetings have been taken place with schools to with a recovery plan.
- (ii) The financial situation facing local government was condemned as it meant severe cuts had to be made to vital services in order to set a balanced budget and called for improved and sustainable funding to deliver those services. It was noted that recent calls had been made by MPs across the political spectrum for the UK Government to provide additional funding for local government. Given the current financial context, it was believed the budget proposals represented the best outcome to ensure social care services and school learners were protected as far as possible and to safeguard the most vulnerable in society.
- (iii) It was stated that in 23/24 a better than expected settlement of 8.2% had been received with a rise of 3.8% council tax. Today members were being asked to agree to a 9.34% rise in council tax which raised concerns as residents were being expect to pay an increase during the cost of living crisis.
- (iv) The risk had been outlined within the report and members expressed concern regarding the £3million saving, Heads of Service were aware of the savings required. Regarding the Voluntary Exit Scheme there had been 140 applications received from staff. Heads of Service had completed a business case to assess the individual who had applied to voluntarily leave. The business cases would be put before CET who would decide which applicants would be approved. It was not a case that every applicant would be granted approval as there were implications to the relevant service and exit costs.
- (v) Gratitude was expressed to all staff during this difficult time who were the backbone of the council. It was a worrying time for everyone involved with councils.

Following debate, a recorded vote was requested and it was confirmed that a further eight members would be required to support a recorded vote. More than eight members supported the proposal for a recorded vote which was proposed and seconded.

Therefore, a recorded vote took place and the results were as follows –

In favour of the budget report including the amended 3.4 recommendation to increase the reserves from £500k to £1million

Councillors Michelle Blakeley-Walker, Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Ellie Chard, Kelly Clewett, Gwyneth Ellis, Gill German, Jonathan Harland, Elen Heaton, Martyn Hogg, Carol Holliday, Alan Hughes, Alan James, Delyth Jones, Diane King, Julie Matthews, James May, Jason McLellan, Barry Mellor, Rajeev Metri, Win Mullen James, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Sandilands, Rhys Thomas, Cheryl Williams, Elfed Williams and Emrys Wynne (27)

Against

Councillors Ann Davies, Karen Edwards, Pauline Edwards, James Elson, Chris Evans, Hugh Evans, Justine Evans, Bobby Feeley, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Hugh Irving, Brian Jones, Paul Keddie, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Terry Mendies, Andrea Tomlin, David Williams, and Huw Williams (17)

Abstain

Councillors Peter Scott and Mark Young (2)

Therefore, it was –

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To note the impact of the Provisional Settlement 2024/25*
- (ii) *That Council supported the proposal outlined in Appendix 1, and detailed in Section 4, as recommended by Cabinet in order to set the budget for 2024/25.*
- (iii) *To approve the average Council Tax rise of 8.23% for council services plus an additional 1.11% for the increase in the levy to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority. This equated to an overall uplift of 9.34% proposed (paragraph 4.4)*
- (iv) *To delegate authority to the Head of Finance and Audit, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance, to adjust the use of cash reserves included in the budget proposals by up to £1million if there is movement between the draft and final settlement figures in order to allow the setting of Council Tax in a timely manner.*
- (v) *That Council supports the strategy for use of reserves as set out in paragraph 4.5, as recommended by Cabinet.*
- (vi) *That Council confirms it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessments as set out in Section 7.*

**At this juncture (12:40 pm) there was a 20 minute break
The meeting reconvened at 1.00 pm**

6 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2024/25

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets, Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, introduced the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25 report (previously circulated).

From 31 March 2013 council tax benefit ceased and the responsibility for providing support for council tax and the funding associated with this, had been passed to the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government had finalised both sets of annual regulations on 19 January 2024 and the new Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 and amendments Regulations 2024 were required to be adopted by 31 January 2024.

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25 report was proposed and seconded and unanimously agreed by a show of hands.

RESOLVED –

- (i) *That members adopt the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme)(Amendment)(Wales) Regulations 2024 in respect of the 2024/25 financial year*
- (ii) *That members approve the discretionary elements of the scheme, shown in section 4.4, for 2024/25 financial year.*

7 COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Corporate Director: Governance and Business, Gary Williams, introduced the Council's Forward Work Programme and the Council Workshop Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED *that the Council's Forward Work Programme and the Council Workshop Forward Work Programme be noted.*

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1.10 PM

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Report to	County Council
Date of meeting	27 February 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
Report author	Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
Title	Council Tax 24/25 and Associated Matters

1. What is the report about?

The Council at its meeting on the 30 January 2024 set the budget for 2024/25 including the level of Council Tax. It is necessary for the Council to pass further resolutions in a particular form to ensure that the Council Tax and its associated matters are legally valid.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To set the levels of Council Tax for 2024/25 in the legally prescribed manner.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. County Council, as the Billing Authority, considers the precepts received from the Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales and the Town/Community Councils and declares the Council Tax levels for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 3.2. That the amounts calculated by the Council for the 2024/25 financial year, in accordance with Sections 32 to 34 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act) and Alteration of Requisite Calculations (Wales) Regulations 2008 are as Appendix A section 3.
- 3.3. That the amounts calculated by the Council for the 2024/25 financial year, in accordance with Sections 34 (2) to 36 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act) are as Appendix A section 4.

- 3.4. That the amounts of Council Tax for the 2024/25 financial year for each of the categories of dwellings be as shown in Appendix C.
- 3.5. That the level of discount for Class A, B, and C as prescribed under the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 2004 be set at zero for the financial year 2024/25 with the caveat that this is dependent on no changes to legislation or local conditions.

4. Report details

Due to the requirement to approve the resolution and recommendations in the prescribed manner Appendix A contains the report details.

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

If the recommendations are not approved the Authority will be unable to raise Council Tax demands, therefore income required to fund Corporate Priorities will not be available.

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

The cost of raising and distributing Council Tax demands is met from within existing resources.

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

A wellbeing assessment for the Council Tax rise has been undertaken as part of the budget process and formed part of the overall Well-being Impact Assessment produced as part of the budget papers presented to Full Council on 30 January 2024.

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

The level of Council Tax forms part of the budget set by the Council. In addition to regular reports to the Governance and Audit 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 throughout the year. Trade Unions have been consulted through Local Joint Consultative Committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The Council has a legal obligation to set a Council Tax. The regulations are prescriptive as to how this is to be done and this report meets those requirements.

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

The financial risk of being unable to collect Council Tax income. Collection rates are high and are monitored closely throughout the year.

11. Power to make the decision

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 and Alteration of Requisite Calculations (Wales) Regulations 2008.

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Appendix A

1.0 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX FOR 2024/25

1.1 Background.

At the Council meeting on the 30 January 2024 members considered and approved Cabinet's budget proposals and approved the Council Tax increase of 9.34%.

Council also delegated authority to the Head of Finance and Audit in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance to adjust the use of cash included in the budget proposals by up to £1,000k if there is movement between the draft and final settlement figures in order to allow the setting of Council Tax in a timely manner.

1.2 The average increase for Council Tax bills (based on Band D) payable is:

	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Increase %
Denbighshire County Council	1,535.35	1,678.75	9.34
Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales	333.09	349.65	4.97
Town/Community Councils (Average)	59.40	61.71	3.90
Total	1,927.84	2,090.12	8.42

2.0 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

It is necessary for the County Council, as the Billing Authority, to consider the precepts received from the Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales and the Town/Community Councils and declare the Council Tax levels for the 2024/25 financial year.

2.1 TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCILS – PRECEPTS

The following precepts have been received:-

	2023/24	2024/25
	£	£
Aberwheeler	4,500	5,000
Betws Gwerfil Goch	3,132	4,075
Bodelwyddan	45,000	49,500
Bodfari	8,500	15,981
Bryneglwys	6,195	6,255
Cefn Meiriadog	7,104	7,104
Clocaenog	6,320	6,300
Corwen	118,300	125,000
Cyffylliog	12,270	12,990
Cynwyd	4,986	9,530
Denbigh	233,442	245,388
Derwen	7,170	7,710
Dyserth	48,500	50,500
Efenechtyd	7,626	7,626
Gwyddelwern	3,584	3,728
Henllan	16,422	16,380
Llanarmon yn Ial	22,440	23,562
Llanbedr D C	20,160	20,160
Llandegla	9,984	9,951
Llandrillo	7,945	9,745
Llandyrnog	11,784	12,372
Llanelidan	6,048	6,048
Llanfair D C	30,000	30,000
Llanferres	19,250	18,960
Llangollen Town	155,677	165,350
Llangynhafal	5,000	5,250
Llanrhaeadr Y C	17,490	17,457
Llantysilio	11,640	12,345
Llanynys	9,000	9,000
Nantglyn	6,483	6,807
Prestatyn	497,299	531,712
Rhuddlan	183,039	199,211
Rhyl	555,954	572,094
Ruthin	164,775	177,332
St. Asaph	139,902	157,419
Trefnant	5,255	6,330
Tremeirchion/Cwm/Waen	18,500	19,700
Total	2,430,676	2,583,872

3.0 DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL/TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS - INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

It is recommended that the amounts calculated by the Council for the 2024/25 financial year, in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act) and Alteration of Requisite Calculations (Wales) Regulations 2008 be as follows:-

	£
(a) The aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (2) (a) to (e) of the Act.	373,746,650
(b) The aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3) (a) to (c) of the Act.	106,192,241
(c) The amount by which the aggregate of Section 32 (2) above, exceeds the aggregate of Section 32 (3) above, calculated in accordance with Section 32 (4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year.	267,554,409
(d) The aggregate amount which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates and revenue support grant less cost of discretionary non-domestic rate reliefs.	194,683,358
(e) The amount at (c) above less the amount at (d) above, divided by council tax base for the year, 40,642.01, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act, (i.e. basic amount Council Tax).	1,740.47
(f) The aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act (Town/Community Council Precepts).	2,583,872
(g) The amount at (e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (f) above by the council tax base, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relate.	1,678.75

4.0 DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL/TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS - COUNCIL TAX

It is recommended that the amounts calculated by the Council for the 2024/25 financial year, in accordance with Sections 34 (2) to 36 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act) be as follows:-

- (a) the amounts calculated in accordance with Sections 34 (2) and (3) of the Act as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in part of the Council's area:-

COUNCIL TAX 2024/25 BAND 'D'

<u>Community</u>	<u>County Council</u>	<u>Community Precept</u>	<u>Total</u>
	£	£	£
Aberwheeler	1,678.75	27.93	1,706.68
Betws G G	1,678.75	25.00	1,703.75
Bodelwyddan	1,678.75	58.30	1,737.05
Bodfari	1,678.75	74.68	1,753.43
Bryneglwys	1,678.75	35.34	1,714.09
Cefn Meiriadog	1,678.75	33.99	1,712.74
Clocaenog	1,678.75	49.61	1,728.36
Corwen	1,678.75	121.12	1,799.87
Cyffylliog	1,678.75	51.96	1,730.71
Cynwyd	1,678.75	32.41	1,711.16
Denbigh	1,678.75	66.00	1,744.75
Derwen	1,678.75	30.00	1,708.75
Dyserth	1,678.75	42.65	1,721.40
Efenechtyd	1,678.75	25.34	1,704.09
Gwyddelwern	1,678.75	16.00	1,694.75
Henllan	1,678.75	42.00	1,720.75
Llanarmon yn Ial	1,678.75	38.00	1,716.75
Llanbedr D C	1,678.75	39.30	1,718.05
Llandegla	1,678.75	31.00	1,709.75
Llandrillo	1,678.75	29.89	1,708.64
Llandyrnog	1,678.75	23.48	1,702.23
Llanelidan	1,678.75	33.98	1,712.73
Llanfair D C	1,678.75	46.01	1,724.76
Llanferres	1,678.75	44.61	1,723.36
Llangollen Town	1,678.75	86.98	1,765.73
Llangynhafal	1,678.75	14.50	1,693.25
Llanrhaeadr Y C	1,678.75	33.00	1,711.75
Llantysilio	1,678.75	46.94	1,725.69
Llanynys	1,678.75	23.81	1,702.56
Nantglyn	1,678.75	39.81	1,718.56
Prestatyn	1,678.75	67.25	1,746.00
Rhuddlan	1,678.75	116.70	1,795.45
Rhyl	1,678.75	57.85	1,736.60
Ruthin	1,678.75	68.87	1,747.62
St. Asaph	1,678.75	94.77	1,773.52
Trefnant	1,678.75	8.94	1,687.69
Tremeirchion/ Cwm/Waen	1,678.75	29.10	1,707.85

- (b) The amounts calculated in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of dwellings listed in different valuation bands. (Appendix B)

5.0 Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales - PRECEPT

The precept for the Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales for 2024/25 is £14,639,167.

In accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, it is noted that the amounts applicable for the year in respect of dwellings listed in different valuation bands are as follows :-

Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
233.10	271.95	310.80	349.65	427.35	505.05	582.75	699.30	815.85

6.0 AGGREGATE COUNCIL TAX – 2024/25 (including Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales)

Having calculated the aggregates in each case of the amounts at 4.0 and 5.0 above in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, it is

RECOMMENDED

That the amounts of Council Tax for the 2024/25 financial year for each of the categories of dwellings be as shown in Appendix C.

7.0 PRESCRIBED CLASS OF DWELLINGS - THE COUNCIL TAX (PRESCRIBED CLASS OF DWELLINGS) (WALES) REGULATIONS 1998 - SI 1998/105 AS AMENDED BY PRESCRIBED CLASS OF DWELLINGS - THE COUNCIL TAX (PRESCRIBED CLASS OF DWELLINGS) (WALES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2004

- 7.1 In Wales, Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 creates a special class of property (prescribed class of dwellings) which allows a local billing authority to use its discretion in determining the level of discount to be awarded. If a dwelling meets certain criteria, then a billing authority can set the level of discount at either 25% or zero (i.e. no discount) for classes A & B, 50% or zero for class C.
- 7.2 The Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings)(Wales) Regulations 1998 as amended 2004, has with effect from 1st April, 2004 designated three classes of prescribed dwellings.

The classes are:-

Class A.

- a. A dwelling which is not the sole or main residence of an individual.
- b. Dwelling which is furnished.
- c. Occupation of the dwelling is prohibited by law for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year.
- d. Dwelling is not a mooring occupied by a boat or pitch occupied by a caravan.
- e. Dwelling is unoccupied and is managed by a personal representative in relation to the administration of a deceased person.

Class B

- a. A dwelling which is not the sole or main residence of an individual.
- b. Dwelling which is furnished.
- c. Occupation of the dwelling is not prohibited by law for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year.
- d. Dwelling is not a mooring occupied by a boat or pitch occupied by a caravan.
- e. Dwelling is unoccupied and is managed by a personal representative in relation to the administration of a deceased person.

Class C

- a. A dwelling which is unoccupied.
- b. A dwelling which is substantially unfurnished.

7.3 The difference between the classes A and B is the fact Class B has unrestricted occupation throughout 365 days a year whereas Class A is restricted to a maximum of 11 months occupation in a year. E.g. planning restriction as commonly applied to holiday chalets.

7.4 The main type of property covered by these regulations relate to furnished dwellings and not someone's sole or main residence e.g. second homes.

7.5 Class C was introduced to end the Council Tax discount for chargeable dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for periods greater than 6 months.

This allows the Authority to levy a full charge once the initial 6 month exemption period expires; this benefits Denbighshire residents in that

- a. The property owner would be contributing a full charge
- b. There is a financial incentive to the owner to occupy the property leading to.

- The potential of increasing accommodation availability
- The reduction in the number of empty properties in communities

7.6 In the year 2009/2010 the Council resolved not to award a discount to Class A, B or C for the remaining term of the Council with the caveat that this was dependant on, no changes to Legislation or local conditions. The purpose of this resolution enabled consistency in the calculation of the Tax Base, a shorter report and the reduction in the volumes of paper produced.

Council Tax Premium

Section 139 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 allows for the Council to charge a premium of up to 300%.

It was decided to introduce a 100% premium at Council on the 5th September 2023. Therefore, unless there are exceptions to be applied in accordance with The Council Tax (Exceptions to Higher Amounts) (Wales) Regulations 2015, Council Tax shall be charged at a premium rate of 100% above the standard charge for properties defined as a 'Second Home' or 'Long Term Empty' which has been empty for a continuous period of one year.

From April 2024, properties which are considered Long Term Empty for a period of 5 years or more will be charged a further 50% in addition to the 100% premium. Therefore a total premium charge of 150%.

7.7 IT IS RECOMMENDED

That the level of discount for Class A, B, and C as prescribed under the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 2004 be set at zero for the financial year 2024/25 being the term of this Council with the caveat that this is dependent on, no changes to Legislation or local conditions.

The Council Tax Premium is charged for 2024/25 at a rate of 100% for both Long Term Empty properties and Second Homes and 150% for Long Term Empty properties that have been empty for 5 years or more.

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNCIL COUNCIL

Appendix B

	<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>BAND A</u>	<u>BAND B</u>	<u>BAND C</u>	<u>BAND D</u>	<u>BAND E</u>	<u>BAND F</u>	<u>BAND G</u>	<u>BAND H</u>	<u>BAND I</u>
	<u>PRECEPT</u>	<u>PRECEPT</u>										
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ABERWHEELER	1,678.75	27.93	1,706.68	1,137.79	1,327.42	1,517.05	1,706.68	2,085.94	2,465.20	2,844.47	3,413.36	3,982.25
BETWS G G	1,678.75	25.00	1,703.75	1,135.83	1,325.14	1,514.44	1,703.75	2,082.36	2,460.97	2,839.58	3,407.50	3,975.42
BODELWYDDAN	1,678.75	58.30	1,737.05	1,158.03	1,351.04	1,544.04	1,737.05	2,123.06	2,509.07	2,895.08	3,474.10	4,053.12
BODFARI	1,678.75	74.68	1,753.43	1,168.95	1,363.78	1,558.60	1,753.43	2,143.08	2,532.73	2,922.38	3,506.86	4,091.34
BRYNEGLWYS	1,678.75	35.34	1,714.09	1,142.73	1,333.18	1,523.64	1,714.09	2,095.00	2,475.91	2,856.82	3,428.18	3,999.54
CEFN MEIRIADOG	1,678.75	33.99	1,712.74	1,141.83	1,332.13	1,522.44	1,712.74	2,093.35	2,473.96	2,854.57	3,425.48	3,996.39
CLOCAENOG	1,678.75	49.61	1,728.36	1,152.24	1,344.28	1,536.32	1,728.36	2,112.44	2,496.52	2,880.60	3,456.72	4,032.84
CORWEN	1,678.75	121.12	1,799.87	1,199.91	1,399.90	1,599.88	1,799.87	2,199.84	2,599.81	2,999.78	3,599.74	4,199.70
CYFYLLIOG	1,678.75	51.96	1,730.71	1,153.81	1,346.11	1,538.41	1,730.71	2,115.31	2,499.91	2,884.52	3,461.42	4,038.32
CYNWYD	1,678.75	32.41	1,711.16	1,140.77	1,330.90	1,521.03	1,711.16	2,091.42	2,471.68	2,851.93	3,422.32	3,992.71
DENBIGH	1,678.75	66.00	1,744.75	1,163.17	1,357.03	1,550.89	1,744.75	2,132.47	2,520.19	2,907.92	3,489.50	4,071.08
DERWEN	1,678.75	30.00	1,708.75	1,139.17	1,329.03	1,518.89	1,708.75	2,088.47	2,468.19	2,847.92	3,417.50	3,987.08
DYSERTH	1,678.75	42.65	1,721.40	1,147.60	1,338.87	1,530.13	1,721.40	2,103.93	2,486.47	2,869.00	3,442.80	4,016.60
EFENECHTYD	1,678.75	25.34	1,704.09	1,136.06	1,325.40	1,514.75	1,704.09	2,082.78	2,461.46	2,840.15	3,408.18	3,976.21
GWYDDELWERN	1,678.75	16.00	1,694.75	1,129.83	1,318.14	1,506.44	1,694.75	2,071.36	2,447.97	2,824.58	3,389.50	3,954.42
HENLLAN	1,678.75	42.00	1,720.75	1,147.17	1,338.36	1,529.56	1,720.75	2,103.14	2,485.53	2,867.92	3,441.50	4,015.08
LLANARMON YN IAL	1,678.75	38.00	1,716.75	1,144.50	1,335.25	1,526.00	1,716.75	2,098.25	2,479.75	2,861.25	3,433.50	4,005.75
LLANBEDR D C	1,678.75	39.30	1,718.05	1,145.37	1,336.26	1,527.16	1,718.05	2,099.84	2,481.63	2,863.42	3,436.10	4,008.78
LLANDEGLA	1,678.75	31.00	1,709.75	1,139.83	1,329.81	1,519.78	1,709.75	2,089.69	2,469.64	2,849.58	3,419.50	3,989.42
LLANDRILLO	1,678.75	29.89	1,708.64	1,139.09	1,328.94	1,518.79	1,708.64	2,088.34	2,468.04	2,847.73	3,417.28	3,986.83
LLANDYRNOG	1,678.75	23.48	1,702.23	1,134.82	1,323.96	1,513.09	1,702.23	2,080.50	2,458.78	2,837.05	3,404.46	3,971.87
LLANELIDAN	1,678.75	33.98	1,712.73	1,141.82	1,332.12	1,522.43	1,712.73	2,093.34	2,473.94	2,854.55	3,425.46	3,996.37
LLANFAIR DC	1,678.75	46.01	1,724.76	1,149.84	1,341.48	1,533.12	1,724.76	2,108.04	2,491.32	2,874.60	3,449.52	4,024.44
LLANFERRES	1,678.75	44.61	1,723.36	1,148.91	1,340.39	1,531.88	1,723.36	2,106.33	2,489.30	2,872.27	3,446.72	4,021.17
LLANGOLLEN TOWN	1,678.75	86.98	1,765.73	1,177.15	1,373.35	1,569.54	1,765.73	2,158.11	2,550.50	2,942.88	3,531.46	4,120.04
LLANGYNHAFAL	1,678.75	14.50	1,693.25	1,128.83	1,316.97	1,505.11	1,693.25	2,069.53	2,445.81	2,822.08	3,386.50	3,950.92
LLANRHAADR Y C	1,678.75	33.00	1,711.75	1,141.17	1,331.36	1,521.56	1,711.75	2,092.14	2,472.53	2,852.92	3,423.50	3,994.08
LLANTYSILIO	1,678.75	46.94	1,725.69	1,150.46	1,342.20	1,533.95	1,725.69	2,109.18	2,492.66	2,876.15	3,451.38	4,026.61
LLANYNYS	1,678.75	23.81	1,702.56	1,135.04	1,324.21	1,513.39	1,702.56	2,080.91	2,459.25	2,837.60	3,405.12	3,972.64
NANTGLYN	1,678.75	39.81	1,718.56	1,145.71	1,336.66	1,527.61	1,718.56	2,100.46	2,482.36	2,864.27	3,437.12	4,009.97
PRESTATYN	1,678.75	67.25	1,746.00	1,164.00	1,358.00	1,552.00	1,746.00	2,134.00	2,522.00	2,910.00	3,492.00	4,074.00
RHUDDLAN	1,678.75	116.70	1,795.45	1,196.97	1,396.46	1,595.96	1,795.45	2,194.44	2,593.43	2,992.42	3,590.90	4,189.38
RHYL	1,678.75	57.85	1,736.60	1,157.73	1,350.69	1,543.64	1,736.60	2,122.51	2,508.42	2,894.33	3,473.20	4,052.07
RUTHIN	1,678.75	68.87	1,747.62	1,165.08	1,359.26	1,553.44	1,747.62	2,135.98	2,524.34	2,912.70	3,495.24	4,077.78
ST ASAPH	1,678.75	94.77	1,773.52	1,182.35	1,379.40	1,576.46	1,773.52	2,167.64	2,561.75	2,955.87	3,547.04	4,138.21
TREFNANT	1,678.75	8.94	1,687.69	1,125.13	1,312.65	1,500.17	1,687.69	2,062.73	2,437.77	2,812.82	3,375.38	3,937.94
TREMEIRCHION	1,678.75	29.10	1,707.85	1,138.57	1,328.33	1,518.09	1,707.85	2,087.37	2,466.89	2,846.42	3,415.70	3,984.98

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DENBIGHSHIRE COUNCIL COUNCILAppendix C

	<u>COUNTY</u> <u>PRECEPT</u>	<u>COMMUNITY</u> <u>PRECEPT</u>	<u>POLICE</u> <u>PRECEPT</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>BAND A</u>	<u>BAND B</u>	<u>BAND C</u>	<u>BAND D</u>	<u>BAND E</u>	<u>BAND F</u>	<u>BAND G</u>	<u>BAND H</u>	<u>BAND I</u>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ABERWHEELER	1,678.75	27.93	349.65	2,056.33	1,370.89	1,599.37	1,827.85	2,056.33	2,513.29	2,970.25	3,427.22	4,112.66	4,798.10
BETWS G G	1,678.75	25.00	349.65	2,053.40	1,368.93	1,597.09	1,825.24	2,053.40	2,509.71	2,966.02	3,422.33	4,106.80	4,791.27
BODELWYDDAN	1,678.75	58.30	349.65	2,086.70	1,391.13	1,622.99	1,854.84	2,086.70	2,550.41	3,014.12	3,477.83	4,173.40	4,868.97
BODFARI	1,678.75	74.68	349.65	2,103.08	1,402.05	1,635.73	1,869.40	2,103.08	2,570.43	3,037.78	3,505.13	4,206.16	4,907.19
BRYNEGLWYS	1,678.75	35.34	349.65	2,063.74	1,375.83	1,605.13	1,834.44	2,063.74	2,522.35	2,980.96	3,439.57	4,127.48	4,815.39
CEFN MEIRIADOG	1,678.75	33.99	349.65	2,062.39	1,374.93	1,604.08	1,833.24	2,062.39	2,520.70	2,979.01	3,437.32	4,124.78	4,812.24
CLOCAENOG	1,678.75	49.61	349.65	2,078.01	1,385.34	1,616.23	1,847.12	2,078.01	2,539.79	3,001.57	3,463.35	4,156.02	4,848.69
CORWEN	1,678.75	121.12	349.65	2,149.52	1,433.01	1,671.85	1,910.68	2,149.52	2,627.19	3,104.86	3,582.53	4,299.04	5,015.55
CYFYLLIOG	1,678.75	51.96	349.65	2,080.36	1,386.91	1,618.06	1,849.21	2,080.36	2,542.66	3,004.96	3,467.27	4,160.72	4,854.17
CYNWYD	1,678.75	32.41	349.65	2,060.81	1,373.87	1,602.85	1,831.83	2,060.81	2,518.77	2,976.73	3,434.68	4,121.62	4,808.56
DENBIGH	1,678.75	66.00	349.65	2,094.40	1,396.27	1,628.98	1,861.69	2,094.40	2,559.82	3,025.24	3,490.67	4,188.80	4,886.93
DERWEN	1,678.75	30.00	349.65	2,058.40	1,372.27	1,600.98	1,829.69	2,058.40	2,515.82	2,973.24	3,430.67	4,116.80	4,802.93
DYSERTH	1,678.75	42.65	349.65	2,071.05	1,380.70	1,610.82	1,840.93	2,071.05	2,531.28	2,991.52	3,451.75	4,142.10	4,832.45
DEFENECHTYD	1,678.75	25.34	349.65	2,053.74	1,369.16	1,597.35	1,825.55	2,053.74	2,510.13	2,966.51	3,422.90	4,107.48	4,792.06
GWYDDELWERN	1,678.75	16.00	349.65	2,044.40	1,362.93	1,590.09	1,817.24	2,044.40	2,498.71	2,953.02	3,407.33	4,088.80	4,770.27
HENLLAN	1,678.75	42.00	349.65	2,070.40	1,380.27	1,610.31	1,840.36	2,070.40	2,530.49	2,990.58	3,450.67	4,140.80	4,830.93
LLANARMON YN IAL	1,678.75	38.00	349.65	2,066.40	1,377.60	1,607.20	1,836.80	2,066.40	2,525.60	2,984.80	3,444.00	4,132.80	4,821.60
LLANBEDR D C	1,678.75	39.30	349.65	2,067.70	1,378.47	1,608.21	1,837.96	2,067.70	2,527.19	2,986.68	3,446.17	4,135.40	4,824.63
LLANDEGLA	1,678.75	31.00	349.65	2,059.40	1,372.93	1,601.76	1,830.58	2,059.40	2,517.04	2,974.69	3,432.33	4,118.80	4,805.27
LLANDRILLO	1,678.75	29.89	349.65	2,058.29	1,372.19	1,600.89	1,829.59	2,058.29	2,515.69	2,973.09	3,430.48	4,116.58	4,802.68
LLANDYRNOG	1,678.75	23.48	349.65	2,051.88	1,367.92	1,595.91	1,823.89	2,051.88	2,507.85	2,963.83	3,419.80	4,103.76	4,787.72
LLANELIDAN	1,678.75	33.98	349.65	2,062.38	1,374.92	1,604.07	1,833.23	2,062.38	2,520.69	2,978.99	3,437.30	4,124.76	4,812.22
LLANFAIR DC	1,678.75	46.01	349.65	2,074.41	1,382.94	1,613.43	1,843.92	2,074.41	2,535.39	2,996.37	3,457.35	4,148.82	4,840.29
LLANFERRES	1,678.75	44.61	349.65	2,073.01	1,382.01	1,612.34	1,842.68	2,073.01	2,533.68	2,994.35	3,455.02	4,146.02	4,837.02
LLANGOLLEN TOWN	1,678.75	86.98	349.65	2,115.38	1,410.25	1,645.30	1,880.34	2,115.38	2,585.46	3,055.55	3,525.63	4,230.76	4,935.89
LLANGYNHAFAL	1,678.75	14.50	349.65	2,042.90	1,361.93	1,588.92	1,815.91	2,042.90	2,496.88	2,950.86	3,404.83	4,085.80	4,766.77
LLANRHAADR Y C	1,678.75	33.00	349.65	2,061.40	1,374.27	1,603.31	1,832.36	2,061.40	2,519.49	2,977.58	3,435.67	4,122.80	4,809.93
LLANTYSILIO	1,678.75	46.94	349.65	2,075.34	1,383.56	1,614.15	1,844.75	2,075.34	2,536.53	2,997.71	3,458.90	4,150.68	4,842.46
LLANYNYS	1,678.75	23.81	349.65	2,052.21	1,368.14	1,596.16	1,824.19	2,052.21	2,508.26	2,964.30	3,420.35	4,104.42	4,788.49
NANTGLYN	1,678.75	39.81	349.65	2,068.21	1,378.81	1,608.61	1,838.41	2,068.21	2,527.81	2,987.41	3,447.02	4,136.42	4,825.82
PRESTATYN	1,678.75	67.25	349.65	2,095.65	1,397.10	1,629.95	1,862.80	2,095.65	2,561.35	3,027.05	3,492.75	4,191.30	4,889.85
RHUDDLAN	1,678.75	116.70	349.65	2,145.10	1,430.07	1,668.41	1,906.76	2,145.10	2,621.79	3,098.48	3,575.17	4,290.20	5,005.23
RHYL	1,678.75	57.85	349.65	2,086.25	1,390.83	1,622.64	1,854.44	2,086.25	2,549.86	3,013.47	3,477.08	4,172.50	4,867.92
RUTHIN	1,678.75	68.87	349.65	2,097.27	1,398.18	1,631.21	1,864.24	2,097.27	2,563.33	3,029.39	3,495.45	4,194.54	4,893.63
ST ASAPH	1,678.75	94.77	349.65	2,123.17	1,415.45	1,651.35	1,887.26	2,123.17	2,594.99	3,066.80	3,538.62	4,246.34	4,954.06
TREFNANT	1,678.75	8.94	349.65	2,037.34	1,358.23	1,584.60	1,810.97	2,037.34	2,490.08	2,942.82	3,395.57	4,074.68	4,753.79
TREMEIRCHION	1,678.75	29.10	349.65	2,057.50	1,371.67	1,600.28	1,828.89	2,057.50	2,514.72	2,971.94	3,429.17	4,115.00	4,800.83

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Report to	Council
Date of meeting	27 February 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
Report author	Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
Title	Capital Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27 and Recommendations of Capital Scrutiny Group

1. What is the report about?

The report updates Members on the 2023/24 Capital Plan and presents the 2024/25 Capital Plan for Council approval. The Capital Scrutiny Group recommendations of capital bids for inclusion in the 2024/25 Capital Plan are attached.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide Members with an updated Capital Plan and the Capital Strategy Report for 2024/25. The Capital Plan records all actual and forecast Council Fund (CF) capital expenditure and funding. The Capital Strategy provides a high level, concise and comprehensive overview to Members of how both CF and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of the Council's services.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 Members note the latest position on the current Capital Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27 included in Appendix 1 and the update on major projects included in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 Members support the Capital Scrutiny Group recommendation of capital bids for inclusion in the 2024/25 Capital Plan. These recommendations are detailed in Appendix 3 and summarised in Appendix 4.

3.3 Members approve the 2024/25 Capital Plan included in Appendix 1.

3.4 Members approve the Capital Strategy Report for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 5.

4. Report details

4.1 Capital Plan 2023/24

The full Capital Plan was last reported to Council in February 2023. Monthly updates are presented to Cabinet. The estimated Capital Plan for 2023/24 is now £101.7m and is summarised by service area in Appendix 1, along with estimates of expenditure and funding over the years 2024/25 – 2026/27. Appendix 2 provides an update on the following major projects:

- Rhyl Queens Market Redevelopment
- Waste Services Remodelling
- 21st Century Schools Programme – Band B
- Central Prestatyn and Central Rhyl Coastal Defence Schemes

4.2 Capital Plan 2024/25

As widely reported, the Council faces a very challenging financial environment in the coming years due to inflationary and demand-led pressures far exceeding the level of forecast funding.

Due to the scale of the financial challenge the following principles have been agreed by Cabinet for capital schemes going forward:

- The Council should work towards capping the block allocations at the level of the capital funding received from Welsh Government.
- Urgent Health and Safety issues should be prioritised.
- Consideration given to Invest-to-save schemes, even if the benefit is reducing pressures in the medium term.
- Capital receipts or delays to other projects will be the only source of funding available for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

- Grant Funded Schemes – more reliance on using grant funding as effectively as possible. 100% grant funded schemes are obviously preferable, but it is recognised that sometimes match funding will be required. Consideration should also be made on any ongoing revenue impact of a capital grant.

The proposed strategy will allow the Council to identify resources as and when the need arises and within available funding restrictions.

4.3 Recommendations of Capital Scrutiny Group

Capital Scrutiny Group has reviewed capital bids and has made recommendations for inclusion in the Capital Plan from 2024/25 onwards. These are detailed in Appendix 3 and summarised in Appendix 4.

There is a need to review how the block allocations are funded in the capital budget. Work on reviewing the 2025/26 block allocations can begin immediately after the 2024/25 budget is set. The proposal is that all block allocations are reviewed, including those funded from capital receipts or prudential borrowing, such as the highways resurfacing allocation, and that in total they match available funding from Welsh Government through the settlement, as far as possible. This review will require input from all services around their annual level of need, and input from Cabinet, CSG and back bench Members on their priorities. Affordability and links to the Council Plan will guide those discussions and outcomes.

4.4 Capital Strategy 2024/25 (Appendix 5)

The Capital Strategy gives a high-level overview of how both CF and HRA capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services, along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

The Strategy includes the prudential indicators prescribed by the CIPFA Prudential Code. The Code requires authorities to look at capital expenditure plans, investments and debt in the light of overall organisational strategy and resources and ensure that decisions are being made with sufficient regard to the long-run financing implications and potential risks to the authority. The prudential indicators required by the Code are designed to support and record local decision making in a manner that is publicly accountable.

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

Projects have been reviewed to ensure that they satisfy the Council's corporate objectives.

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

6.1 Cost Implications

It is necessary to ensure that the Capital Plan is fully funded as any cost overruns above the total available funding have to be funded from revenue budgets.

6.2 Staffing / ICT / Accommodation Implications

Each new project is required to complete a business case form and any specific implications are discussed at that stage.

6.3 Assessment of impact on Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation

New capital projects are subject to scrutiny by Capital Scrutiny Group. Each business case will show, where relevant, carbon tonne emission pre and post project, thus identifying whether the project is carbon emission positive, negative or neutral. In addition, it is necessary to ensure new capital projects are future proof and able to adapt to climate change.

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

A full Impact Assessment has been completed for each capital bid reviewed by Capital Scrutiny Group. A summary of these is included in Appendix 6. The full reports can be accessed in the Members' Library via the following link: [Cynigion Cyfalaf – Capital Bids 2024 25](#)

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

All new capital projects / capital bids are scrutinised by the Capital Scrutiny Group. Projects are prepared and subsequently monitored in consultation with Heads of Service. The figures used in the reports are based upon the latest estimates available.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 No project should commence without being fully funded against a robust project plan and the project being discussed with the Capital Scrutiny Group.
- 9.2 Project sponsors need to exercise tight control over their capital expenditure to ensure that the projects remain within budgets.
- 9.3 It is important that all aspects of the budget contribute to ensuring that the Council remains financially sustainable over the coming very difficult period. A reduction in the capital programme is something that Members have suggested the Council consider as part of overall work to set balanced budgets in the future. This needs to be considered alongside the requirement for the Council to continue to invest appropriately in its assets. Not to do so can incur more significant costs in the long term. With the continuing reduction in the real value of Welsh Government supported borrowing, the Council must rely on its own resources more and more.

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

- 10.1 Possible risks would include schemes not progressing, loss of grant and disruptions to services. The condition of assets would continue to deteriorate if investment is not made, and this may lead to the loss of important services.
- 10.2 No capital project is without risk. However, all schemes are reviewed by Capital Scrutiny Group and also subject to on-going monthly monitoring and reporting.

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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Position to January 2024

CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY BY SERVICE
Projects listed > £500k value

	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Estimated Programme £000	Estimated Capital Plan £000	Proposed Block Allocations £000	Total Estimated Programme £000	Estimated Programme £000	Estimated Programme £000
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE						
Corporate Support: Performance, Digital & Assets						
Property, Capital Maintenance Works - Block Allocation	2,106		845	845		
Fire Risk Assessment Works - Public Buildings	764		312	312		
Reduction in Carbon Emissions from Council Assets	1,195		86	86		
Energy Efficiency/Reduction at County Hall, Ruthin	119	500		500		
Low Carbon Heat Grant	10	492		492		
Corporate Fleet Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Phase 1 & 2	12	600		600		
ICT Strategy Phase 2	213	100	250	350	350	250
Other projects	1,272	574	125	699		
Total Corporate Support: Performance, Digital & Assets	5,691	2,266	1,618	3,884	350	250
Finance & Audit						
Rhyl, Queen's Building Redevelopment	2,709	175		175		
Other projects	5			0		
Total Finance & Audit	2,714	175	0	175	0	0
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services						
Housing Improvement Grants	1,912		1,500	1,500		
Traffic and Car Parks	798		324	324		
Active Travel Fund	1,150			0		
Woodland Creation - SPF Funded	50	671		671		
Local Places for Nature 2023-2025	363	414		414		
Clwyd South UK Gov Levelling Up Fund	1,587	2,111		2,111		
Clwyd West UK Gov Levelling Up Fund	2,058	1,875		1,875	4,811	
Bodelwyddan County Park SPF	25	875		875		
Other projects	2,063	992		992	0	
Total Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	10,006	6,938	1,824	8,762	4,811	0
Adult Social Care & Homelessness						
Minor Adaptations, Community Equipment and Telecare	463	45	240	285		
Homelessness Wales PRS Leasing Scheme	92	237		237	136	256
Other projects	57	200		200		
Total Adult Social Care & Homelessness	612	482	240	722	136	256
Children's Services						
Sub-Regional Children's Residential Assessment Centre (Meadow Lodge)	1,288			0		
Kentigern Hall	150	748		748		
Total Children's Services	1,438	748	0	748	0	0
Housing & Communities						
Other projects	69			0		
Total Housing & Communities	69	0	0	0	0	0
Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services						
Highways Maintenance	4,479	1,004	2,213	3,217		
Bridges	2,065	178	800	978		
Street Lighting	256	250		250	250	250
Coastal Defence - Inspections and Essential Maintenance	454	1,821	100	1,921		
Prestatyn Coastal Defence - Construction Phase	11,183	9,199		9,199	5,216	
Rhyl Central Coastal Defence - Construction Phase	31,751	24,340		24,340	9,309	
Natural Flood Management in Denbighshire 2023 - 2025	588	983		983		
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	1,350			0		
Botanical Gardens, Rhyl - New Accommodation and H&S Works	681	866		866		
Remodelling Waste Service	11,475			0		
Installation of Salt Barns at Corwen Depot	250	679		679		
Installation of Salt Barns at Lon Parcwr Depot	500	802		802		
Installation of Salt Barns at Kinmel Park Depot				0	59	1,802
Other projects	1,890	350	67	417		
Total Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services	66,922	40,472	3,180	43,652	14,834	2,052
Education and Children's Services						
Schools Capital Maintenance Block Allocation	6,130	1,014	1,500	2,514		
Universal Primary Free School Meals Phases 2 - 4	1,284	121		121	300	
School Workplace Transport	1,393			0		
Oaktree Centre - Expansion of 'Little Acorns' - WG Childcare Grant	1,007			0		
Relocate Cylch Bodawen to Ysgol Twm o'r Nant - WG Childcare Grant	196	1,221		1,221		
21c Schools Band A - Rhyl, Christ the Word - New School	598			0		
21c Schools Band B - Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn	397	1,015		1,015		
Ysgol y Castell, Rhyl - Classroom Extension	165	472		472		
Community Focused Schools Grant	638	1,661		1,661		
Learners with Additional Learning Needs	595			0		
Other projects	1,516	670		670		
Total Education and Children's Services	13,919	6,174	1,500	7,674	300	0
Contingency						
	329		171	171		
Total Capital Plan Expenditure	101,700	57,255	8,533	65,788	20,431	2,558
Add contingency forecast unused from 2023/24			329			
Total block allocations			8,862			
CAPITAL FINANCING						
External Funding	31,390	15,947	6,283	22,230	5,497	506
Receipts and Reserves	7,033	738		738	0	0
Prudential Borrowing	63,277	40,570	2,250	42,820	14,934	2,052
	101,700	57,255	8,533	65,788	20,431	2,558

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Appendix 2 - Major Capital Projects Update – January 2024

Rhyl Queens Market Redevelopment	
Total Budget	£13.253m
Expenditure to date	£12.847m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	£0.231m
Future Years' estimated spend	£0.175m
Funding	WG £8.060m DCC Asbestos £0.272m. DCC £4.921m
<p>Narrative:</p> <p>Construction commenced on Monday 15 August 2022 and is scheduled to handover w/c February 12th 2024.</p> <p>Negotiations with our preferred operator have ceased, and an alternative option to operating the Queen's Market is being progress.</p> <p>The Council's Facilities Management Team will be responsible for the building in the interim, with the support of the Housing Maintenance Team.</p>	
Forecast In Year Expenditure 23/24	£2.709m

Waste Service Re-modelling	
Total Budget	£21.992m
Expenditure to date	£15.980m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	£6.012m
Future Years estimated spend	£0
Funding	WG £12.022m, DCC £9.970m
Narrative:	
<p>A number of work streams are being taken forward including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 in March 2024. • Permit application for new WTS - NRW issued a Permit on 14th December 2023. • At present working towards a go live of the new recycling collections model in early June 2024 subject to 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 was launched at the end of September 2023 in an initial Pilot area (LL16 / LL17). Sign-up launched County wide in January 2024 for implementation in June 2024 in conjunction with the switch to the new recycling collections model. • Specification and procurement of the new fleet required to support the new model has been completed with delivery of this new fleet from start of 2024 ahead of the roll out of the new service to allow for commissioning and training on the new fleet before it goes operational in June. • Procurement of the new containers complete and deliveries to DCC have commenced ahead of roll out in 2024 from the end of February through to end May to deliver the new containers to households ahead of the go live switch to the new recycling collections model in June. • 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. 	
Forecast In Year Expenditure 23/24	£11.475m

Sustainable Communities for Learning – Band B	
Total Budget	£51.9m
Expenditure to date	£1.176m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	£0.417m
Future Years' estimated spend	£50.307m
Funding	WG £36.1m, DCC £15.8m
Narrative:	
<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 8th November and the period for objection ran until the 5th 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 during 2024.</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. A revised design brief has been completed which has enabled the commissioning of further design work in order to progress the project.</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>All 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 £9.488m Rhyl £21.136m
Estimated remaining spend in 23/24	Prestatyn £2.191m Rhyl £11.240m
Future Years' estimated spend	Prestatyn £14.415m Rhyl £33.650m
Funding	Prestatyn: WG £22.18m; DCC £3.914m Rhyl: WG £56.122m; DCC £9.904m

Narrative:

Prestatyn

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; installation of offices at the east end of the scheme; and development of the detailed design for the refurbishment of Rhyl Golf Club. Costs relating to the refurbishment of the golf club are still being reviewed and will be discussed at the January Board meeting.

Stage 2 construction of the bund is due to be completed at the end of February and then there will be a period of dormancy. Initially this was due to be for 9 months but ground conditions indicate the will now be for six months – or even a little less.

Rhyl

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. The current position is that costs have been agreed with both SeaQ and the various local farms who will be taking the livestock on a permanent basis. A Delegated Decision report has been signed and all livestock were

removed by January 5th 2024 so that construction can now continue within the previously restricted area. At the time of writing there is still an issue with SeaQ in respecting of meeting the terms of the Agreement. Discussions are ongoing to resolve this and hopefully there won't be any adverse effect on construction programming.

Forecast In Year Expenditure 23/24

Prestatyn £11.183m

Rhyl £31.751m

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Appendix 3

Summary of Capital Scrutiny Group Recommendations (Capital Plan 2024/25)

1.1 Report Details

1.1 The available funding for 2024/25 is shown below:

Source	Amount £000
General Capital Grant	3,128
Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing	3,045
Sub-total: WG Funding – Provisional Settlement December 2023	6,173
Prudential Borrowing ICT - existing provision	250
Prudential Borrowing – Highways	2,000
Capital receipts	111
Estimated unused contingency b/f	328
Total Funds Available 2024/25	8,862

1.2 The Capital Plan spends money on two types of project. Firstly there are one-off projects such as a new school; the second type is a 'block allocation'. These are on-going programmes of work that stretch over several years (and may never be complete) e.g. schools maintenance. Elements of this work may be paid for from repair and maintenance budgets but a significant part is funded through the Capital Plan.

Recommendations of Capital Scrutiny Group

1.3 Bids submitted to Capital Scrutiny Group were broadly in line with previously agreed block allocations for services, with the exception of the Property block allocation and Highways prudential borrowing. Services were asked to provide a business case to support their bids. However, as was the case for the 2023/24 bids, the requirement for Heads of Service to present business cases to Capital Scrutiny Group was waived.

1.4 Each bid was submitted with approval of the relevant Head of Service. The proposed allocations are detailed in Appendix 6 and in summary are as follows:

- An allocation of £240k is recommended for Minor Adaptations, Community Equipment and Telecare. This funding is targeted at enabling the elderly and disabled to remain in their own homes.
- It is proposed to allocate £1.5m in support of Private Sector Housing Assistance. The funding will be used in the main on the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants.
- Both the school and non-school capital maintenance bids include provision for essential maintenance such as asbestos removal, fire risk assessment work, equalities etc. It is recommended that £1.5m be allocated to schools capital maintenance works. It is also proposed to allocate £1.368m to non-schools capital maintenance work. It is further recommended that the appropriate Heads of Service determine the precise allocations to works required, in order of priority.
- Council on 30 January 2024 was asked to approve £150k revenue funding to fund capital spend on Highways as part of the 2024/25 Investment in Priorities. This will allow £2.000m of capital expenditure.
- In addition to this, it is proposed to allocate £710k block allocation for structural and other repairs including highway maintenance, street lighting and bridges. Also included within this recommendation is a further £470k for repairs to bridge structures. This is the eighth year of a proposed ten-year Highways Structure Backlog Project.
- An allocation of £324k is recommended to carry out road safety improvements.
- It is proposed to allocate £250k of the £1m four-year rolling programme to fund the annual desktop refresh and a number of other projects in order to maintain the Council's ICT infrastructure. Years 2 to 4 to be reviewed in 2024/25.
- Capital Scrutiny Group recommends maintaining the allocation set aside for any contingencies at £0.5m, in line with 2023/24.

2024/25 Capital Bids - Proposed Block Allocations

APPENDIX 4

WIA Ref	Project Name	Head of Service	Capital Plan Requirement 2024/25 £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	General Capital Funding £000	TOTAL 2024/25 £000	Brief Description
G01	Minor Adaptations; Community Equipment, Telecare	Ann Lloyd	240		240	240	Minor Adaptations and Equipment
G02	Private Sector Housing Assistance	Emlyn Jones	1,500		1,500	1,500	Housing Improvement Works to Private Sector Dwellings
G03	Schools Capital Maintenance Works	Helen Vaughan-Evans	1,500		1,500	1,500	Works to a range of work streams in schools.
G04	Non School Public Buildings Capital Maintenance Works	Helen Vaughan-Evans	1,368		1,368	1,368	Works to a range of work streams for Public Buildings
G05/G06/G07	Highways works	Paul Jackson	3,180	2,000	1,180	3,180	Improvements to roads and bridges. Coastal Protection
G08	Traffic Works	Emlyn Jones	324		324	324	Road Safety Improvement Schemes.
G09	Desktop & ICT Infrastructure Projects	Helen Vaughan-Evans	250	250		250	£1m 4-year rolling programme
	Capital Contingency		500		500	500	
	TOTALS		8,862	2,250	6,612	8,862	

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Denbighshire County Council
Capital Strategy Report 2024/25 to 2026/27

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Capital Expenditure and Financing**
- 3. Treasury Management**
- 4. Revenue Budget Implications**
- 5. Knowledge and Skills**
- 6. Medium Term Capital Strategy**

Capital Strategy Report 2024/25 to 2026/27

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This capital strategy gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services, along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It has been written in an accessible style to enhance members' understanding of these sometimes technical areas.

2 Capital Expenditure and Financing

- 2.1 Capital expenditure is where the Council spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles, that will be used for more than one year. In local government, this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets.

In 2024/25, the Council is planning capital expenditure of £116.02m as summarised below:

Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure

Capital Expenditure	2023/24 Approved £000	2023/24 Revised £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000
Council Fund	81,308	101,700	65,788	20,431	20,181
Estimated New Projects	11,036		29,803	29,121	28,175
HRA	19,537	16,748	20,431	11,616	6,518
Total	111,881	118,448	116,022	61,168	54,874

- 2.2 For details of the capital projects please refer to Appendices 1-2 in the Capital Plan report. These give details of the capital plan by service and major capital project updates. The estimated new projects include projects which are in the pipeline but have not been approved by Council, such as the Band B 21st Century Schools project and the 2024/25 bids.

- 2.3 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account which ensures that council housing does not subsidise, or is itself not subsidised, by other local services. HRA capital expenditure is therefore recorded separately. Details of the Housing capital budgets can be found in the Housing Rent Setting and Housing Revenue and Capital Budgets Report to Cabinet on 12 December 2023.

2.4 Governance

The Capital Scrutiny Group (CSG) provides an independent review of all business case proposals for capital investment regardless of value. If supportive of the project, the CSG will recommend schemes for approval to either the Corporate Executive Team (CET) if under £1m in value, or Cabinet if the scheme is over £1m in value.

Capital Strategy Report 2024/25 to 2026/27

Annually CSG invites bids from the Heads of Service and meets to review the bids and recommend the proposed allocation of the funding to Cabinet and Council. The recommendations for 2024/25 are included in Appendix 5 of the Capital Plan Report.

A Summary of the Council's Capital Plan is included in the monthly Finance Report to Cabinet. It shows the approved Capital Plan against spend to date. Also, an update on the major projects is included in the overall Capital Plan.

- 2.5 All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing). The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows:

Table 2: Capital Financing

Capital Financing	2023/24 Approved £000	2023/24 Revised £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000
Council Fund					
Capital Receipts	4,989	68	0	0	0
Grants & Contributions	6,997	13,071	19,371	5,247	0
Revenue Contributions & Reserves	7,404	6,966	738	0	0
Supported Borrowing	8,948	18,319	2,859	250	0
Prudential Borrowing	52,970	63,276	42,820	14,934	20,181
	81,308	101,700	65,788	20,431	20,181
Estimated New Projects					
Grants & Contributions	456	0	19,089	15,834	14,605
Revenue Contributions & Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Supported Borrowing	0	0	186	2,795	3,045
Prudential Borrowing	10,580	0	10,528	10,492	10,525
	11,036	0	29,803	29,121	28,175
COUNCIL FUND TOTAL	92,344	101,700	95,591	49,552	48,356
HRA					
Capital Receipts	895	0	975	0	0
Grants & Contributions	4,698	4,404	4,360	2,625	2,370
Revenue Contributions & Reserves	1,944	579	1,150	921	148
Prudential Borrowing	12,000	11,765	13,946	8,000	4,000
HRA TOTAL	19,537	16,748	20,431	11,616	6,518

- 2.6 Debt is only a temporary source of finance, since loans and leases must be repaid, and this is therefore replaced over time by other financing, usually from revenue, which is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Alternatively, proceeds from selling capital assets (known as capital receipts)

Capital Strategy Report 2024/25 to 2026/27

may be used to replace debt finance. The Council's full MRP statement is included within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2024/25.

- 2.7 The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and capital receipts used to replace debt. The CFR is expected to increase by £51.1m during 2024/25. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Council's estimated CFR is as follows:

Table 3: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement

Capital Financing Requirement	2023/24 Approved £000	2023/24 Revised £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000
Council Fund	306,082	278,499	319,639	338,647	362,780
HRA	90,958	85,523	95,509	98,994	98,385
Total CFR	397,040	364,022	415,148	437,642	461,165

- 2.8 **Asset management:** To ensure that capital assets continue to be of long-term use, the Council has an asset management strategy in place. The Asset Management Group (AMG) meets quarterly to provide strategic direction for all matters relating to the effective use of Council owned land and building assets within the County, including (but not exclusively):

Land and property disposal

Land and property acquisition

Strategic property planning (including consideration of Asset Management Plans)

Innovative land and property usage / utilisation.

- 2.9 **Asset disposals:** When a capital asset is no longer needed, it may be sold so that the proceeds, known as capital receipts, can be spent on new assets or used to repay debt. Approximately £3.0m receipts are anticipated in 2023/24 or 2024/25 for the sale of two agricultural estates, two former schools and some former Council offices. The Council has a programme of potential disposals which is reported to the Asset Management Group.

3 Treasury Management

- 3.1 Treasury management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Council's spending needs, while managing the risks. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash will be met by borrowing to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current

Capital Strategy Report 2024/25 to 2026/27

account. The Council is typically cash rich in the short-term as revenue income is received before it is spent, but cash poor in the long-term as capital expenditure is incurred before being financed. The revenue cash surpluses are offset against capital cash shortfalls to reduce overall borrowing.

3.2 Due to decisions taken in the past, at the time of writing the Council has £299.9m borrowing at an average interest rate of 4.39% and £17.4m treasury investments at an average rate of 5.18%.

3.3 **Borrowing strategy:** The Council's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between short-term loans (currently available at around 5.6%) and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known (currently 4.5 to 5.0%).

Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above).

Table 4: Prudential Indicator: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement

Capital Financing Requirement	31/03/24 Approved £000	31/03/24 Revised £000	31/03/25 Estimate £000	31/03/26 Estimate £000	31/03/27 Estimate £000
CFR	397,040	364,022	415,148	437,642	461,165
Debt	292,084	317,084	350,425	384,329	418,670

3.4 Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from Table 4, the Council expects to comply with this in the medium term.

3.5 **Affordable borrowing limit:** The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year and to keep it under review. In line with statutory guidance, a lower "operational boundary" is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

Table 5: Prudential Indicators: Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

	2023/24 Approved £000	2023/24 Revised £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000
Authorised Limit	350,000	350,000	415,000	430,000	460,000
Operational Boundary	345,000	345,000	410,000	425,000	455,000

Further details on borrowing are included in the Treasury Management Strategy.

Capital Strategy Report 2024/25 to 2026/27

- 3.6 **Investment strategy:** Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.
- 3.7 The Council's policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield, that is, to focus on minimising risk rather than maximising returns. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, for example with the government, other local authorities or selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss.

Table 6: Treasury Management Investments

	31/03/23 Actual £000	31/03/24 Estimate £000	31/03/25 Estimate £000	31/03/26 Estimate £000	31/03/27 Estimate £000
Investments	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000

Further details on treasury investments are included in the Treasury Management Strategy.

- 3.8 **Governance:** Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to the Chief Finance Officer and staff, who must act in line with the treasury management strategy approved by Council. Quarterly reports on treasury management activity are presented to the Governance and Audit Committee. The Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for scrutinising treasury management decisions.

4 Revenue Budget Implications

- 4.1 Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue, offset by any investment income receivable. The net annual charge is known as financing costs, this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Council Tax, business rates and general government grants.

Table 7: Prudential Indicator: Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2023/24 Approved £000	2023/24 Revised £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000
Financing Costs	20,513	19,763	20,535	20,535	20,535
Net Revenue Stream	256,063	266,346	270,240	272,799	275,109
Council Fund Ratio	8.01%	7.42%	7.60%	7.53%	7.46%
Financing Costs	7,471	7,465	7,745	8,708	9,148
Net Revenue Stream	18,233	17,896	19,612	20,320	20,898
HRA Ratio	40.98%	41.71%	39.49%	42.85%	43.77%

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Note: The coastal defence schemes in Rhyl and Prestatyn were approved in December 2022. The Welsh Government is funding the Council £5.27m each year for 25 years to cover 85% of our prudential borrowing costs for these schemes. The above Council Fund financing costs and net revenue stream figures include this additional funding. If this funding is excluded, the Council Fund ratio is: 2023/24 approved – 6.08%, 2023/24 revised – 5.55%, 2024/25 – 5.76%, 2025/25 – 5.71% and 2026/27 – 5.66%.

- 4.2 **Sustainability:** Due to the very long-term nature of capital expenditure and financing, the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 50 years into the future. The Head of Finance and Audit / Section 151 Officer is satisfied that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable.

5 Knowledge and Skills

- 5.1 The Council's approach to ensuring that the requisite knowledge and skills are held and demonstrated when making capital, borrowing and investment decisions is three fold.

- Employment of professionally qualified and experienced staff with responsibility for making decisions.
- Continuous and extensive training for Council members to aid informed decision making and effective scrutiny.
- Employment of treasury management advisors, Arlingclose, to provide specialist advice in requisite areas.

6 Medium Term Capital Strategy

- 6.1 Work is continuing to develop a medium-term strategy for capital. This will help identify projects that we are planning to develop and invest in over a 5 to 10 year period, but have not yet gone through the approval process. This will impact on the level of borrowing that the Council will require to undertake over the coming years. The Capital Scrutiny Group was established in April 2023 to complement and aid this work, the papers of which are available to all members.

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CAPITAL BIDS 2024/25 – Well-being Impact Assessment Reports summaries

The full Well-being Impact Assessment Reports can be accessed in the Members' Library via the following link:

[Cynigion Cyfalaf – Capital Bids 2024 25](#)

G01 – Minor adaptations and equipment

Concluded no Equality Impact Assessment required

G02 – Block capital bid for delivery of Housing Adaptation & Improvements FY24/25

Assessment Number: 1278

Brief Description: Block capital bid for delivery of adaptations and improvements to private residential properties in Denbighshire. This is a statutory undertaking under Housing, Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996

Date completed: 03/01/2024

Responsible Service: Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services

Who will be affected by the proposal? Denbighshire residents

Summary

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

The block capital bid is to allow the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grant for 23/24. This is a statutory undertaking as per the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

The delivery of DFGs allows vulnerable citizens of Denbighshire to continue to live independently within their own homes for as long as possible and thus reduce the reliance on other services, such as NHS, social services etc. and thus contribute to a resilient, healthier and more equal Denbighshire.

Working with colleagues from the Homelessness Team to identify and enable empty homes to be brought back into use will assist in helping Denbighshire to homelessness. It will also improve the amenity to the neighbourhood that the presence of empty homes can affect and thus contribute to a Denbighshire of cohesive communities.

Working with local contractors, where possible, will contribute to a more prosperous Denbighshire.

G03 – Capital bids for maintenance and H&S works to school and non-school buildings

Assessment Number: 1326

Brief Description: A programme of planned capital maintenance schemes and improvements to ensure the Council has an adequate property portfolio to deliver services in a safe and sustainable manner.

Date completed: 04/01/2024

Responsible Service: Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets

Who will be affected by the proposal? All DCC service users and staff

Summary

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Positive
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

The programme of maintenance work will enhance the physical environment in which all DCC services are provided as well as improving the efficiency of the buildings reducing energy use and carbon reduction. Where possible, local contractors and supply chains will be utilised to increase local economic activity and minimise the impact of embodied carbon and emissions from travel. The works will ensure that the buildings and sites owned by DCC are well maintained and remains safe to use.

G05 – Highways block allocation bid

Assessment Number: 94

Brief Description: Funding to maintain / enhance bridges, flood defences, footways and other public rights of way

Date completed: 02/11/2016

Responsible Service: Highways & Environment Services

Who will be affected by the proposal? All residents and road users in the County

Summary

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Neutral
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

Overall this outcome shows that targeted funding that both helps with general maintenance whilst at the same time improving access for users will prove beneficial when measured against the desires of the Act

G06 – Highways capital programme**Assessment Number:** 90**Brief Description:** Provision of highway maintenance and surfacing works**Date completed:** 27/10/2016**Responsible Service:** Highways & Environment Services**Who will be affected by the proposal?****Summary**

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Negative
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Neutral
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

This proposal is basically offering a like for like outcome and therefore wouldn't be expected to add significantly to the aims of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act however it will also have very little negative effect too

G07 – Investment in highway bridges and retaining walls**Assessment Number:** 100**Brief Description:** The desire to fund a backlog in bridge maintenance**Date completed:** 04/11/2016**Responsible Service:** Highways & Environment Services**Who will be affected by the proposal?** All road users in the County

Summary

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Neutral
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

This proposal is basically offering a like for like outcome and therefore wouldn't be expected to add significantly to the aims of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act however it will also have very little negative effect too

G08 – Traffic and parking block capital bid

Assessment Number: 1343

Brief Description: Traffic and Parking Block Capital Bid 2024-25

Date completed: 07/02/2024

Responsible Service: Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services

Who will be affected by the proposal? Car park users, road users, general public

Summary

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Neutral
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Positive
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

The active travel projects contained within the Block Capital Bid have many benefits in terms of health, wellbeing, carbon reduction and improving travel choices.

All of the projects will improve existing transport infrastructure.

G09 – Desktop and infrastructure projects 2024 to 2028

Assessment Number: 1339

Brief Description: To consider the expenditure for capital funds for Desktop and Infrastructure Projects 2024 to 2028. All the projects will be funded through Denbighshire County Council Corporate Prudential Borrowing. Seeking approval of funding of £1,000,00.00 over 4 years.

Date completed: 01/02/2024

Responsible Service: Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets

Who will be affected by the proposal? N/A

Summary

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Neutral
A resilient Denbighshire	Neutral
A healthier Denbighshire	Neutral
A more equal Denbighshire	Neutral
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Neutral
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

This is an internal ICT project with no direct external impacts.

Report to	Council
Date of meeting	27 February 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
Report author	Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
Title	Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2024/25 and Prudential Indicators 2024/25 to 2026/27 (Appendix 1)

1 What is the report about?

- 1.1 The TMSS (Appendix 1) shows how the Council will manage its investments and its borrowing for the coming year and sets the policies within which the treasury management (TM) function operates.

2 What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the "CIPFA TM Code") requires the Council to approve the TMSS and Prudential Indicators annually. A decision is required therefore to approve the recommendations below.

3 What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 That Council approves the TMSS for 2024/25 (Appendix 1).
- 3.2 That Council approves the setting of Prudential Indicators for 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 (Appendix 1 Annex A).
- 3.3 That Council approves the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (Appendix 1 Section 6).
- 3.4 That Council confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) as part of its consideration.

4 Report details

Background

- 4.1 TM involves looking after the Council's cash which is a vital part of the Council's work because approximately £0.5bn passes through the Council's bank account every year.
- 4.2 At any one time, the Council normally has up to £20m in cash so it needs to make sure that the best rate of return possible is achieved without putting the cash at risk.

TMSS 2024/25

- 4.3 The TMSS for 2024/25 is set out in Appendix 1. This report includes the following sections:
- 4.4 The Council's treasury investment strategy (section 3) which will continue to be to prioritise security and liquidity before seeking the highest rate of return. The Council holds minimal investments for short-term cashflow purposes and therefore mainly invests in UK Government's Debt Management Office and a high street bank call account.
- 4.5 The Council's borrowing strategy (section 4) continues to be to monitor interest rates and to take a mixture of short-term and long-term loans depending on the level of the respective rates.
- 4.6 The Council's Minimum Revenue Provision statement (section 6) for the year ahead, which shows no change from last year.
- 4.7 TM Prudential Indicators which set limits on the Council's TM activity as shown in Appendix 1 Annex A.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 An efficient TM strategy allows the Council to minimise its borrowing costs and release funding for its investment priorities.

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

- 6.1 There are no additional cost implications arising as a result of the setting of Prudential Indicators. The point of the TM Strategy is to obtain the best return within a properly managed risk framework.

7 What are the main conclusions of the Wellbeing Impact Assessment?

- 7.1 Financial planning and decision making should ensure that proper regard is given to the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and in particular, proper consideration of the long term impact of financial decisions, including the payback period and whole life costs of capital investment decisions, properly impact assessed budget proposals and long term debt and investment (treasury management) strategies. The principles of prudence, affordability and sustainability are already enshrined within the requirements of the Prudential Code and should underpin financial planning and decision making.
- 7.2 In the context of treasury management, the existing requirements to assess and report on the long term financial consequences of investment and borrowing decisions using prudential indicators and long-term debt planning support the sustainability goals of the Wellbeing Act.
- 7.3 The Wellbeing Impact Assessment report is included in Appendix 2 which shows how an efficient Treasury Management Strategy promotes the wellbeing goals of the Act.

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

- 8.1 The Strategy Statement was reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 31 January 2024. The committee had no matters to draw to the Council's attention.
- 8.2 The Council has consulted with its TM consultants, Arlingclose Ltd.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 TM involves looking after significant sums of cash so it is a vital part of the Council's work. It requires a sound strategy and appropriate controls to safeguard the Council's money, to ensure that reasonable returns on investments are achieved and that debt is effectively and prudently managed.

9.2 It is a requirement of the CIPFA Code of Practice on TM for Council to approve a TMSS each financial year.

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

10.1 There are inherent risks involved in any TM activity as outlined in the Strategy Statement. The Council has a risk management policy but it is impossible to eliminate these risks completely.

11 Power to make the Decision

11.1 The Local Government Act 2003 determines the requirement for local authorities to set Prudential Indicators and requires the Council to comply with the Prudential Code of Capital Finance for Local Authorities that has been produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

Denbighshire County Council

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement
and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27**

Contents

- 1. Background**
- 2. Treasury Position**
- 3. Treasury Investment Strategy**
- 4. Borrowing Strategy**
- 5. Debt Rescheduling**
- 6. MRP Statement 2024/25**
- 7. Reporting Treasury Management Activity**
- 8. Other Items**

Annexes

- A. Prudential Indicators**
- B. Interest Rate Outlook**
- C. Glossary**
- D. Liability Benchmark Chart**
- E. Debt Maturity Profile**

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

1 Background

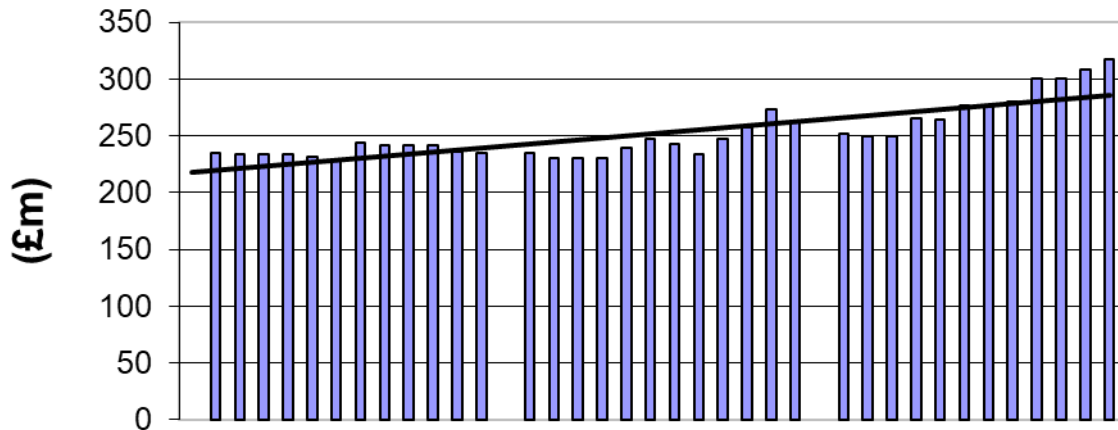
- 1.1 The Council is responsible for its treasury management decisions and activity which involves looking after the Council's cash. This is a vital part of the Council's work because approximately £0.5bn passes through the Council's bank account every year.
- 1.2 In December 2021, CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) published its revised Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code of Practice. The Code requires the Authority to approve a Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) before the start of each financial year. There is also now a requirement to provide quarterly treasury management update reports to members and this has been implemented during the 2023/24 financial year.
- 1.3 In addition, the Welsh Government (WG) issued revised *Guidance on Local Authority Investments* in November 2019 that requires the Authority to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year. It also requires the Authority to include details of any investments and loans which are not held for treasury management purposes. Following a review, the Authority has concluded that it doesn't have any non-treasury related arrangements which fall within the scope of this guidance.
- 1.4 This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the WG Guidance.
- 1.5 The purpose of the TMSS is to set the:
 - Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25
 - Annual Investment Strategy for 2024/25
 - Prudential Indicators for 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 (Annex A)
 - Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement

2 Treasury Position

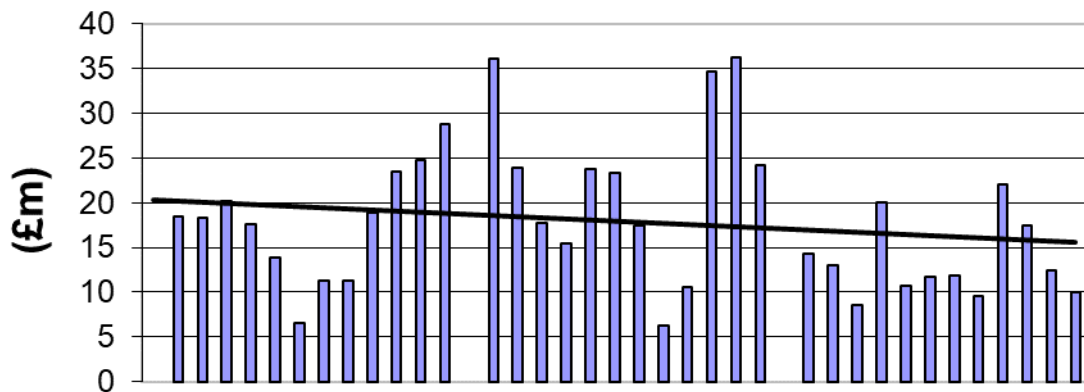
- 2.1 The levels of the Council's borrowing and investment balances over the last three years are shown in the graphs below. The first chart shows the Council's borrowing has increased over this period. The second chart shows a decrease in the amount of money which is available for investment.

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement
and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27**

Borrowing Balances (2021/22 - 2023/24)



Investment Balances (£m)



3 Treasury Investment Strategy

3.1 Both the CIPFA Code and the WG Guidance require the Authority to invest its treasury funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority’s objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

- 3.2 Given the ongoing risk and low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Council will continue to hold a minimal amount of investments for short-term cash flow purposes and will continue to place a far greater emphasis on investing with the UK Government's Debt Management Office and other local authorities in order to minimise these risks.
- 3.3 The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in Table 1 below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

Table 1: Treasury Investment Counterparties and Limits

Sector	Time limit	Counterparty limit
The UK Government	50 years	Unlimited
Local authorities & other government entities	25 years	£10m
Secured investments *	25 years	£10m
Banks (unsecured) *	13 months	£5m
Building societies (unsecured) *	13 months	£5m
Registered providers (unsecured) *	5 years	£5m
Money market funds *	n/a	£10m
Strategic pooled funds	n/a	£10m
Real estate investment trusts	n/a	£10m
Other investments *	5 years	£5m

*** Minimum Credit Rating:** Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors, including external advice, will be taken into account.

Government: Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Government are deemed to be zero credit risk due to its ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

Secured investments: Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used. The combined secured and unsecured investments with any one counterparty will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

Banks and Building Societies (Unsecured): Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail.

Registered Providers (Unsecured): Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of registered providers of social housing and registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

Money Market Funds: Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee.

Strategic Pooled Funds: Bond, equity and property funds that offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

Real Estate Investment Trusts: Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

Other investments: This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and company loans. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Authority's investment at risk.

- 3.4 Natwest is the Council's banker and will continue to be used for operational and liquidity purposes by transferring cash in and out of the instant access account as required even if its credit rating falls below A-.
- 3.5 For a group of banks under the same ownership, the banking group limit is equal to the individual bank limit.
- 3.6 Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:
 - no new investments will be made,
 - any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
 - full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.
- 3.7 The Authority understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices (the cost of banks insuring themselves against default), financial statements, information on potential government support, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Council's treasury management adviser. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.
- 3.8 When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2020, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Authority will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Authority's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will protect the principal sum invested.

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement
and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27**

3.9 **Specified Investments:** The WG Guidance defines specified investments as those:

- denominated in pound sterling,
- due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement unless the counterparty is a local authority,
- not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and
- invested with one of:
 - the UK Government,
 - a UK local authority, parish council or community council, or
 - a body or investment scheme of “high credit quality”.

The Authority defines “high credit quality” organisations as those having a credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher.

3.10 **Non-specified Investments:** Any investment not meeting the definition of a specified investment is classed as non-specified. The Authority does not intend to make any investments denominated in foreign currencies. Non-specified investments will therefore be limited to long-term investments, i.e. those that are due to mature 12 months or longer from the date of arrangement and investments with bodies and schemes not meeting the definition of high credit quality. Under this category, the Council has given three loans to Town Councils for capital purposes which are being paid back in instalments over the agreed terms.

Limits on non-specified investments are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Non-Specified Investment Limits

	Cash limit
Total long-term investments	£10m
Total investments without credit ratings or rated below A- (except the UK government and UK local authorities)	£10m
Total investments (except pooled funds) with institutions domiciled in foreign countries rated below AA+	£10m
Total non-specified investments	£30m

4 Borrowing Strategy

4.1 The Council continues to undertake temporary borrowing from other local authorities as required to cover short-term cash flow requirements as this is a good source of readily available cash.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

- 4.2 At the same time, the Council will also continue to monitor its cash position and interest rate levels to ensure that further long-term borrowing is undertaken at the optimal time to fund on-going capital commitments.
- 4.3 The approved sources of borrowing are listed below:
- HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board)
 - UK Infrastructure Bank Ltd
 - any institution approved for investments
 - any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
 - any other UK public sector body
 - UK public and private sector pension funds (except Clwyd Pension Fund)
 - capital market bond investors
 - retail investors via a regulated peer-to-peer platform
 - UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues

5 Debt Rescheduling

- 5.1 The Council is able to pay off loans earlier than it has to and to replace them with cheaper loans in order to save money or to reduce the risk to the Council. Sometimes, these loans will be replaced and sometimes not, depending on market conditions and interest rates.
- 5.2 The lower interest rate environment and changes in the rules regarding the premature repayment of PWLB loans has adversely affected the scope to undertake meaningful debt rescheduling although occasional opportunities arise. Regularly updates on this are received from the Council's treasury management advisers so the position is kept under review.

6 Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement

- 6.1 The Council sets aside money each year to repay debt and this is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).
- 6.2 There are four different methods of calculating MRP and the Council needs to say each year which methods it will use. This is known as the MRP Statement.
- 6.3 The MRP Statement is submitted to Council before the start of each financial year. If the terms of the original MRP Statement are revised during the year, a revised statement will be put to Council at that time.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

6.4 MRP Statement

The Council will apply the Asset Life Method to calculate MRP on outstanding supported borrowing incurred up to 31 March 2017 using a straight-line calculation over 50 years.

The Council will apply the Asset Life Method to calculate MRP on supported borrowing incurred on or after 1 April 2017 using a straight-line calculation over an appropriate number of years, dependent on the period of time that the capital expenditure is likely to generate benefits.

The Council will apply the Asset Life Method to calculate MRP on all capital expenditure funded from unsupported borrowing.

These methods represent a continuation of last year's MRP policy.

- 6.5 MRP on housing assets funded through prudential borrowing is charged on a straight-line basis over 20 years for improvement works to comply with the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) and for property appropriated by the HRA, and over 50 years for new build properties and for the loans used to buy the HRA out of the government subsidy scheme on 31st March 2015. For capital expenditure incurred before the introduction of the WHQS the authority charges MRP on a 2% reducing balance basis.

7 Reporting Treasury Management Activity

- 7.1 The Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) will report to the Governance and Audit Committee on treasury management activity / performance as follows:
- (a) The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Prudential Indicators will be submitted to the Committee in January each year prior to approval by Council.
 - (b) Quarterly treasury management updates will be submitted to the Committee in January, April, July and October each year.
 - (c) An annual report on treasury activity will be submitted to the Committee in July each year for the preceding year prior to approval by Cabinet.

A treasury update showing the latest investment and borrowing position will be included in the monthly Revenue Monitoring report and borrowing will also be reported on in the Capital Plan to Council. The Capital Strategy Report will be reported to Council in February with the Capital Plan.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

8 Other items

8.1 Investment Training

8.1.1 Member Training

The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management requires the Section 151 Officer to ensure that all members tasked with treasury management responsibilities, including scrutiny of the treasury management function, understand fully their roles and responsibilities. The last treasury management training session for all members was given on 18 January 2024.

The Council has nominated the Governance and Audit Committee as the committee which has responsibility for scrutiny of the treasury management function.

8.1.2 Staff Training

Staff attend training courses, seminars and conferences provided by Arlingclose and CIPFA. There is a team of four members of staff who cover TM duties on a rota basis to ensure that their knowledge is kept up to date. An additional member of staff will be added to the TM rota soon and he will be given full training before he starts his duties. These members of staff are also members of professional accountancy bodies including CIPFA and the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT). The operational processes which staff must follow are shown within the Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) which have been updated recently.

8.2 Treasury Management Advisers

The Council uses Arlingclose Ltd as treasury management advisers and receives the following services:

- Credit advice
- Investment advice
- Borrowing advice
- Technical accounting advice
- Economic & interest rate forecasts
- Workshops and training events

The Council maintains the quality of the service with its advisers by holding quarterly strategy meetings and tendering every 5 years. The Council's current contract has just been renewed from 1 January 2024.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

8.3 Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MIFID)

8.3.1 Under the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MIFID), local authorities can be classed as professional clients if they have at least a £10m investment balance and staff with relevant experience. Local authorities not meeting the criteria have been reclassified as retail clients. Retail clients have greater protection when placing investments because there is a requirement for firms to ensure that investments are suitable for the client. Professional clients are assumed to have greater knowledge and therefore need less protection.

8.3.2 The Council is not in a position to be classed as a professional client because it does not have an investment balance which is consistently above £10m so it is classified as a retail client. In practice, this does not have an impact on the Council's treasury management activities which consist of cash deposits or loans which are outside the scope of MIFID. The Council's investment advisers, Arlingclose, have continued to advise retail clients as they have a retail adviser who is able to advise on any investment products which come under the scope of MIFID such as shares and bonds.

8.4 Investment of Money Borrowed in Advance of Need

The Authority may, from time to time, borrow in advance of need, where this is expected to provide the best long-term value for money. Since amounts borrowed will be invested until spent, the Authority is aware that it will be exposed to the risk of loss of the borrowed sums, and the risk that investment and borrowing interest rates may change in the intervening period. These risks will be managed as part of the Authority's overall management of its treasury risks.

The total amount borrowed will not exceed the authorised borrowing limit. The maximum period between borrowing and expenditure is expected to be three years, although the Authority is not required to link particular loans with particular items of expenditure.

8.5 Policy on Use of Financial Derivatives

In the absence of any explicit legal power to do so, the Authority will not use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options). Derivatives embedded into loans and investments, including pooled funds and forward starting transactions, may be used, and the risks that they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement
and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27**

8.6 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The Council operates one loans pool for the Council Fund and the HRA. A proportion of the Council's investment and debt interest is apportioned to the HRA at year end. The amount of HRA investment interest is calculated by applying the Council's average investment interest rate to the HRA's average notional cash balance.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/25

Well-being Impact Assessment Report – summary

The full Well-being Impact Assessment Report can be accessed in the Members' Library via the following link:

[Members Library Treasury Management Folder](#)

Assessment Number: 148

Brief Description: Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25

Responsible Service: Finance and Audit Services

Who will be affected by the proposal? Proposals have little or no direct impact on the vast majority of residents as the strategy involves managing the Council's investments and borrowing.

Summary

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Neutral
A more equal Denbighshire	Neutral
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Neutral
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsive Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

An effective Treasury Management strategy ensures that the Council's investment and borrowing decisions will contribute towards the goal of maximising income and minimising costs which supports efficient service delivery.

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**Treasury Management Strategy Statement
and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27**

ANNEX A

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2024/25 TO 2026/27

1 Upper Limits for Fixed Interest Rate Exposure and Variable Interest Rate Exposure

- 1.1 These indicators allow the Council to manage the extent to which it is exposed to changes in interest rates. This Council calculates these limits on a net interest paid basis (i.e. interest paid on fixed rate debt net of interest received on fixed rate investments).
- 1.2 The upper limit for variable rate exposure has been set to ensure that the Council is not exposed to interest rate rises which could adversely impact on the revenue budget. The limit allows for the use of variable rate debt to offset exposure to changes in short-term rates on investments.

	2023/24 Approved %	2024/25 Estimate %	2025/26 Estimate %	2026/27 Estimate %
Upper Limit for Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	100	100	100	100
Upper Limit for Variable Rate Exposure	40	40	40	40

- 1.3 The limits above provide the necessary flexibility within which decisions will be made for drawing down new loans on a fixed or variable rate basis; the decisions will ultimately be determined by expectations of anticipated interest rate movements as set out in the Council's treasury management strategy.

2 Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate borrowing

- 2.1 This indicator highlights the existence of any large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates and is designed to protect against excessive exposures to interest rate changes in any one period, in particular in the course of the next ten years.
- 2.2 It is calculated as the amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate. The maturity of borrowing is determined by reference to the earliest date on which the lender can require payment.

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement
and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27**

Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing	Actual %	Lower Limit %	Upper Limit %
under 12 months	4.63	0	40
12 months and within 24 months	4.40	0	40
24 months and within 5 years	12.68	0	40
5 years and within 10 years	18.34	0	40
10 years and above	59.95	30	100

3 Credit Risk

- 3.1 The Council considers security, liquidity and yield, in that order, when making investment decisions.
- 3.2 Credit ratings remain an important element of assessing credit risk, but they are not a sole feature in the Council’s assessment of counterparty credit risk.
- 3.3 The Council also considers alternative assessments of credit strength, and information on corporate developments of and market sentiment towards counterparties. The following key tools are used to assess credit risk:
- Published credit ratings of the financial institution (minimum A- or equivalent) and its sovereign (minimum AA+ or equivalent for non-UK sovereigns);
 - Sovereign support mechanisms;
 - Credit default swaps (where quoted);
 - Share prices (where available);
 - Economic fundamentals, such as a country’s net debt as a percentage of its GDP;
 - Corporate developments, news, articles, markets sentiment and momentum;
 - Subjective overlay.
- 3.4 The only indicators with prescriptive values are credit ratings. Other indicators of creditworthiness are considered in relative rather than absolute terms.

4 Upper Limit for total principal sums invested over 1 year

- 4.1 The purpose of this limit is to contain exposure to the possibility of loss that may arise as a result of the Council having to seek early repayment of the sums invested.

Upper Limit for total principal sums invested over 1 year	2023/24 Approved £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00

5 Liability Benchmark

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

- 5.1 To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Forecast £m	2025/26 Forecast £m	2026/27 Forecast £m
Loans CFR	305	364	415	438	461
Less: Balance Sheet Resources	-82	-62	-54	-53	-53
Net Loans Requirement	223	302	361	385	408
Plus: Liquidity Allowance	24	10	10	10	10
Liability Benchmark	247	312	371	395	418

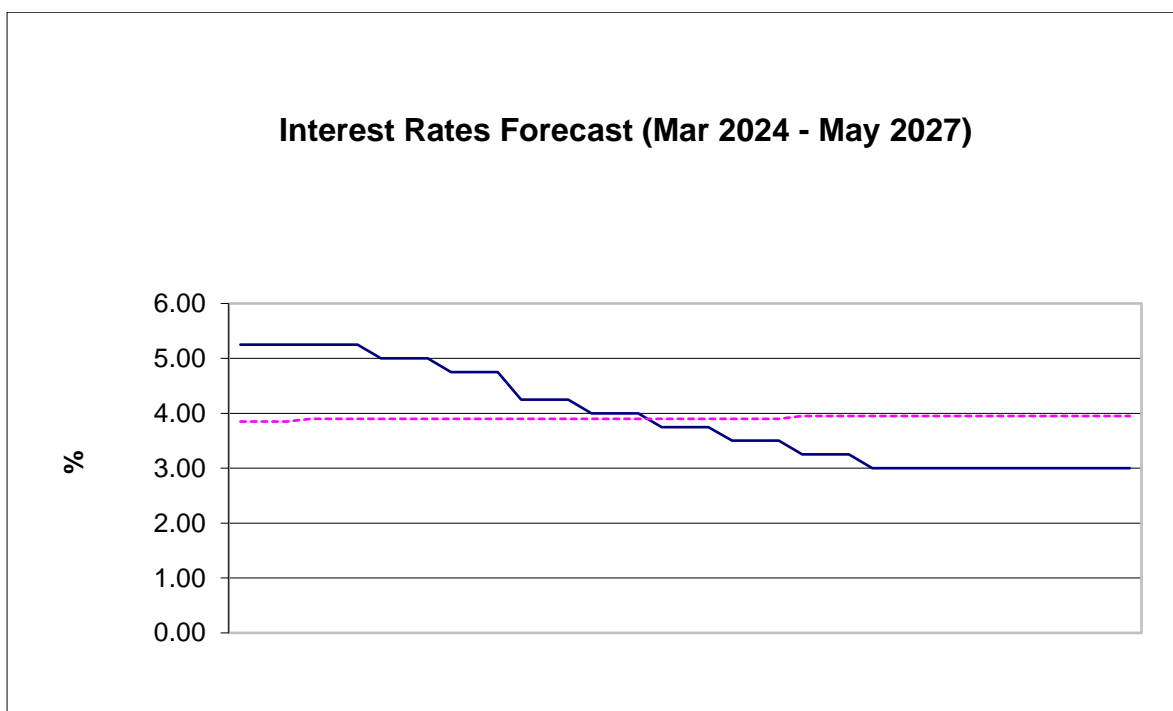
- 5.2 The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow.
- 5.3 This is shown in the liability benchmark chart in Annex D together with the Council's debt maturity profile in Annex E.

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INTEREST RATES FORECAST

The graph below shows the interest rate forecast for the Official UK Bank Rate and the 50 year GILT rate from March 2024 to May 2027. The Official Bank Rate influences the rate at which the Council can invest. The GILT rate is the rate at which the Government borrows money and therefore this affects the rate at which the Council can borrow from the PWLB, which is approximately 1% above GILT rates, and the UK Infrastructure Bank which is approximately 0.4% above GILT rates.

As the graph shows, it is slightly more expensive to borrow than to invest at the moment with the Official UK Bank Rate expected to decrease.



—— Official Bank Rate

- - - - 50-yr GILT Rate

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GLOSSARY – Useful guide to treasury management terms and acronyms

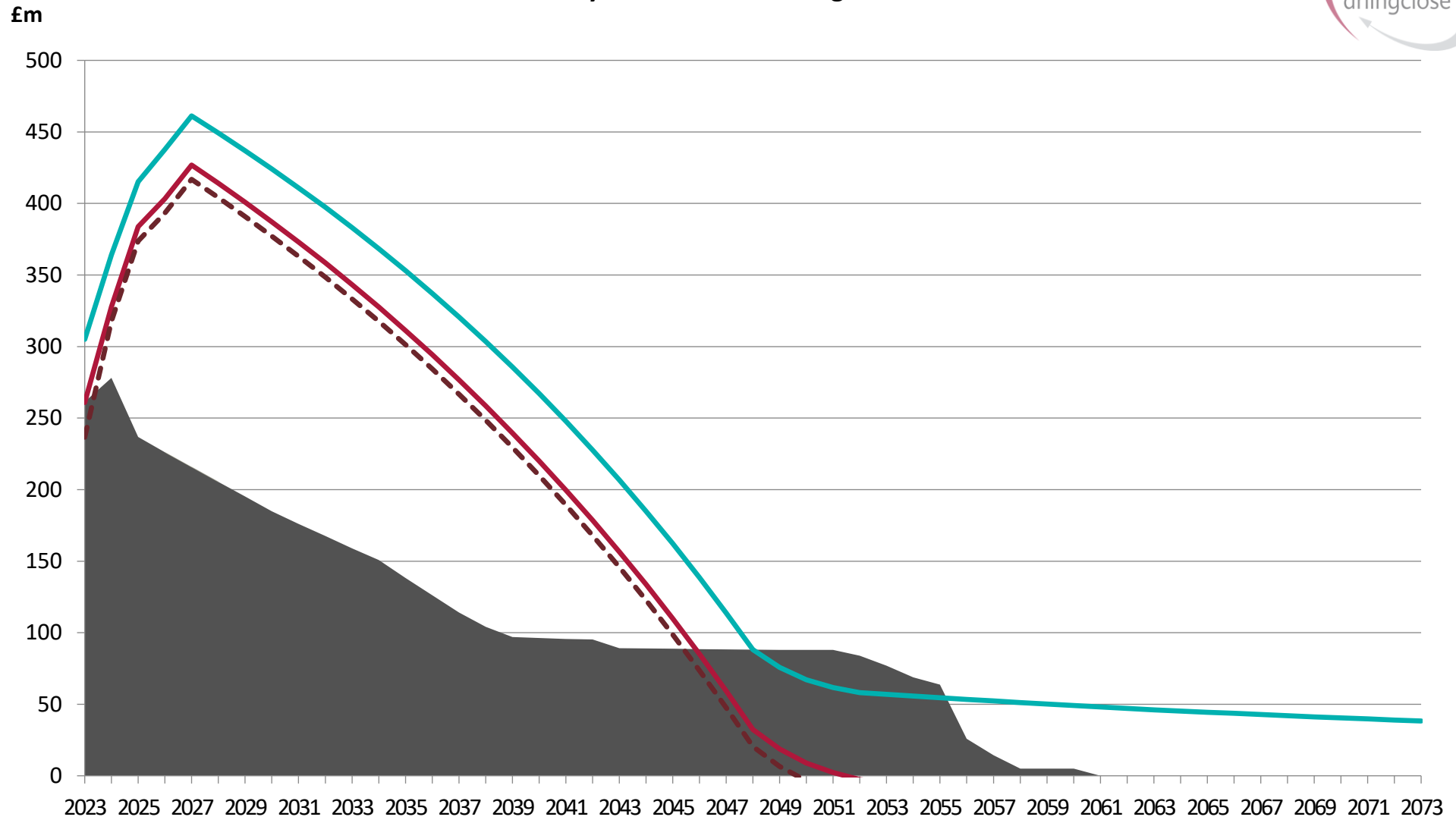
BANK OF ENGLAND	UK's Central Bank
BANK RATE	Bank of England Interest Rate (also known as Base Rate)
CPI	Consumer Price Index – a measure of the increase in prices
RPI	Retail Price Index – a measure of the increase in prices
DMO	Debt Management Office – issuer of gilts on behalf of HM Treasury
FSA	Financial Services Authority - the UK financial watchdog
GDP	Gross Domestic Product – a measure of financial output of the UK
LIBID	London Interbank Bid Rate - International rate that banks lend to other banks
LIBOR	London Interbank Offer Rate – International rate that banks borrow from other banks (the most widely used benchmark or reference for short term interest rates)
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board – a Government department that lends money to Public Sector Organisations
MPC	Monetary Policy Committee - the committee of the Bank of England that sets the Bank Rate
LONG-TERM RATES	Interest rates on borrowing more than 12 months duration
SHORT-TERM RATES	Interest rates on borrowing less than 12 months duration
BOND (GENERAL)	An investment in which an investor loans money to a public or private company that borrows the funds for a defined period of time at a fixed interest rate
GOVERNMENT BOND	A type of bond issued by a national government generally with a promise to pay periodic interest payments and to repay the face value on the maturity date
CORPORATE BOND	A type of bond issued by a corporation to raise money in order to expand its business

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

COVERED BOND	A corporate bond issued by a financial institution but with an extra layer of protection for investors whereby the investor has recourse to a pool of assets that secures or “covers” the bond if the financial institution becomes insolvent
GILT	A bond that is issued by the British government which is classed as a low risk investment as the capital investment is guaranteed by the government
REPO	A repurchase agreement involving the selling of a security (usually bonds or gilts) with the agreement to buy it back at a higher price at a specific future date For the party selling the security (and agreeing to repurchase it in the future) it is a REPO For the party on the other end of the transaction e.g. the local authority (buying the security and agreeing to sell in the future) it is a reverse REPO
FTSE 100	Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 - An index composed of the 100 largest companies listed on the London Stock Exchange which provides a good indication of the performance of major UK companies

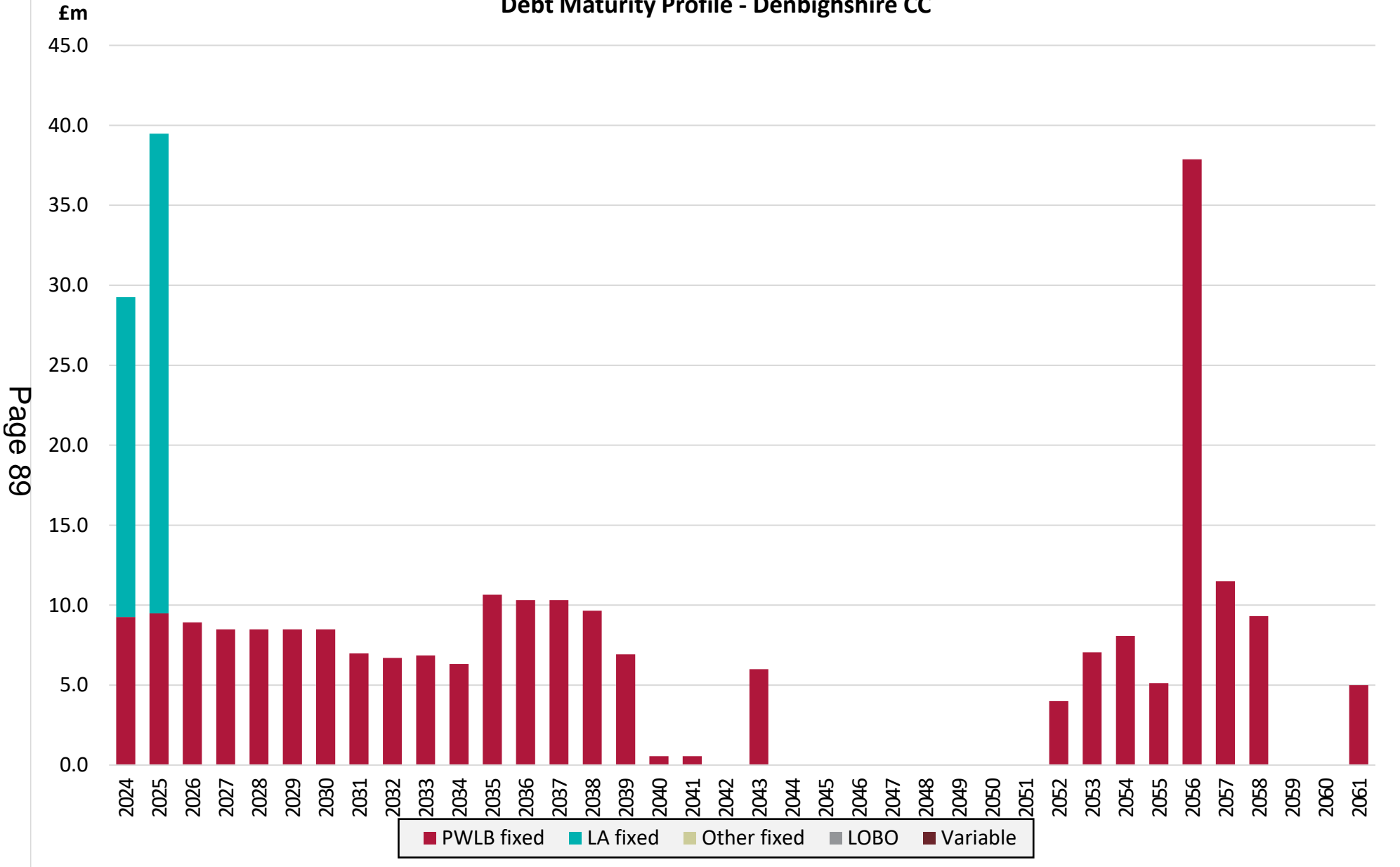


Liability Benchmark - Denbighshire CC



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Debt Maturity Profile - Denbighshire CC



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Report to	County Council
Date of meeting	Tuesday, February 27, 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities
Head of Service	Helen Vaughan-Evans, Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital and Assets
Report author	Iolo McGregor, Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader
Title	Review of Corporate Plan Objectives

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. The scale of budget cuts required over next 3 years and the reduced service capacity across the organisation points us to the need to rationalise and focus our efforts. This report presents a proposal to reduce the size of the Corporate Plan (Themes and Pledges) and how that can be achieved.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. Following a review of our existing Well-being, Equality and improvement objectives, a decision is required on the revised Corporate Plan proposed within this report, which sets the Council's continuing strategic vision for the remainder of the present term (2024 to 2027).

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 That Council confirms that it has read, understood, and taken account of the Wellbeing Impact Assessment (appendix 4) as part of its consideration.

- 3.2 It is recommended that, subject to any agreed changes, Members approve the revised Corporate Plan (appendix 1b) to enable the document to be published.

4 Report details

- 4.1 It must be acknowledged at the start of this report that what Council is being asked to consider here is not what anyone wanted for this Corporate Plan; however, this situation is not unusual or unique within Wales. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act requires public bodies to review the appropriateness their Well-being Objectives annually, and likewise the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011 has a mechanism for revising Equality Objectives. In light of the significant financial challenge faced by the council, it is appropriate that we now take this opportunity to review where we are, what is important to us going forward, and make appropriate course-corrections to support our long-term sustainability.
- 4.2 The current size of the Corporate Plan creates an administrative burden and drain on management capacity across the organisation at a time when head-space and time is needed to address the pressing budget challenge. The reporting obligation expands and contracts depending on how many themes and pledges there are within the Corporate Plan, and the present Corporate Plan, which moved from five themes to nine, represents a 240% increase in size when compared with the previous Plan. At the same time, the Local Government & Elections Act has placed additional statutory duties on us with regards to performance management. Practically, this has meant that not only did the number of themes and pledges for which there was work to do increase, but also the level of work required for each theme.
- 4.3 A budget saving is expected in the Strategic Planning Team, with the proposal to permanently delete a post (currently vacant) – a post that was originally approved to reflect the additional reporting burden and governance support required for an enlarged Corporate Plan. Additionally, the scale of budget cuts required over the next 3 years and the reduced service capacity across the organisation also points us to the need to rationalise and focus our efforts. Furthermore, the needs of the organisation around having a capacity to deliver insight and facilitate service transformation are becoming evident, which would represent an additional draw on the capacity of the Strategic Planning Team.

- 4.4 The recommendation of this paper is to reduce the size of the Corporate Plan by dispersing 3 Themes and de-escalating or amending 22 Pledges to release the required capacity. It will also potentially slow any future financial commitments. However, it must be stressed that the removal of pledges does not mean that these things stop. They will continue at Service Plan level for as long as resources allow. The changes proposed in this paper are strictly about how we report.
- 4.5 Crucially, adopting these changes at this time will also help release capacity within the Strategic Planning Team in 2025 to 2026. This would be when the council would need to prepare its next Strategic Equality Plan, which unfortunately runs on a four-year statutory cycle, instead of five-years like the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Ordinarily we produce an interim one-year Plan, with considerable effort, to bridge the gap between these requirements and the start of our next integrated Plan; but reviewing our objectives now in 2024 means that we can align the business planning cycles of both. This revision, therefore, combined with the supporting information and addendum (which will be updated) that explains how we developed our Corporate Plan Objectives (published on our [Equality, Diversity and Human Rights](#) webpage), constitutes our Strategic Equality Plan for 2024 to 2028. We have also met the requirements of the Act's Engagement Provisions through our annual Stakeholder Survey (most recently between September 2023 and February 2024) where we have consulted widely with stakeholders in our communities on the content and relevance of our Corporate Plan objectives, particularly around the issue of equality and fairness.
- 4.6 Appendix 1a gives some additional context to this report, while 1b provides an outline as to what the new Corporate Plan would look like. It is felt that what is outlined here represents the simplest operational way for Council to reduce the reporting burden currently being experienced by the organisation, and produce the capacity that we would like to see for business transformation work. It is also felt that these changes will strengthen our monitoring of Equality and Welsh Language issues, removing them from siloed themes, and instead having these as principles that underline all of our themes and work as a council (see pgs.13-14, appendix 1b). Appendix 2 gives a detailed account of the changes that we have made, while appendix 3 provides an update to our governance arrangements (with changes highlighted).
- 4.7 Taken together, Themes and Pledges, this results in approximately a 20% decrease in the size of the Plan, which would still be 170% larger than its predecessor and still

hold the authority to account. A further piece of work will need to be undertaken to lighten the Performance Framework in response to changes. These changes would be reported through our usual Performance Update Reports to committees.

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

- 5.1 This decision will narrow the number of themes and pledges in the Corporate Plan. As a result, the amount of activity being monitored corporately will reduce. This should, however, allow the authority to focus its resources where the greatest impact can be made within financial constraints.

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

- 6.1 Costs could be avoided where some pledges require additional investment. Costs for delivering this change will be absorbed by the service.

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

- 7.1 The Well-being Impact Assessment (appendix 4) has been revisited to reflect changes to the Plan. More current information can now be found within it, and overall there are no negative impacts arising as a result of these changes, with the impact of the Plan remaining positive.
- 7.2 We should continue to revisit the impact assessment on a regular basis and review our findings. Engagement with seldom heard groups across the region should continue. The opportunities highlighted at the end of each sustainable development principle and each of the seven well-being goals should be noted. Individual projects or activities identified within the Corporate Plan should be individually impact assessed as they are developed. It is also important to note that our level of influence and control varies across some of the Themes, and this will affect our ability to bring about positive impacts in some areas.

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

- 8.1 The sustainability of the Corporate Plan was questioned by councillors during Performance Scrutiny in November. This proposal has been discussed with CET,

SLT, Cabinet and Group Leaders prior to input from County Council. The present proposal has been put forward by the Strategic Planning and Performance Team with their knowledge of the existing Corporate Plan and how it is working.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 Given the considerable financial pressure and constraints the council will operate under during the remainder of the life of this iteration of the Corporate Plan it is appropriate to review and make changes to it. The proposal to reduce the size of the Corporate Plan by dispersing Themes and de-escalated Pledges to Service Plan level will free-up additional capacity across all services and enable the Strategic Planning Team to realise a £31k saving.

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

- 10.1 There will be some political considerations in altering the Corporate Plan. Assurance can be given that the change must be made to protect staff well-being whilst the revised Corporate Plan still holds the authority to account as to things that it will deliver to improve the well-being of our residents. The recommendations of this paper are consistent with the wider budget narrative that we cannot deliver everything we have been with less money. It also presents the opportunity to release capacity to do the transformation work for Council services to be delivered in a different way.
- 10.2 There will be some operational considerations in altering the Corporate Plan. The chance to collaborate on the changes and ensure alignment during the 2024 to 2025 Service Planning process (undertaken January to March) should not be missed.
- 10.3 To make this change in time for April 2024, which is when work would begin on our annual reporting requirements, definitive action is needed by Members and officers to meet the challenges we are facing.

11 Power to make the decision

11.1 The Corporate Plan and its reporting arrangements are governed by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015; the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011; and the Local Government & Elections Act (Wales) 2021.

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Revision of Corporate Plan – February 2024



Appendix 1a – Proposed Approach – Important Briefing Note for Members

The following appendix 1b has been worked up by the Strategic Planning and Performance Team from their professional knowledge and expertise as to how the present Corporate Plan's reporting structure is working at all levels, and it is felt that what is outlined here represents the easiest way for Council to reduce the reporting burden currently being experienced by the Team and produce the capacity that we would like to see there. It will also release some wider capacity amongst managers and officers across the council to address current pressures, and potentially slow any future financial commitments.

The items that have been de-escalated to Service Plan level (see appendix 2) have been chosen because their continued reporting at a corporate level is not felt to add any great value in the wider context of what the Plan seeks to achieve. This maybe because:

- Work has either already been completed, or that the work is sufficiently embedded that it is now business-as-usual for services.
- There may also be things where we know resources are stretched, and are unlikely to improve or match our original ambitions. In these cases, future reports would only show worsening performance, and perhaps it is a more positive message that we are making brave decisions now as to the limit of our ambitions, accepting the financial restraints.

We must stress that the removal of pledges from the Corporate Plan does not mean that these things stop. They will continue at Service Plan level for as long as resources allow. These changes are strictly about how we report.

Critically, we have tried to keep in the things that we know are important to members, residents, communities, and our regulators. Overall, it is a compromise, but hopefully a palatable balance has been achieved.

Revision of Corporate Plan – February 2024

Further Context That Is Important For This Debate

The Strategic Planning and Performance Team, in addition to losing a post, are facing a number of increasing asks in new directions. These include:

- Supporting the Panel Performance Assessment process, required under Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act. Work to commence early 2024 in preparation for fieldwork in late Summer / early Autumn 2024.
- Supporting the Impact Assessment of ongoing budget proposals, which will continue for the foreseeable future.
- Developing capacity for insight and research to support necessary transformational change within the authority.
- Supporting the Welsh Government's equality action plans (ARWAP, LGBTQ+, etc.)

These are significant tasks in addition to the Team's usual work supporting eight council services with service planning, performance and risk management, equality and well-being impact assessment work. The team also supports the work of the Public Services Board; the Corporate Risk Register; the Service Challenge Programme; quarterly Corporate Plan performance / Self-Assessment reports; five Boards (plus other groups); the Stakeholder Survey; Audit Wales fieldwork; and Welsh Government consultations. This is a high performing team, but there are limits to capacity.

It must also be noted that what Council is being asked to do here is not unusual or unique. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act requires public bodies to review the appropriateness their Well-being Objectives annually, which is what we are now doing. In light of the significant financial challenge faced by the council, it is appropriate that changes are made. We are also not alone in this task in Wales.

The following is what officers and Cabinet propose for what the Corporate Plan will look like. The specific changes have been detailed in appendix 2. In addition to the new section covering Welsh Language and Equalities (which would appear prominently before the themes themselves), the introductory text to the Plan (covering the plan's development, financial strategy, monitoring, etc) has also be updated to explain why these changes are necessary, and how the Plan differs (which is a legislative requirement).

The Denbighshire We Want: 2022 to 2027

This document presents the council's revised strategic plan for delivery from 2024 to 2027, reflecting the financial challenges that the council is now facing. It includes our key objectives that will help secure the well-being of residents now and in the future (under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015), and forms our Strategic Equality Plan in response to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010 and subsequent 2011 (Wales) Regulations).

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

By EMAIL: strategicplanningteam@denbighshire.gov.uk

By TELEPHONE: 01824 706291

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

By POST:

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Ruthin,

LL15 9AZ

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

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Foreword and Introduction

The increasingly difficult and unprecedented financial environment that the council is operating in means that it is now necessary to revise our Corporate Plan for 2022 to 2027. This is a pragmatic step to reduce the administrative burden on already stretched council services across the board. It will help release capacity to support our new transformational agenda that will enable us to innovatively respond to the challenges ahead, improving performance and efficiency, whilst still ensuring that we can continue to deliver essential services to our residents and communities.

We remain committed to delivering our activity in a sustainable way for the long-term benefit of our communities and their future generations. This Plan meets both our aspirations and obligations under the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Equality Act. It also captures our key performance functions for the purposes of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Although we are having to rationalise our ambitions, we remain aspirational, and the Plan is underpinned by our desire to work as 'One Council', where our diverse services are working together towards shared goals more effectively. We will continue to provide a focus on preventative actions that protect people from harm and address the challenges that our communities face, such as the cost-of-living crisis and the Climate Emergency, ensuring sustainable economic growth, promoting well-being, and quality of life. We still want to work collaboratively with our residents, communities, businesses, and partners to help shape the services we provide and the way in which we provide them in challenging times.

If you have any questions, or want to learn more about our Corporate Plan, please feel free to contact us or visit our [website](#).



Jason McLellan
Leader



Graham H Boase
Chief Executive

Developing this Plan

During the summer of 2021, residents in the county were asked about their long-term aspirations for their communities. We did this through our 'County Conversation' approach, a series of workshop discussions held with residents across the six areas of Denbighshire (Rhyl, Prestatyn, Elwy, Denbigh, Ruthin, and the Dee Valley), and an online survey (with hard copies available in all libraries and One Stop Shops). We also met with each of our secondary school councils. All the feedback that we received informed a larger [Assessment of Local Well-being](#), produced with our partners on the [Public Services Board](#). This has helped us to understand the current state of Well-being in our county and to identify necessary interventions to benefit future generations.

Having drafted a long-list of pledges for our Corporate Plan, we initiated a second phase of our County Conversation between January and March 2022, inviting feedback on the themes identified from the initial engagement and the Well-being Assessment. Feedback was also sought from colleagues from other organisations, including Health, North Wales Fire and Rescue, Natural Resources Wales and the third sector. During the spring, further workshops were held for Denbighshire County Council staff on an individual theme basis to start to plan the actions that we would deliver.

Following the election of the Council in May and further planning sessions with the new Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team, a final phase of public engagement and meetings with political groups was held at the end of the Summer, 2022, to 'sense-check' our nine themes and pledges, which were subsequently adopted by Council in October of that year.

However, in light of the worsening financial context and budgetary position that became clear during 2023, discussions were again held with senior managers and councillors between January and February 2024 to rationalise the content of the Corporate Plan, focussing on those ambitions that remain important areas of improvement for our communities, and de-escalating the reporting of already embedded, operational activity. This has seen us move from nine themes to six.

Well-being Statement and Our Objectives

As described above, the [Conwy and Denbighshire Well-being Assessment](#), which examines data and the views of local people through the lens of the Well-being Goals for Wales, has supported the setting of our well-being objectives for Denbighshire. Our objectives, therefore, directly contribute to the achievement of the national goals. This gives us confidence that we are focusing our resources on delivering the right outcomes that will be of the greatest benefit to our communities.

The following are the council's revised Well-being and Equality Objectives that will help to deliver sustained performance improvement across the council's work from 2024 to 2027.

- 1. A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs**
- 2. A prosperous Denbighshire**
- 3. A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire**
- 4. A learning and growing Denbighshire**
- 5. A greener Denbighshire**
- 6. A well-run, high performing council**

Sustainable development, and applying the five ways of working to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, has been central to the work that we have done to identify our objectives and develop the actions that we will take forward in support of each theme in this plan.

- **Long-term:** Having analysed past, current, and predicted future data trends, and also discussed long-term aspirations with our residents, we are confident that this plan will deliver long-term benefits for our communities.
- **Prevention:** Looking at future trends, including risks and opportunities, has also enabled us to identify preventative steps that we can take now to prevent problems from getting worse in the future.

- **Involvement:** Developing our Plan through Involvement has been a key driving principle. In addition to online consultation, we have invested significant time to holding focus groups discussions across the county, including with all secondary schools, and with staff. We endeavoured to make these groups representative (reflecting age, gender, social status, occupations, hard to reach groups, etc.).
- **Collaboration:** Delivery of the objectives cannot be isolated to one service alone and will therefore require collaboration (within and outside of the council). We will form a collaborative working group for each of our objectives (nominating one senior officer and Cabinet Member as a lead for each themed area).
- **Integration:** We have aligned our Plan with national programmes of work, such as the Programme for Government, as well as the work of our partners regionally and locally. As we take our activities forward, we will continue to evaluate the impact of our work on the goals of our partners and other organisations, and always look for opportunities where we can integrate and deliver greater benefits.

Although public bodies are not required to undertake response analysis, we will undertake this exercise as it will lead to better delivery. This will take the form of:

1. Consideration of what is already being done in support of each objective.
2. Consideration of good practice.
3. Consideration of 'gaps' in service provision to be addressed.
4. Consideration of overlaps with other organisational objectives, and opportunities to integrate.
5. Consideration of opportunities to innovate (through new technologies or otherwise).
6. Prioritisation of options for action according to a cost and benefit analysis.

Steps will be reviewed by our senior management, Cabinet, and Scrutiny. Our evaluation will assess the extent to which identified actions are being delivered; whether they are delivering their predicted benefits; and what (if any) corrective steps are required. These governance arrangements will be delivered within existing resources.

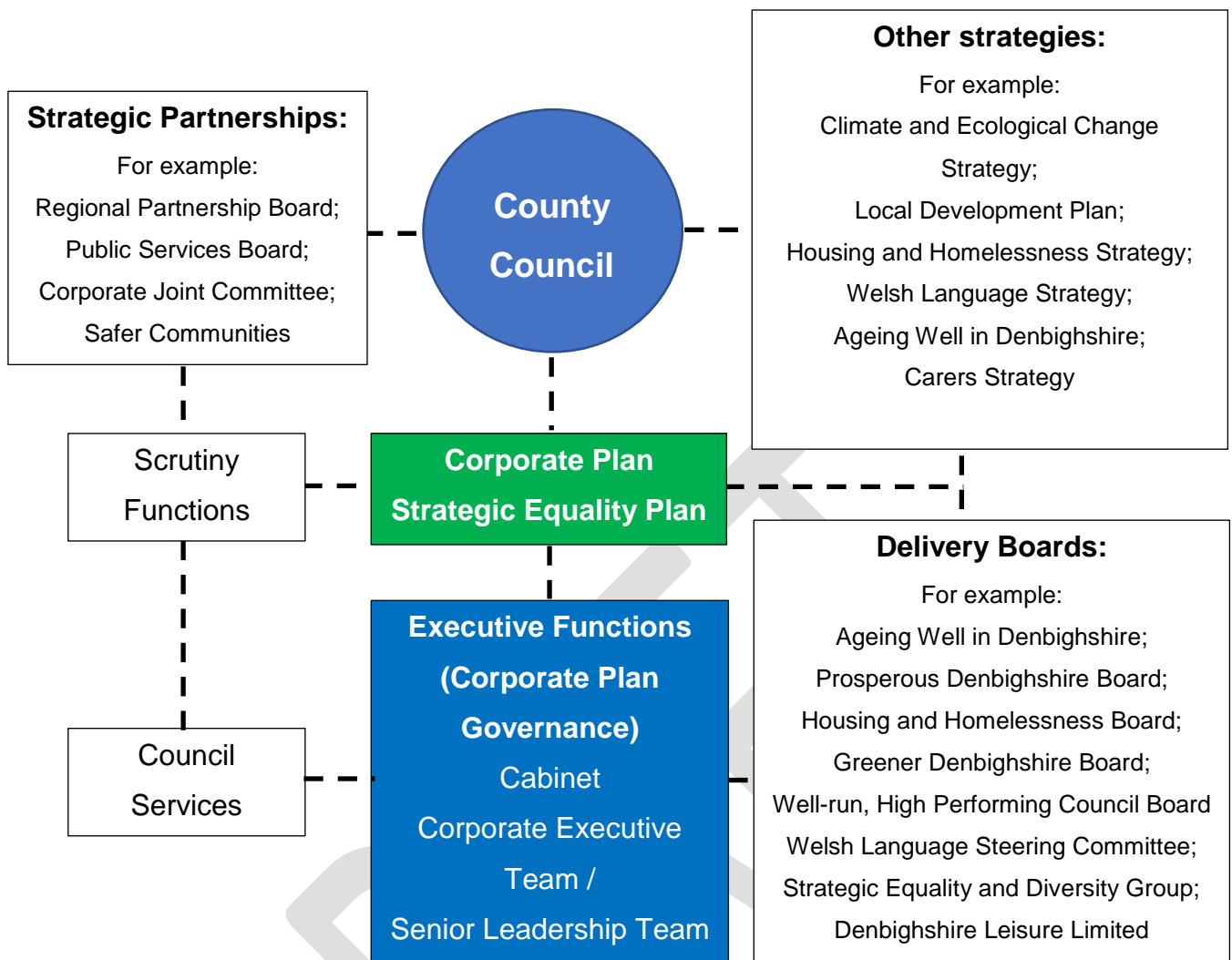
Details of our actions as they are developed, including timescales and progress, will be available on our [Corporate Plan and performance webpages](#).

Financial Strategy

Our Corporate Plan for 2022 to 2027 did warn that the council was entering a very uncertain financial environment due to inflationary and demand pressures far exceeding the projected level of funding. Our fears that this may impact the availability of funding have been realised. The reach of our Corporate Plan has therefore had to be pared back to reflect the difficult financial circumstances facing the council. A robust budget process has been established in response to worsening budgetary pressures, and the council remains committed to delivering essential services. Much of what is contained in the Corporate Plan has already started, and will therefore have resources already identified to support delivery. Large commitments include flooding schemes and school buildings, for example.

Monitoring progress

Although the Corporate Plan is owned by the County Council, responsibility for the ongoing governance of the Corporate Plan and driving its delivery will sit with our Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team. However, the plan cannot be delivered in isolation of other partnerships, strategies, delivery bodies, services, or scrutiny functions. The plan has of course been developed to take account of, and build upon other existing areas of delivery; and it is important that they all work together to guarantee its success.



The council has strong performance management arrangements in place, which we will apply to the monitoring and reporting of progress against this Corporate Plan. This will include a rigid performance framework, agreed by managers and councillors, that articulates indicators, performance measures and activities with clear targets and expectations that match the ambition that we have for our communities.

We will produce performance reports against this framework every six months, sharing it with our Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny to better inform their decisions on where improvement is needed and how resources are allocated. These reports, which form our Self-Assessment of Performance (required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021), are also shared with our Governance and Audit Committee and full Council annually, and published on our [performance webpages](#).

We will annually review our objectives and actions to make sure that they are still the right ones for our communities, which includes inviting feedback from our residents. We also accept that not everything that we hope to do may be possible as circumstances change. We will always be transparent about any changes that we make, and report on any adjustments and the rationale behind them.

What else we deliver

Our Corporate Plan captures a wide breadth of activities from across the council's many varied services; however, it does not detail everything that we do. Many other statutory obligations and important activities, which may or may not contribute to our objectives, take place within the council, and are captured and monitored through the business plans of our individual service areas. These service business plans are the backbone of the council's performance management arrangements. They are reviewed annually ahead of each financial year, and are signed off by the Head of Service and Lead Cabinet Member(s), with input from Scrutiny Link Members.

Performance against these plans are monitored on a quarterly basis by services. The council also carries out what it calls 'Service Performance Challenges', which is when senior managers, councillors, and our regulators (Audit Wales, Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales), perform a deep-dive annually into the achievements and pressures faced by our services.

What's different in this version of the Plan?

Broadly we have reduced the number of Corporate Plan Themes from nine to six. This has been achieved by merging themes as follows:

- **A better Connected Denbighshire:** Our pledges from this theme have largely been moved within the Prosperous Denbighshire Theme, mainly around supporting access to goods and services through a good road network and improved digital networks. Aspects to do with supporting social infrastructure and community networks are a natural fit within our Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire Theme; and aspects around sustainable transport solutions and electric vehicles work well within our Greener Denbighshire Theme.
- **A fairer, safe, and more equal Denbighshire:** Aspects of this theme are closely aligned within our social care agenda, which is well covered by our Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire Theme, particularly around alleviating the impact of poverty, and the support we provide for refugees. There are also a number of pledges dedicated to tackling poverty and inequality within education that sit naturally with our Learning and Growing Denbighshire Theme. Ensuring the voices of those from seldom heard groups inform our decision-making sits best within the Well-run, High Performing Council Theme. Although dispersing this theme may feel like a step-back, in reality, having it as an overarching principle within the Corporate Plan should elevate this agenda to have greater influence on our work, and allow the Lead Member to be more prevalent in discussions shaping the other themes.
- **A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language:** Elements of this theme relating to promoting our cultural offer have been moved within our Prosperous Denbighshire Themes, as there are good synergies to be made there with our Economic Strategy. Our work to support the realisation of one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050 would also be better integrated within our Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire Theme, our Learning and Growing Denbighshire Theme, but also within the Well-run, High Performing Council Theme. As above, although dispersing this theme may feel like a step-back, in reality, having it as an overarching principle within the Corporate Plan should elevate this

agenda to have greater influence on our work, and allow the Lead Member to be more prevalent in discussions shaping the other themes.

These changes alone, however, do not address the resource pressures that the council is facing. It has also been necessary for us to apply a more scrutinising eye to some of the pledges that we had agreed to take forward, to take stock of our progress so far, and to assess our ambition in light of reducing resources. This is not to say that we are cutting services as a result of these changes, but rather that we cannot take things as far as our ambition would have originally liked. Any reductions to service delivery will be considered in greater detail by managers and councillors as we take our budget planning forward in the months and years ahead.

The six themes that are outlined in the following pages should present less of an administrative burden for the council going forward, whilst still holding the authority to account as to things that it will deliver to improve the well-being of our residents.

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Welsh Language and Equalities – How we will work

It is important to be clear that the council remains committed to the promotion of the Welsh Language, equalities, and the Socio-Economic Duty – they are key principles to which we work across all our services, and run throughout the Corporate Plan.

Promoting the Welsh Language

The council has outlined its commitment to the Welsh language in its new [strategy for 2023 to 2028](#), which seeks to:

- Increase the use of Welsh within Denbighshire communities, not least among children and young people by giving access to Welsh-medium education and community activities and promoting opportunities for social interaction in Welsh.
- Recognise the importance of a prosperous economy to the future of the Welsh language, and the council can offer strong leadership in terms of developing the Welsh language and promoting the area's unique culture and identity.
- Enhance our bilingual culture and ethos as an organisation, giving staff the confidence to speak in Welsh.
- Ensure that our services are underpinned by the Welsh Language Standards, and that residents feel comfortable that they can access services naturally through the medium of Welsh.

These commitments run throughout the themes of our Corporate Plan, and our progress in delivering on the above will be monitored by our Welsh Language Steering Committee.

Our equalities commitment

Our Corporate Plan includes, under the Equality Act (Wales) Regulations 2011, our four-year Strategic Equality Objectives. Combined with the supporting information and addendum that explains how we developed our Corporate Plan Objectives, which is published on our [Equality, Diversity and Human Rights](#) webpage, this makes up our Strategic Equality Plan. This revision of our objectives in 2024 is timely and will help align the business planning cycles of both our Public Sector Equality Duty (which is on a four-year cycle) and the Well-being of Future Generations Act (five-year cycle) when we come to consider the next iteration of our Corporate Plan in 2027. In considering this revision,

we have again revisited the wealth of information that we gathered in our [Well-being Assessment](#); and in respect of the 2011 Engagement Provisions, through our annual Stakeholder Survey (most recently between September 2022 and February 2023) we have consulted widely with representative stakeholders in our communities on the content and relevance of our Corporate Plan objectives, particularly around the issue of equality and fairness.

During the lifetime of this Plan and beyond, we will ensure that in all areas of our work we:

- Engage with individuals and groups that represent people with protected characteristics or who are at a socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider the appropriateness of facilities, services, and information that we provide to those with protected characteristics, or those at a socio-economic disadvantage.
- Engage, challenge and, where possible, remove barriers to opportunities (including work) for those with protected characteristics, or those at a socio-economic disadvantage.
- Take action against all forms of hate crime, discrimination, bullying or harassment.

Our progress in delivering on the above commitments will be monitored by our Strategic Equality and Diversity Group.

Theme 1: A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs

What we want

Ensure sufficient good quality housing is available, meeting the needs of all Denbighshire residents.

What we aim to do:

1. 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.
2. Prevent homelessness, and ensure that any instances of it are rare, brief, and unrepeatable. This includes young care leavers.*
3. Upgrade the council housing stock to ensure it is:
 - Safe, secure, and well-maintained.
 - Where possible, suitable for the needs of residents, for example, those with disabilities.*
 - Energy efficient and well-insulated.
4. Deliver more homes to meet local need and demand, including:
 - 300 affordable homes subject to the availability of Welsh Government funding
 - 35 specialist homes through Extra Care Schemes.
 - 170 council homes subject to the availability of Welsh Government funding
 - Working to minimise the number of empty homes in Denbighshire
5. 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. This includes engaging with those already living in council houses, and those on low incomes.

Theme 2: A prosperous Denbighshire

What we want

Support economic recovery, capitalising on opportunities to enable residents to access decent employment and income. This will mean having good access to goods and services, and the county will maximise its rich cultural heritage and natural assets to support economic prosperity. We want to use economic growth as a driver to reduce inequality and poverty.

What we aim to do:

1. Work collaboratively with communities and partners to deliver projects and initiatives that will stimulate economic growth, including:
 - Working with Ambition North Wales on North Wales Growth Deal projects.
 - The Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Programme.
 - The UK Government's Levelling Up Fund.
 - The new Queen's Market in Rhyl, which will provide employment and a mixed-use hall offering artisan eateries, retail, and events space.
 - The former North Wales Hospital in Denbigh, which will provide construction jobs and apprenticeship opportunities during the construction phase, and homes and community facilities in the long-run.
 - An improved and sustainable archive service for North Wales.

2. Develop an economic strategy that will:
 - Grow Denbighshire's green economy.
 - Support rural businesses.
 - Regenerate town centres.
 - Enhance our tourism offer.
 - Promoting Denbighshire's rich culture and heritage.
 - Making the best use of our great natural assets, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the newly proposed National Park.

3. Work in partnership to support an economy that promotes fair work, justice, and socially responsible public procurement, benefitting the local supply chain and local communities.*

4. Support access to education, employment, services, goods, and activities by:
 - Maintaining a safe road network throughout the county.
 - Replace Llanerch Bridge, in partnership with Welsh Government.
 - Promoting options and solutions for improved internet connectivity where they are available.
 - Improve transport services in Denbighshire's communities, working through the regional body, and within the context of the Wales Transport Strategy.

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Theme 3: A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire

What we want

Promote the safety, resilience and well-being of communities, and people of all ages, using strong community networks and social infrastructure that enables people to live safely, happily, independently, and receive support when needed. This includes promoting the diversity and cohesion of our communities and reducing inequality and deprivation. Everyone should also be able to access services naturally in Welsh.

What we aim to do:

1. Ensure that the council's social care offer is of a high standard, which includes:
 - Promoting a strong culture of safeguarding children, young people, and adults in the county.
 - Providing the best possible care and support through our Corporate Parenting role.
 - Supporting those with additional learning or complex needs.
 - Working with partners to enhance support and respite for carers of all ages.
 - Ensuring everyone can access services through the Welsh language naturally, and at all stages in their lives.
2. Support the well-being, mental-health, and resilience of individuals within communities by:
 - Ensuring access to the right information, advice, and assistance through our Single Point of Access (SPoA), Community Navigator, and Library Services.
 - Encouraging communities to be age-friendly, intergenerational, and inclusive, reducing isolation and loneliness.*
3. Promote personal and community well-being by:
 - Supporting volunteering and projects from grassroots organisations to develop community and personal skills in local places.
 - Investing in capacity building and support for community leadership and groups, such as to help with cost-of-living pressures.

- Developing community engagement schemes to support community involvement and decision-making in local regeneration.
 - Support the broader use of Welsh and the celebration of Welsh culture in the community, including workplace settings.
4. Foster community cohesion by ensuring people are protected from harm, abuse, and exploitation. This includes:
- Working to reduce domestic abuse.*
 - Tackling anti-social behaviour.
5. Continue to support and resettle refugees through the UK Global Resettlement Scheme, in support of Wales' declaration to be a Nation of Sanctuary.*

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Theme 4: A learning and growing Denbighshire

What we want

Support the provision of quality learning and training, including Welsh language skills development, that enables people of all ages to fulfil their potential, both personally and professionally, also addressing inequality and educational deprivation.

What we aim to do:

1. Promote the learning and development of our children and young people by:
 - Supporting early years child development.
 - Working with schools and GwE, our school improvement partner, to support high standards of education provision that removes barriers to learning and leads to good attainment.
 - Supporting Schools to deliver against new standards, such as the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, the new curriculum for Wales, and the Additional Learning Needs code.*
2. Provide high quality buildings and facilities that meet the needs of pupils, families, and the wider community, including working with the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.
3. 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, supported by:
 - The right opportunities for work.
 - Access to quality volunteering, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.*
 - Personal and professional learning (e.g. life skills or 'green skills').
4. Improving the well-being of children from low income and disadvantaged families. This includes expanding the free school meals offer to all primary school pupils, and working to reduce the attainment gap of children and young people through Equity in Education and the Price of Pupil Poverty project.*

Theme 5: A greener Denbighshire

What we want

Become a Net Zero Carbon organisation by 2030, and enhance, preserve, and improve our natural assets to support biodiversity. We must also mitigate and work with communities to cope with the impacts of climate change.

What we aim to do:

1. Deliver our Climate and Ecological Change Strategy to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030, including:
 - Increasing renewable energy capacity in buildings the council owns and operates.
 - Reducing carbon emissions from our supply chains.
 - Offsetting carbon emissions through tree planting and other measures.
 - Grow the amount of habitat available for pollinators and wildlife.
 - Increasing new native wildflower meadows across the county.
2. Improve recycling rates and reduce waste by:
 - Implementing a new waste service.
 - Reducing the use of single use plastics in schools.
 - Developing a food waste strategy for the county with our partners, helping to alleviate poverty.
3. Support communities to mitigate and cope with the impacts of climate change by:
 - Increasing allotments and community food growing opportunities.
 - Delivering schemes to reduce coastal and in-land flood risk. This includes support for the management of land adjacent to waterways.
 - Encouraging the management of moorland to reduce the risk of wildfires, working with landowners, farmers, communities, and statutory bodies.
4. Develop a Sustainable Transport Plan that makes travel and tourism within our county 'greener', including new Active Travel routes that encourage walking and cycling within

and between communities.

5. Support our county's green infrastructure by:

- Developing and installing a public network of electric vehicle charging points.
- Exploring ways in which the council can encourage new housing developments to allow for electric vehicle charging and green spaces.

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Theme 6: A well-run, high performing council

What we want

To be a council that is fair, transparent, performs well, represents value for money, and gives consistently good customer service. The council wants to be creative, brave, ambitious, outward-looking, and an excellent employer, backed by strong governance and assurance. The Welsh language will also be a living, thriving language within the council.

What we aim to do:

1. Embed a positive “one council” culture by:
 - Placing our values of integrity, respect, unity, and pride at the heart of everything that we do.
 - Being close to our communities, encouraging community leadership and resilience, and by ensuring we provide consistently good customer service.
 - Improve our services through meaningful promotion, engagement and communication with the public, City, Town and Community councils, and partners.*
 - Have clear performance expectations by promoting a strong culture around performance management, and by being accountable, realistic, open, and honest about how we are performing as a council.
 - Promoting good communication and close working relationships between elected members and officers.
 - Ensuring Denbighshire County Council is a good employer and is an excellent place to work.
2. Reduce inequalities by ensuring that the experiences of people from diverse backgrounds, seldom heard groups, and those at a socio-economic disadvantage are heard and inform decision making.*
3. Play our part in achieving one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050, by building a culture and ethos that encourages the daily use of Welsh by elected members and

council staff, providing training and social opportunities to improve their confidence in using the language.

4. Working collaboratively to alleviate problems with recruitment and retention.

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Appendix 2 – Explanation of changes proposed to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027

Changes to Themes

Broadly, we have reduced the number of Corporate Plan Themes from nine to six. This has been achieved by merging themes as follows below. These Themes were chosen because the different pledges within each of them are more siloed and are easily divorced from each other, enabling instead links to be made with other pledges in other Themes. Additionally, by dispersing pledges for equalities and the promotion of the Welsh Language across the remaining Themes supports the understanding that they are key principles to which we work across our services and run throughout our Corporate Plan. It is proposed that a new section of the Corporate Plan is added prominently before the Themes, focusing on Welsh Language and Equalities and how both are integral to how we will work as an organisation.

1. **A better connected Denbighshire:** Our pledges from this theme have largely been moved within the Prosperous Denbighshire Theme, mainly around supporting access to goods and services through a good road network and improved digital networks. Aspects to do with supporting social infrastructure and community networks are a natural fit within our Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire Theme; and aspects around sustainable transport solutions and electric vehicles work well within our Greener Denbighshire Theme.
2. **A fairer, safe, and more equal Denbighshire:** Aspects of this theme are closely aligned within our social care agenda, which is well covered by our Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire Theme, particularly around alleviating the impact of poverty, and the support we provide for refugees. There are also a number of pledges dedicated to tackling poverty and inequality within education that sit naturally with our Learning and Growing Denbighshire Theme. Ensuring the voices of those from seldom heard groups inform our decision-making sits best within the Well-run, High Performing Council Theme. Although dispersing this theme may feel like a step-back, in reality, having it as an overarching principle within the Corporate Plan should elevate this agenda to have greater influence on our work, and allow the Lead Member to be more prevalent in discussions shaping the other themes.

3. **A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language:** Elements of this theme relating to promoting our cultural offer have been moved within our Prosperous Denbighshire Themes, as there are good synergies to be made there with our Economic Strategy. Our work to support the realisation of one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050 would also be better integrated within our Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire Theme, our Learning and Growing Denbighshire Theme, but also within the Well-run, High Performing Council Theme. As above, although dispersing this theme may feel like a step-back, in reality, having it as an overarching principle within the Corporate Plan should elevate this agenda to have greater influence on our work, and allow the Lead Member to be more prevalent in discussions shaping the other themes.

Changes to Pledges

Just dispersing Themes, however, does not address the resource pressures that the council is facing. The number of pledges under each Theme taken forward in the Corporate Plan also need to be rationalised. The table below summarises how 15 pledges have been de-escalated down to Service Plan level, and how 7 pledges have had their wording amended. The rationale for these suggested changes to Pledges is based on taking stock of our progress so far, ability to integrate with other pledges, whether in fact it is business as usual activity, and whether a pause of activity is required due to financial and / or capacity constraints. We must stress that the removal of pledges from the Corporate Plan does not mean that these things stop. They will continue at Service Plan level for as long as resources allow.

Pledge	Justification
<p>Theme 1, Pledge 4: Signpost residents to opportunities to improve the efficiency of their homes.</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. This is business as usual for our services and we are limited in terms of our ability to do much more.</p>
<p>Theme 1, Pledge 5: Exploring how we can protect housing through new Welsh</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. The council has implemented changes to the</p>

Pledge	Justification
Government legislation to regulate the impact of second homes.	rate of council tax on second homes and we will follow WG guidance as part of usual business.
<p>Theme 2, Pledge 3: Provide advice and support that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enable strong business growth and economic development. – Support the growth of the local social economy, including community businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises. <p>Theme 9, Pledge 2: Working in partnership to support an economy that promotes fair work, justice and socially responsible public procurement, benefitting the local supply chain.*</p>	<p>Move and amend. There was some duplication here between these two pledges in two themes. These have now been combined and reworded for inclusion in Theme 2:</p> <p><i>“Work in partnership to support an economy that promotes fair work, justice and socially responsible public procurement, benefitting the local supply chain and local communities.”</i></p>
<p>Theme 3, Pledge 1: Continue to work towards being a Dementia Friendly Organisation</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. The Alzheimer’s Society no longer monitor and run the Dementia Friendly campaign. However, this work continues through Ageing Well in Denbighshire’s Age Friendly application to the World Health Organisation.</p>
<p>Theme 3, Pledge 1: Work with the Welsh Government to contribute to the provision of a high-quality national care service.</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. There is currently a lack of clarity on the delivery of a national service. The council will</p>

Pledge	Justification
	naturally respond to this national initiative once there is further guidance.
<p>Theme 3, Pledge 2: Supporting local sports facilities to bring people together.</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. Beyond the allocation of grants that the council administers as a matter of course, the council's role here is limited. This is business as usual.</p>
<p>Theme 4, Pledge 1: Enhancing the help and advice available to parents</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. This is business as usual under the Families First and Flying Start programmes. There is very little change to report on.</p>
<p>Theme 4, Pledge 1: Providing high quality buildings and facilities, working in partnership with Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.</p> <p>Theme 4, Pledge 2: 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.</p>	<p>Amend and Report at Service Plan Level. For reporting purposes, it is easier to streamline these activities into a single pledge within the theme:</p> <p><i>“Provide high quality buildings and facilities that meet the needs of pupils, families and the wider community, including working with the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.”</i></p> <p>Aspects of Theme 4, Pledge 2 that are emerging areas of work will be reported at Service Plan level. Should significant activity emerge following WG guidance, this can be re-elevated as appropriate to Corporate Plan reporting.</p>

Pledge	Justification
<p>Theme 4, Pledge 3: A strong extra-curricular offer available to young people through our Youth Service provision.</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. As an intervention service, the council is limited as to the extent to which it can grow its Youth Service provision.</p>
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 1: £20m in resurfacing projects by 2027.</p>	<p>Move and amend. This has been moved to Theme 2, and to reflect budgetary pressures, alternative wording has been offered: <i>“Maintaining a safe road network throughout the county.”</i></p>
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 1: Replace Llanerch Bridge, in partnership with Welsh Government.</p>	<p>Move. This pledge has been moved to Theme 2.</p>
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 2: Improve transport services in Denbighshire’s communities.</p>	<p>Move. This pledge has been moved to Theme 2.</p>
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 2: Developing a Sustainable Transport Plan, that makes travel and tourism within our county ‘greener’, including new Active Travel routes that encourage walking and cycling within and between communities.</p>	<p>Move. This pledge has been moved to new Theme 5 (Greener Denbighshire).</p>
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 3: Support our county’s green infrastructure by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and installing a public network of electric vehicle charging points. 	<p>Move. This pledge has been moved to new Theme 5 (Greener Denbighshire).</p>

Pledge	Justification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploring ways in which the council can encourage new housing developments to allow for electric vehicle charging and green spaces. 	
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 4: Support communities with improved digital networks and skills, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping residents to understand options and solutions for improved internet connectivity, including through Fibre Community Partnerships. 	<p>Move and amend. The council’s role and influence in this is limited. Nonetheless, we recognise its importance and have included amended phrasing within Theme 2 around “Promoting options and solutions for improved internet connectivity where they are available.”</p>
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 4: Support communities with improved digital networks and skills, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through our libraries, and in partnership with Cwmpass, offer skills development and quality facilities that support digitally safe and inclusive communities. 	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. This is business as usual.</p>
<p>Theme 5, Pledge 5: Promote personal and community well-being by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting volunteering and projects from grassroots 	<p>Move. This pledge has been moved to Theme 3.</p>

Pledge	Justification
<p>organisations to develop community and personal skills in local places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Investing in capacity building and support for community groups. – Developing community engagement schemes to support community involvement and decision-making in local regeneration. 	
<p>Theme 7, Pledge 1: Foster community cohesion by ensuring people are protected from harm, abuse and exploitation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Working to reduce domestic abuse.* – Tackling anti-social behaviour. 	<p>Move. This pledge has been moved to Theme 3.</p>
<p>Theme 7, Pledge 1: Participating in the Welsh Government’s Community Cohesion Programme.*</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. This is business as usual and there is limited new activity to report on within this work.</p>
<p>Theme 7, Pledge 1: Promoting our Zero Racism Pledge.*</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. This pledge is complete with no new activity to report or monitor. However, removing this activity in no way diminishes the council’s commitment to the Zero Racism Pledge, as shown in our equalities section.</p>
<p>Theme 7, Pledge 1: Taking action against hate crime, such as against those with a</p>	<p>Move and amend. This works best as a principle to which the council will work. This has been covered under the new</p>

Pledge	Justification
disability, or because of race or sexual orientation.*	equality section before the themes are introduced.
Theme 7, Pledge 2: Ensuring that the experiences of people from diverse backgrounds, seldom heard groups, and those at a socio-economic disadvantage are heard and inform decision making.*	Move: This has been moved to new Theme 6 (Well-run, High-Performing Council).
Theme 7, Pledge 2: Improving the well-being of children from low income and disadvantaged families. This includes reducing the attainment gap of children and young people through Equity in Education and the Price of Pupil Poverty project.*	Move: This has been moved to Theme 4.
Theme 7, Pledge 2: Encouraging broad participation in services delivered by libraries, arts, culture and heritage sectors.*	Report at Service Plan Level Only. This is business as usual, but there may also be opportunities that can be picked up by the new Economic Strategy.
Theme 7, Pledge 3: Expanding our free school meals offer to all primary school pupils, in partnership with the Welsh Government.	Move. This has been moved to Theme 4.
Theme 7, Pledge 3: Developing a food waste strategy for the county with our partners.	Move. This has been moved to new Theme 5 (Greener Denbighshire).

Pledge	Justification
<p>Theme 7, Pledge 3: Working with our partners to provide information, advice and support to those at risk of fuel poverty.</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. This is business as usual.</p>
<p>Theme 7, Pledge 3: Stimulating and supporting community groups to help individuals with cost of living pressures.</p>	<p>Move and amend. This has been merged with an existing pledge within Theme 3: <i>“Investing in capacity building and support for community groups, such as to help with cost of living pressures.”</i></p>
<p>Theme 7, Pledge 4: Continue to support and resettle refugees through the UK Global Resettlement Scheme, in support of Wales’ declaration to be a Nation of Sanctuary.*</p>	<p>Move. This has been moved to Theme 3.</p>
<p>Theme 8, Pledge 1: Ensuring everyone can access services through the Welsh language naturally, and at all stages in their lives.</p> <p>Support the broader use of Welsh and the celebration of Welsh culture in the community, including workplace settings.</p>	<p>Move. These have been moved to Theme 3.</p>
<p>Theme 8, Pledge 1: Supporting children and families during their early years to develop confidence in using the Welsh language.</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. The Welsh Language Strategy will have its own monitoring requirements, and we have committed to the strategy within the new section included on Promoting the Welsh Language. These aspects are also duplicated within the commitment already</p>

Pledge	Justification
Grow the services available from the Welsh Language Centre in St Asaph to benefit the wider county.	outlined in Theme 4 to deliver the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
<p>Theme 8, Pledge 1: Building a culture and ethos that encourages the daily use of Welsh by elected members and council staff, providing training and social opportunities to improve their confidence in using the language.</p>	<p>Move. This has been moved to new Theme 6 (Well-run, High Performing Council).</p>
<p>Theme 8, Pledge 2: Develop a cultural strategy and programme of events that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Promoting Denbighshire’s rich culture and heritage. – Making the best use of our great natural assets, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the newly proposed National Park. 	<p>Move and amend. This has not been removed, but will instead be considered within Theme 2 as part of our new Economic Strategy.</p>
<p>Theme 8, Pledge 3: Working in partnership to deliver an improved and sustainable archive service for North Wales.</p>	<p>Move. This has been moved to Theme 2.</p>
<p>Theme 9, Pledge 1: Embed a positive culture of ambition, transparency and continuous improvement by:</p>	<p>Amend. Pledges have been reworded to streamline and reflect work presently being undertaken by the Board:</p>

Pledge	Justification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Being a ‘learning’ organisation that uses feedback and lessons-learned to drive organisational improvement. – Fostering a culture that welcomes fair and appropriate challenge. – Instilling the values of integrity, respect, unity and pride in everything that we do. <p>Theme 9, Pledge 2: Improving our systems and processes so that all our customers experience reliable and consistently good customer service.</p> <p>Improving our services through meaningful promotion, engagement and communication with the public, City, Town and Community councils, and partners.*</p> <p>Theme 9, Pledge 3: Promoting a strong culture around performance management, and being transparent in how we are performing as a council.</p> <p>Theme 9, Pledge 5: Ensure Denbighshire County Council is a good employer and is an excellent place to work by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Delivering and embedding the staff well-being policy – Supporting training and workforce development. 	<p><i>Embed a positive “one council” culture by</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Placing our values of integrity, respect, unity, and pride at the heart of everything that we do.</i> – <i>Ensure that our systems and processes enable us to be close to our communities and providing reliable and consistently good customer service.</i> – <i>Improve our services through meaningful promotion, engagement and communication with the public, City, Town and Community councils, and partners.*</i> – <i>Have clear performance expectations by promoting a strong culture around performance management, and by being accountable, realistic, open and honest about how we are performing as a council.</i> – <i>Promoting good communication and close working relationships between elected members and officers.</i> – <i>Ensuring Denbighshire County Council is a good employer and is an excellent place to work.</i>

Pledge	Justification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Promoting fairness, equality and diversity.* 	
<p>Theme 9, Pledge 3: Ensuring that we exercise our seven core governance functions effectively, and are using resources efficiently. These functions cover corporate planning, financial planning, performance management, risk management, workforce planning, assets and procurement.</p> <p>Working constructively with our regulators and ombudsmen.</p> <p>Ensuring value for money is embedded within our organisational culture, and that decisions are balanced by considering service quality and social value.</p>	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only.</p> <p>These matters are covered within existing business as usual processes and will not change a great deal.</p>
<p>Theme 9, Pledge 4: Promote strong staff and elected member relations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maintaining effective governance that allows for strong decision making. – Working together to ensure that elected member and staff codes of conduct are met. 	<p>Report at Service Plan Level Only. This is business as usual.</p>

Appendix 3 – Proposed Corporate Plan Governance Arrangements (February 2024)

Supporting the principles of Welsh Language and Equality

The changes proposed will place more importance on the work of the Welsh Language Steering Group and the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group, as shown in the table below. Otherwise, pledges that support these key areas of work will continue to be reported and monitored in the usual way through six-monthly Performance Update Reports to SLT, Cabinet, and Performance Scrutiny; and once annually to County Council and Governance and Audit. Likewise,

The Fairer, Safer, More Equal Denbighshire Board will be closed as a result of changes made to the Corporate Plan in February 2024. A closure meeting will be held in March to ascertain how work within the outgoing theme will be monitored. Much of the work can be picked up by the already existing Prosperous Board and the Strategic Planning and Diversity Group.

Corporate Plan Principles	Cabinet Lead and Cabinet Support	CET Lead and Services involved	Structure, i.e. Prog Board, service plans, etc.
Welsh Language	Cllr Emrys Wynne	Gary Williams • All Services	Welsh Language Steering Group
Equality, Diversity, and the Socio-Economic Duty	Cllr Julie Matthews	Gary Williams • All Services	Strategic Equality and Diversity Group

Corporate Plan Governance

Changes as a result of revisions to the Corporate Plan in February 2024 are highlighted in yellow and explained in the note below.

Theme	Cabinet Lead and Cabinet Support	CET Lead and Services involved	Structure, i.e. Prog Board, service plans, etc.
A Denbighshire of Quality Housing That Meets People’s Needs	Cllr Rhys Thomas (Chair) Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Cllr Elen Heaton Cllr Win Mullen-James	Tony Ward • Housing and Communities • Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services • Adult Social Care and Homelessness	Housing and Homelessness Board
A Prosperous Denbighshire	Cllr Jason McLellan (Chair) Cllr Emrys Wynne Cllr Barry Mellor	Tony Ward • Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services • Housing and Communities	Prosperous Denbighshire Programme Board

Appendix 3 – Proposed Corporate Plan Governance Arrangements (February 2024)

Theme	Cabinet Lead and Cabinet Support	CET Lead and Services involved	Structure, i.e. Prog Board, service plans, etc.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Support Services: People Highways and Environmental Services Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital and Assets Finance and Audit 	
A Healthier, Happier, Caring Denbighshire	Cllr Elen Heaton (Chair) Cllr Gill German Cllr Rhys Thomas Cllr Emrys Wynne	Nicola Stubbins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Social Care and Homelessness Children’s Services Housing and Communities Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital and Assets Corporate Support Services: People 	Mainstreamed via service plans, performance reports, projects, etc.
A Learning, Growing Denbighshire	Cllr Gill German (Chair) Cllr Rhys Thomas Cllr Jason McLellan Cllr Emrys Wynne	Nicola Stubbins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and Children’s Services Housing and Communities 	Mainstreamed via service plans, performance reports, projects, etc.
A Greener Denbighshire	Cllr Barry Mellor (Chair) Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Cllr Barry Mellor	Gary Williams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital and Assets Corporate Support Services: People Highways and Environmental Services Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services Housing and Communities 	Greener Denbighshire Board
A Well-Run, High Performing Council	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis (Chair) Cllr Julie Matthews Cllr Emrys Wynne	Graham Boase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital and Assets Finance and Audit Corporate Support Services: People 	Well-Run, High Performing Council Board



Revised Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027 (fourth iteration of the Well-being Assessment): 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: 913

Brief description: The Strategic Planning team is responsible for the development and performance management of the council's Corporate Plan (and also supports the development of the PSB's Well-being Plan). The Corporate Plan also forms our Strategic Equality Plan. The Corporate Plan was developed as part of a collaborative approach with partners across North Wales, and in particular Conwy County Borough Council. Version three was completed following our workshops with staff, Denbighshire's new Cabinet and following a joint workshop between Cabinet and SLT, during which the findings of the well-being assessment (research, including engagement) were discussed. This fourth version was undertaken by the Strategic Planning Team during January 2024 as part of a revision exercise.

Date Completed: 29/01/2024 20:41:07 Version: 4

Completed by: Helen Vaughan-Evans

Responsible Service: Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? Residents, communities, businesses, visitors, public sector partners (regional and local), including children and young people and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage as well as people with protected characteristics (Equality Act).

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 : 31 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

Projects and activities have mostly started and embedding those as business as usual is a core component of our thinking. The council will need to consider, through its budget process, how its objectives will be impacted. As this Corporate Plan reaches the end of its term further consideration will need to be given to the legacy of our objectives (this usually forms part of the planning process for the subsequent Corporate Plan).

Prevention

Moving forward, as the budget process develops, there will be an opportunity for the council to actively consider and pursue alternative delivery approaches to ensure services can be sustained. In terms of the environment, it features strongly in the Corporate Plan to reflect the programme we have in place already and also because climate change adaptation was a key feature of engagement feedback and research.

Integration

Whilst the Corporate Plan themes have been revised, there remains a strong commitment to the Well-being of Future Generations Act; ensuring equality and fairness, a thriving Welsh language and culture, and well-connected communities. As stated previously, following the completion of the well-being assessment, housing and building new housing, has emerged as a priority for our residents.

There are many actions relating to the LDP in the Net Carbon Zero strategy.

Collaboration

The PSB's Well-being Plan is closely aligned to our Corporate Plan, with a focus on poverty and deprivation ("Conwy and Denbighshire will be more equal with less deprivation"). Within the current Corporate Plan there are good examples of partnership working taking place, e.g. in the housing and prosperous themes. Going forward, there may be more opportunities to explore where partnership working could sustain or enhance services.

Involvement

Our well-being assessment engaged with seldom heard groups. Our annual Stakeholder Survey is a key part of performance management. Meaningful engagement with communities is challenging, as experienced by the wider public sector. Cabinet Members are actively involved in the governance of each theme. All Councillors have an opportunity to scrutinise and give input through our regular reports to Committee (once annually to Council), and to support delivery of our Well-Run theme.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Positive

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

Our Corporate Plan for 2022 to 2027 did warn that the council was entering a very uncertain financial environment due to inflationary and demand pressures far exceeding the projected level of funding. Our fears that this may impact the availability of funding have been realised. The reach of our Corporate Plan has therefore had to be pared back to reflect the difficult financial circumstances facing the council. A robust budget process has been established in response to worsening budgetary pressures, and the council remains committed to delivering essential services. Much of what is contained in the Corporate Plan has already started, and will therefore have resources already identified to support delivery. Large commitments include flooding schemes and school buildings, for example.

We should continue to revisit the impact assessment on a regular basis and review our findings to inform the approach to further development engagement and consultation on the Plan. Engagement with seldom heard groups (serving and ex-armed forces, offenders and ex-offenders, in addition to people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and people with protected characteristics (Equality Act)), across the region, should continue. We should also use the impact assessment as an aide memoir, using the topics and the tooltips to inform our engagement and well-being assessment. The opportunities highlighted at the end of each sustainable development principle and each of the seven well-being goals should be noted and considered thoroughly.

Individual projects or activities identified within the Corporate Plan should be individually impact assessed as they are developed.

It is also important to note that our level of influence and control varies across some of the themes and this will affect our ability to bring about positive impacts in some areas. For example, digital infrastructure.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

We are estimating a positive impact because the Corporate Plan actively supports the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and a Prosperous Denbighshire, both of which have robust governance arrangements in place.

Further actions required

We will need to work with businesses, farmers and Trade Unions more closely, and link into regional work via the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB). There is the potential to maximise skills development around low carbon housing in particular, which could form part of the focus of the learning theme.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Supporting a green economy is a core part of the Corporate Plan. Individual projects will need to be assessed in their own right. Following leadership set by NWEAB should lead to positive outcomes.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Active travel, roads and bridges maintenance, electric vehicle charging, public transport and broadband for rural communities feature in the Plan.

Economic development

Tourism, green economy, social economy, Levelling Up funding and Growth Deal funding feature in the Corporate Plan.

Quality skills for the long term

Interventions by Working Denbighshire feature in the Corporate Plan and these are already showing positive results.

Curriculum development and delivery of 21st Century Schools are proposed alongside equality objectives to address social deprivation and disadvantage faced by some people with protected characteristics. However, it is worth noting that our powers are limited. Schools are their own public bodies, and it is their governing bodies, not the local authority, that determine how the curriculum is taught in schools. Our School Improvement Arm is also delegated to GwE.

Quality jobs for the long term

The 'Learning and growing Denbighshire' theme prioritises a range of pledges to support people to find decent work, including support for young people to access work experience, income-maximising opportunities for those in low paid work and education, training and employment for all young people, including those in care.

Childcare

Support for early years and childcare provision features in the Plan. We have already delivered new enhanced childcare facilities at the Oaktree Centre for example.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

There may be some activity that result in increased carbon emissions in the development stages. These are sometimes difficult to calculate over the life time of a building for example, but our procurement team is exploring how this can be determined alongside partners across Wales.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed). Disruption caused by the loss of Llannerch Bridge continues to impact the community. Discussions with Welsh Government to secure funding to deliver the most viable option to replace Llannerch Bridge are ongoing.

Any future dis-investment in road maintenance as a result of the budget process will be impact assessed separately.

Economic development

There are risks associated with us being unable to achieve the desired changes and these are captured within the Prosperous Denbighshire Board's Risk Register and the Corporate Risk Register.

Quality skills for the long term

There is widespread recognition, which has been highlighted in our well-being assessment, that women and people with protected characteristics and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are less likely to benefit from opportunities from the green sector.

Quality jobs for the long term

The Well-Run theme aims to embed the council's values and principles, whilst also considering the impact of a reduced workforce (as budget reductions occur) on existing staff as well as prospective employees. There may be new opportunities for staff who no longer work for the council (perhaps linked to new ways of delivering services) and the council will need to consider how it can facilitate and support those transitions.

The well-being assessment still lacks sufficient analysis about local jobs.

Childcare

Whilst we have been unable to identify any specific negative or unintended consequences for childcare, it is worth noting that any new childcare provision brings with it questions around sustainability, for carbon and for overall provision across the sector. These should be assessed in more detail within each individual well-being impact assessment.

Also, the well-being assessment includes some analysis of how childcare - whilst enabling work - can be a barrier in other ways, for women in particular, who may disproportionately arrange and ferry children to and from school, nursery, and other childcare provision. This could impact the opportunities women have to travel sustainably (on foot, by bicycle, bus etc) and can also result in them having less visibility in the workplace.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Denbighshire County Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and a strategy (2021-2030) to become net carbon zero and ecologically positive has been approved. Environmental well-being is a key feature of our well-being assessment and engagement feedback.

Further actions required

The Climate Change Programme will soon be able to assess the results achieved by our current effort and allocated budgets to determine the extent to which we are on track to achieve our targets in 2030.

We may need to adjust our thinking around climate risk resilience to include being resilient to extremes in weather (hotter, drier summers, wetter winters).

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

The Corporate Plan has made a commitment to the continued delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan, aiming to be a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030.

Biodiversity in the built environment

The Corporate Plan has made a commitment to the continued delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan, aiming to be a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030. The well-being assessment demonstrates that the planet needs flourishing eco-systems for it to survive.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

This is a feature of the Corporate Plan.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Energy efficient housing, alleviating fuel poverty, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and choosing active travel over private car is currently delivered through a combination of business as usual (where activity takes place and is primarily managed at a Service Plan level) or the Corporate Plan.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

From our engagement, we have found that people feel strongly about being empowered to tackle climate change, and were particularly vocal about active travel.

Flood risk management

Continued delivery of flood defence schemes to reduce the risk of flooding features in the well-being assessment and the Corporate Plan. There is also more detailed consideration now of how climate risk resilience (e.g. from flooding), intersects with deprivation and other characteristics.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

There may be some activity that results in increased carbon emissions that could be damaging to biodiversity. These will need to be considered, with negative impacts removed, reduced or mitigated on a case by case basis.

Biodiversity in the built environment

There may be some activity that result in increased carbon emissions, particularly in the development stages, that could be damaging to biodiversity. These will need to be considered, with negative impacts removed, reduced or mitigated on a case by case basis.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed). The new waste service project is managing any negative impacts identified through its own detailed well-being impact assessment and project documentation.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Our well-being assessment shows that some people, particularly those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, may be less likely to benefit from schemes to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce their energy bills. EV cars are likely to remain within the reach of those with a sizeable disposable income for a while yet.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Some people are vocal about wildflower meadows and see these as an eyesore. The council continues to do a lot of work in terms of communication and through community engagement on this.

Flood risk management

There are project teams and Boards in place to manage delivery of the schemes. There have been some challenges associated with the construction phase of the projects, with some local concern around their delivery. The Flood Strategy is currently being updated.

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The Corporate Plan makes a commitment for the county to be healthier, happy and caring.

Further actions required

The well-being assessment references the North Wales Collaborative's population health needs assessment. Topics such as mental-well-being should be kept under review.

We had previously raised a concern that the draft Corporate Plan did not adequately address the findings of the well-being assessment to attempt to resolve issues of food supply and poverty, and these issues are likely to have exacerbated as the cost of living has increased. We will continue to consider this, with the Corporate Plan placing a focus on free school meals under the "learning and

growing" theme, food waste under the "Greener" theme and a food strategy under the "healthier" theme.

Positive impacts identified:

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

The revised Corporate Plan continues to include a range of activity/equality objectives that aim to secure better health and well-being outcomes for disadvantaged or marginalised groups.

Access to good quality, healthy food

The Corporate Plan includes delivery of free school meals under our 'Learning and Growing Theme', food waste is a consideration under our 'greener Denbighshire' theme. We have a Food Waste Strategy, and also an activity to 'Develop and deliver the county wide Food Partnership Network (including social supermarket project Cogog) around Denbighshire'.

People's emotional and mental well-being

The themes of health and a learning and growing Denbighshire are very much focussed on securing better well-being outcomes.

Access to healthcare

Our signposting to health services and initiatives through the Single Point of Access and community navigators continues.

The digital inclusion agenda also supports, or can support, access to healthcare.

The council continues to have a statutory duty to repair damaged roads and pavements, which can impact both access to healthcare from a travel perspective and from a health and safety perspective of pedestrians and road users.

Waiting lists, and the impact these have on service delivery, staff well-being, in addition to the health and well-being of patients is likely to be subject to further analysis.

Participation in leisure opportunities

Active travel features strongly in the Plan. Opportunities to engage in leisure remain unchanged.

Negative impacts identified:

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

Some activities, particularly where there is a construction phase, may cause interim negative impacts for communities.

Access to good quality, healthy food

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

People's emotional and mental well-being

Some interventions are already becoming more targeted to be deliverable (within the budget). This could result in higher thresholds for accessing support.

Access to healthcare

The council's budget for road and pavement repair will be under pressure going forward.

Participation in leisure opportunities

Some people may be less likely to participate either because of access issues (cost, transport, living in a rural area) or perhaps due to accessibility barriers for people with protected characteristics.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall there is a greater focus in this Corporate Plan on growing our economy as a route out of poverty. However, it is not clear currently how any proposed areas of focus will truly reduce poverty (increase household incomes) given the turbulence of geopolitics and the global economy. It is

certainly hoped though that poverty and disadvantage will not get worse.

Although dispersing this theme throughout our Corporate Plan may feel like a step-back, in reality, having it as an overarching principle within the Corporate Plan should elevate this agenda to have greater influence on our work, and allow the Lead Member to be more prevalent in discussions shaping the other themes.

Further actions required

Alongside this reduction in the Corporate Plan, the council will undertake impact assessments of proposals that could result in a reduction to services to consider the impact on people with protected characteristics, or people or places experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

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

The revised Corporate Plan continues to make a strong commitment in support of improving the well-being of those with protected characteristics. Activity that was included in the 'A fairer and more equal Denbighshire' now features in other Corporate Plan themes or continues to be delivered via Service Plans. Such as a range of activities to: reduce harms, exploitation and abuse experienced by people, to ensure people's voices are heard; and to alleviate socio-economic deprivation.

A range of equality objectives are highlighted with an Asterix (*) throughout the Corporate Plan. These identify our commitment to our Strategic Equality Plan.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

The Corporate Plan includes proposals to support marginalised groups, such as refugees. The well-being assessment includes analyses to consider the well-being of (some) marginalised groups, such as refugees. There is also, while limited, a little more understanding of the long term resilience of people who suffer discrimination and disadvantage to climate change for example.

Our equalities commitment in the revised Corporate Plan states that we will take action against all forms of hate crime, discrimination, bullying or harassment.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Deprivation and tackling poverty features strongly in the Corporate Plan, with a particular focus on reducing the impacts of poverty (e.g. hunger) and improving opportunities for skills development.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

The Corporate Plan enables a focus on all areas of deprivation, including in rural communities.

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

The well-being assessment specifically highlighted disabled people as having poorer well-being. In all of its work, the council should examine how and whether activities can and will enhance equality of opportunity or whether there could be disproportionately negative impacts for people with protected characteristics.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

The well-being assessment includes analyses to consider the well-being of (some) marginalised groups, such as refugees. However, this is limited and reflects, in part, challenges we faced with engagement. There is also, while limited, a little more understanding of the long term resilience of people who suffer discrimination and disadvantage to climate change for example. Some of the pledges may not be able to partly, let alone, fully alleviate poverty and disadvantage given the turbulence in the wider global economy.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

As already stated, the impacts of the pledges may not be able to partly, let alone, fully alleviate poverty and disadvantage given the turbulence in the wider global economy.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

As stated elsewhere, some interventions will need to be targeted to ensure the benefits are felt by the people/places needing them most.

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The impact continues to be positive overall as a result of the themes and pledges in the Corporate Plan that focus on community well-being and community building. There are a number of projects and activities across a number of themes in the Plan that will have a positive impact on rural communities.

Further actions required

Future budget reductions should consider the impact on cohesive communities and rural communities. It is expected that efforts will be focused on the Council's role in supporting the longer term resilience of communities and rural areas.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The Corporate Plan emphasises the council's ongoing commitment to safeguarding vulnerable children, young people and adults, to ensuring the best possible care of children looked after and carers. Homelessness, and good housing features strongly, alongside activity that focuses on bringing communities together.

Community participation and resilience

This continues to feature in the context of activity around skills development and opportunities for intergenerational community building, and social isolation and loneliness is included. Being close to our communities is a core part of our ambition around being a Well-Run, High Performing Council and this is centred on the council's role supporting resilient communities.

The attractiveness of the area

Our Prosperous theme includes many activities and projects (including Levelling Up and SPF-funded

initiatives) that are designed to improve the attractiveness of areas.

Connected communities

The revised Corporate Plan still focuses on the importance of a good road and digital infrastructure, with support for people to be digitally included.

Rural resilience

The Close to Communities strand of work, the prosperous theme and the healthier theme all include activities or projects that will have a positive impact on rural communities.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Community participation and resilience

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

The attractiveness of the area

Wildflower meadows remain contentious with some residents regarding them as an eyesore. The new Plan could take the opportunity to bring people along with the climate and ecological change programme.

Connected communities

Our control in securing better phone signal and broadband is limited, as demonstrated by the previous Corporate Plan. Reducing budgets could affect road conditions, and this will be considered separately within its own impact assessment.

Rural resilience

There is a risk that any future budget reductions compound existing challenges affecting rural communities.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The overall impact is expected to be positive, given the contribution we intend to make to collectively supporting the national agenda around Welsh language (through our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan or Welsh Language Strategy and Policy) as well as considering cultural opportunities as part of economic development. Although dispersing this theme may feel like a step-back, in reality, having it as an overarching principle within the Corporate Plan should elevate this agenda to have greater influence on our work, and allow culture and Welsh language to be more prevalent in discussions shaping the other themes.

Further actions required

Arrangements are in place to monitor delivery of the Corporate Plan, and this will include monitoring delivery of our commitments around Welsh language and culture. Impact on the Welsh language will be assessed as we take forward budget proposals.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The revised Corporate Plan has taken the approach of embedding our Welsh language commitment across all of our themes. Our work to support the realisation of one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050 will be better integrated within our Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire theme, our Learning and Growing Denbighshire theme, but also within the Well-run, High Performing Council theme.

Promoting the Welsh language

The Corporate Plan remains committed to the council playing its part in achieving one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050, by building a culture and ethos that encourages the daily use of Welsh by elected members and council staff, providing training and social opportunities to improve their confidence in using the language.

Culture and heritage

Elements of this theme relating to promoting our cultural offer have been moved to sit within our Prosperous Denbighshire theme, as there are good synergies to be made there with our Economic Strategy.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The targets associated with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan are challenging. Progress is reported and monitored regularly by the Welsh in Education Strategic Group, Welsh Language Steering Committee, Scrutiny Committee and so on.

Promoting the Welsh language

Impact on the Welsh language will be assessed as we take forward budget proposals.

Culture and heritage

The council may need to be 'refocussed' in some way to deliver cultural regeneration in a cohesive way. Agriculture could feature more strongly in the thinking.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Denbighshire County Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and a strategy (2021-

2030) to become net carbon zero and ecologically positive has been approved. Socially responsible procurement features heavily in the action plan to deliver the strategy and for these reasons the anticipated impact is positive.

Further actions required

The revised Corporate Plan retains a broader commitment to health and well-being and is in alignment with the PSB's Well-being Plan.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

In line with the Social Partnerships and Public Protection Act, the Corporate Plan makes specific commitments around procurement and securing community benefits. We will need to work seamlessly with partners and Welsh Government to support small and medium sized businesses to ensure they are prepared and well-positioned for the changes. This will also include the third sector.

Human rights

Safeguarding and protecting human rights is a core part of procurement and HR policies currently and we are taking action against poverty, child hunger (free school meals), and homelessness. Our Equalities Objectives include ongoing support as part of Wales's declaration as a Nation of Sanctuary, and these are monitored at a service level.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

The Corporate Plan attempts to create more focus around tackling poverty and deprivation, and is in alignment with the PSB's Well-being Plan.

Reducing climate change

Reducing climate change is a core part of our Greener theme.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

There is a risk that the local supply chain will not be sufficiently prepared and ready to take

advantage of the opportunities afforded by new Wales/UK procurement legislation. For this reason we are planning a range of communications and learning opportunities for local businesses, including as part of the 2024 March for Business campaign.

Human rights

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

There is a risk that reducing budgets across the public sector affect service provision (thresholds for support could increase), partnership working and demand.

Reducing climate change

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

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Report to	Full Council
Date of meeting	27 th February 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Report author	Lisa Jones, Legal Services Manager
Title	Review of the Composition of the Standards Committee Recruitment Panel.

1. What is the report about?

A review of the composition of the recruitment panel that appoints the lay (independent non elected) members to the Council's Standards Committee.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 The Standards Committee has recommended that this report be brought to the full council to consider whether to reduce the number of elected members on the panel to 2 (from 3) and replace the 1 elected member with the Chair of Standards Committee.

2.1 That the recruitment panel membership be formally agreed.

3. What are the Recommendations?

There are no officer recommendations and the Standards Committee is in principle supportive of the change; however, it is a matter for Council Members to debate and consider whether to support the change, taking into consideration the slight increase in costs as set out below and the loss of a third seat on the recruitment panel.

4. Report details

- 4.1. Full Council will be aware that the majority of members forming the Standards Committee are non elected persons, appointed via public advert and interview.

- 4.2. Standards Committee discussed the possibility of the Chair of Standards Committee forming part of the decision making panel regarding any future interviews and recommendation decisions in relation to the appointment of independent (lay) persons sitting on the Councils' Standards Committee. The Standards Committee agreed that a report should be taken to Council.
- 4.3. The Standards Committee (Wales) Regulations 2001 paragraph 15 provides that every Council in Wales must establish a recruitment panel consisting of not more than 5 panel members. One panel member must be a member of the public who is not an elected or lay member of the Council ie completely independent of the Council; the panel must also include one panel member who is a member of a community council situated in the local authoritys' area. This therefore leaves 3 seats left, which Denbighshire County Council when it originally set up the recruitment panel, agreed these should remain for the three main political groups.
- 4.4. It is this membership of 5 members in total that are the formal panel recommending the appointments. The practice over recent years has also been to invite the current Chair of Standards Committee to attend the interviews as an observer, given the importance of establishing good working relationships and team work by the independent lay members of the Standards Committee.
- 4.5. The Council is therefore being asked to consider whether to reduce the number of elected County Council members on the recruitment panel to 2 rather than 3 members. This is a decision for the full Council only.
- 4.6. Whilst taking this report, the tenure of independent members is fixed in time and a recruitment process to replace the current Chair and Vice Chair will need to commence over the next year. It would therefore be expedient if the Council could also confirm if it is content to appoint the current 2 elected members sitting on the Standards Committee and the current community member to the recruitment panel and also the member of the public supporting the process in accordance with the regulations. These are named in 4.7 below.
- 4.7. The community council member is Gordon Hughes, Corwen Town Council. The 2 elected members to Standards Committee are Cllr Bobby Feeley and Cllr (tbc); The independent member of the public is Noela Jones.

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

There are no negative or positive contributions to the Corporate Plan.

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

There will be an additional cost of the standard day and preparation rate to be paid to the Chair if requested to also sit on the recruitment panel, as that person would be required to attend and therefore will be entitled to payment. The current full day rate is £268.00

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

A well being impact assessment is not required.

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

Standards Committee have been consulted as set out in the body of this report.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

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

The main risk identified is that one of the three main political groups may not be represented on the recruitment panel if the change is made. Standards Committees have the ability to suspend from office any member found in breach of the Code of Conduct.

11. Power to make the decision.

Standards Committee (Wales) Regulations 2001

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NOTICE OF MOTION put forward by Councillor Jon Harland for consideration by Full Council -

'That this council, in light of the distressing events that have occurred in Israel and Palestine, commits to

(i) explore how the Council can offer appropriate support to local residents of all faiths and none, who need our assistance as a result of these violent events.

(ii) stand ready to provide support and open our arms to innocent people displaced and affected by these events.'

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NOTICE OF MOTION put forward by Councillor Merfyn Parry for consideration by Full Council -

"I propose a motion for Denbighshire County Council to suspend any further engagement with the proposed new North Wales National Park, especially financially, until there is a significant improvement in local and national funding."

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COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Meeting	Item (Description / Title)		Purpose of Report	Council Decision Required (yes/no)	Lead member and Contact Officer
14 May 2024	1	Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of County Council	To appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council for the 2024-2025 municipal year	Yes	Gary Williams / Steve Price
	2	Pay Policy Statement 2024-2025	To approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2024-2025	Yes	Lead Member – Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Head of Service – Catrin Roberts Report Author – Sophie Vaughan
	3	Annual Review of Political Balance and Appointment of Scrutiny Chairs	To consider a report on Political Balance and Committee-related issues	No	Lead Member – Cllr Julie Matthews Head of Service – Catrin Roberts Report Author – Steve Price
	4	Petition Scheme	To approve a Petition Scheme for the Council	Yes	Cllr Julie Matthews / Gary Williams
9 July 2024	1	Reviewed and updated Denbighshire County Council’s Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021-2030)	To present the reviewed and updated Climate and Ecological Change strategy document for Council to decide on whether to adopt it	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor / Liz Wilcox-Jones / Helen Vaughan-Evans
	2	Council Performance Self-Assessment 2023 to 2024 (year end)	To consider a report by the Strategic Planning Team for Council to approve the Performance Self-Assessment 2023 to 2024.	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans, Iolo McGregor, Emma Horan
	3	Annual Report of Scrutiny	To review the annual report of Scrutiny	No	Lead Member – Cllr Julie Matthews Head of Service – Catrin Roberts

COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

					Report Authors – Rhian Evans and Karen A. Evans
10 September 2024					
12 November 2024					

FUTURE ITEMS

Meeting	Item (Description / Title)	Purpose of Report	Council Decision Required (yes/no)	Lead member and Contact Officer
TBC	Review of Polling Places and Stations	To consider a statutory review of the county’s polling places and polling stations.	Yes	Cllr Julie Matthews / Steve Price / Shellan Rowley

Note for Officers – Full Council Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
		14.05.2024	30.04.2024	09.07.2024	25.06.2024
10.09.2024	27.08.2024	12.11.2024	29.10.2024		

COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

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Updated 21.02.2024 SLW

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Council Workshops Forward Work Programme

DATE OF COUNCIL WORKSHOP	TOPIC(S)	LEAD SLT / LEAD MEMBER
2024 DATES Tuesday 2pm		
12 March	Waste Model pre roll out of the new model	Tony Ward / Russell Vaughan / Peter Clayton / Simon Lammond / Councillor Barry Mellor
9 April	Update on National Park Proposal from Natural Resources Wales	Huw Rees / Emlyn Jones / Councillor Win Mullen-James
7 May	Demonstration of hoists and equipment	Nicola Stubbins / Councillor Elen Heaton
11 June	Highways	Tony Ward / Councillor Barry Mellor
16 July		
3 September		
1 October		
5 November		
10 December		

Reserve List for consideration post 2023;

1. Strategic Flooding approach (inc DCC Strategy) - Tony Ward & Emlyn Jones / Councillor Barry Mellor

Council Workshops Forward Work Programme

2. ALN Reform, the New Curriculum for Wales and the support provided by The Regional School Improvement Service (GwE)
3. Inclusion Service & Pupil Referral Unit
4. How we support Schools through Admissions, Transport, Governance and Resource Management.
5. Tackling Poverty/Deprivation
6. Tourism, including destination management and Tourism Strategy
7. Culture/Arts/Heritage
8. Young People in democracy
9. CJC Update to include the Regional Strategic Planning, Transport Plan etc
10. NWEAB work, including Growth Deal
11. Sustainable Transport Plan & Active Travel
12. LDP
13. Approach to Homelessness
14. Town Centres
15. Flying Start, Family Support and Early Prevention
16. Safeguarding & Community Safety
17. Levelling up Funds and Shared Prosperity Fund
18. Regional Integration Fund (RIF) Projects & Funding
19. NWOW & Office Strategy
20. Corporate Plan
21. DLL & DCC
22. Workshop for each of the Corporate Plan themes.

Promotion of Welsh Language (within the Council, Communities and Schools - Welsh Education Strategic Plan, New Language Categorisation). (This was the topic for the 10 oct 2023 Workshop which meeting was cancelled, with the intention of being rescheduled).

Revised 21/2/24 SLW