

To: Members of the Cabinet

Date: 17 April 2024

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **CABINET** to be held at **10.00 am** on **TUESDAY, 23 APRIL 2024** in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

3 URGENT MATTERS

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

4 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 March 2024 (copy enclosed).

5 NORTH EAST WALES ARCHIVE PROJECT (Pages 11 - 52)

To consider a report by Councillor Emrys Wynne, Lead Member for Welsh Language, Culture and Heritage (copy enclosed) seeking Cabinet's support to accept the grant offer towards the cost of the new joint archive facility and commitment to contribute capital match funding, subject to Flintshire County Council confirming their acceptance of the grant and their capital contribution.

6 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING - ROLLING PROGRAMME (Pages 53 - 82)

To consider a report by Councillor Gill German, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Education, Children and Families (copy enclosed) seeking Cabinet approval to submit the draft Strategic Outline Programme for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme to the Welsh Government for their consideration.

7 UPDATE TO MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND PLAN FOR 2025/26 - 2027/28 AND REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY (Pages 83 - 276)

To consider a report by Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets (copy enclosed) providing an update on outstanding matters relating to 2024/25 budget, sets the scene for budget setting in the medium term (2025/26 – 2027/28), and self-assesses the Council's current level of financial resilience and sustainability.

8 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 277 - 282)

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

MEMBERSHIP

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

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

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a *member/co-opted member of
*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Denbighshire County Council

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

*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)**

Signed

Date

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

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CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by video conference on Tuesday, 19 March 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

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

Observers: Councillors Joan Butterfield, Bobby Feeley, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Alan James, and Andrea Tomlin

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (GB); Corporate Directors: Social Services and Education (NS), Governance and Business/Monitoring Officer (GW), and Environment and Economy TW; Heads of Service: Finance and Audit (LT) and Adult Social Care and Homelessness (AL), and Committee Administrators (KEJ & RTJ [Webcaster])

1 APOLOGIES

The Leader submitted apologies from Councillor Win Mullen-James who was unwell and conveyed his best wishes for a speedy recovery.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declaration of interest had been raised.

3 URGENT MATTERS

No urgent matters had been raised.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20 February 2024 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2024 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

5 RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING CARE HOME FEE SETTING 2024/25

Councillor Elen Heaton presented the report seeking Cabinet approval for the setting of residential and nursing care home fees for the financial year 2024/25 following consultation with care providers and which represented an 8.8% uplift.

Care home fees represented a substantial part of the annual social care budget with around £13m allocated to approximately 364 placements in 82 care homes. Care provision was a priority for the Council which had been reflected in budget allocations for 2024/25 to safeguard social care and education as much as possible during the local government funding crisis. An update had been provided on engagement with care providers together with fee uplift options for 2024/25. Given the financial implications lower cost options had also been presented but whilst the proposed 8.8% uplift was significantly higher than the Council's 3.8% settlement and would increase expenditure by over £1m, it balanced affordability for local taxpayers, sustainability of other essential services, and ensured fair compensation for valued care providers having accounted for inflation and the Real Living Wage.

Councillor Heaton stressed that the Council valued its care providers and was committed to fostering an open and fair relationship. No providers should feel they were facing financial crisis due to unfair compensation for services and the offer of an open book exercise would continue to allow transparent engagement and a fair discussion about the true cost of care and efficient use of taxpayers' money.

The Corporate Director: Social Services and Education and the Head of Adult Social Care and Homelessness also attended for this item. The Corporate Director explained how the fee setting process differed from previous years in order to bring forward a recommendation for discussion in a public forum with transparency about the process undertaken and as much engagement as possible with care providers and regional colleagues. There was an open-door policy for care providers and discussions on care homes fees were welcomed throughout the year. The Regional Fees Group had been re-established and re-engaged with care providers and work would continue going forward taking into account provider feedback.

Cabinet discussed the report and noted the efforts made to engage with providers, the themes arising from the initial engagement exercise, and subsequent feedback following consultation on the fees offer. Cabinet was keen to ensure that all care providers paid staff the Real Living Wage and questions were raised regarding the method of regular engagement and communication with care providers, the need to ensure that smaller providers were equally engaged in the process, and further detail was also sought regarding mitigation of the risks identified in the report.

The Lead Member and officers responded to questions and comments as follows –

- whilst it was made clear that provision for the Real Living Wage (RLW) had been included in the fee rate offered and there was an expectation that care providers paid staff the RLW there was no contractual or other mechanism to legally enforce that payment. However, if staff were not paid the RLW it was likely they would leave to work for other providers who did pay that rate
- Welsh Government was committed to paying the RLW in social care and had established the Fair Work Forum with a view to ensuring staff received the pay, terms and conditions, and recognition deserved through collective bargaining. It was confirmed that Care Forum Wales (a representative body of its membership of care providers across Wales) was also a member of the Fair Work Forum

- detailed the regular contact with care providers by various council staff including home visits by the contract monitoring team, communications via payment teams and social workers/occupational therapists visits, with an open dialogue on all aspects of care provision including fees, and issues could be identified and raised via any of those sources. Initial feedback from providers welcomed the relaunch of the Provider Forum which had since been re-established and offered another mechanism for regular dialogue in addition to the open-door policy and ongoing open book exercise. Consequently, there was confidence regarding the level of engagement with care providers throughout the year
- elaborated on mitigation to reduce the risks identified in the report and explained the constant dialogue with providers in order to keep abreast of the situation and provide a clear picture of provision across the county and identification of issues including availability and affordability of appropriate placements to best meet need. The challenge associated with social care placements was highlighted given the complexity of needs in some cases and available provision to meet those needs. However, there were known providers keen to invest and develop in Denbighshire which was encouraging and the market for new development reduced the risk; dialogue with those providers would continue. The recommended 8.8% uplift in care fees would put Denbighshire on a par with some other local authorities across North Wales and therefore would reduce the risk that some providers would only choose to offer placements to higher payers
- with regard to the longer term view and managing future risks, the Council produced its Market Position Statement and engaged in regional collaboration with a Regional Commissioning Strategy and Regional Workforce Strategy and work was constantly ongoing to identify the needs for future service provision and ensuring sufficient workforce to meet those needs going forward
- it was recognised that smaller care homes represented most of care home provision in the county and assurances were provided that good relationships had been fostered with most of the local smaller businesses in addition to the larger businesses; smaller care homes were also represented at the Provider Forum. In addition, there had been a conscious effort to ensure a range of providers engaged in the fee setting process to help inform the fee calculations.

Cabinet had been pleased to note the continuing dialogue with care providers via a range of council teams, the relaunch of the Provider Forum, and ongoing offer of an open book exercise, particularly given the uncertain economic outlook, with a mechanism to engage and review fees throughout the year and discuss and support care providers on the wider issues of managing a care home.

At this point the Leader opened the debate to non-Cabinet members. Councillor Bobby Feeley queried whether the work of the Regional Fees Group should have been completed in advance of the fee setting and the involvement of Care Forum Wales in that process; highlighted the lack of response from providers and meaningful dialogue to inform the process; and raised concerns regarding the risks identified in the report and issues raised by providers in their initial feedback.

The Lead Member and officers responded to those questions and further supplementary comments from Councillor Feeley as follows –

- given the work required to be undertaken by the Regional Fees Group it was known that a new methodology would not be introduced in time to inform the fee setting process for 2024/25; further details were given on the work carried out by the Group and different pilot methodologies to inform future recommendations
- Care Forum Wales was a significant part of the Regional Fees Group with representation on the standing committee and membership on the operational group and therefore was very dominant in that regional fees process
- any delay in setting the fees would create uncertainty for both the care sector and the Council and approval of the care home fees, whilst accepting that work and discussions were still ongoing locally and across the region, created the certainty needed for budget setting and good financial management, particularly given the proposed additional investment in social care amounted to over £1m
- all local authorities were currently undertaking a fee setting process and comparisons could not easily be made; Denbighshire's fees offer had been based on a rationale taking into account local circumstances
- an engagement exercise with care providers carried out in October had helped inform the fee setting process and subsequent consultation on the fees offer in December involved contact with all care providers and further offer of an open book exercise. 9 providers had come forward as a result of that communication and discussions with them were ongoing and verbal feedback had also been received from some providers who were happy with the fees offer. It was difficult to conclude an overall view as not all providers had responded.
- further detail had already been provided on the risks and mitigation measures
- reiterated that there was an ongoing process of engagement with care providers and although they were engaged with on an annual basis around the fee setting process there remained a continual dialogue throughout the entire year both through contract monitoring and placements of individual citizens and the open-door policy and open book exercise was also offered throughout the year. Further detail was given on the Provider Forum which covered issues such as workforce development and training, legislation and guidance, and other common themes around the wider issues of running a care home.

Cabinet recognised the valued and important service undertaken by care providers and had been reassured regarding the continued level of engagement and close partnership working with those providers carried out throughout the year which provided plenty of opportunities for dialogue and engagement on a range of issues relating to the care sector and wider support in addition to the fee setting process. Cabinet had also been reassured regarding the open-door policy for care providers to discuss their care fees at any time and ongoing offer of the open book exercise.

At the end of the debate, the Leader thanked everyone for their contributions and the Lead Member and officers for the hard work carried out. He was pleased that the Council had conducted the fee setting process in an open and transparent way, with discussion in a public forum, based on a clear rationale and in a timely manner.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the setting of baseline care home fees for financial year 2024/25 in accordance with Table 1 at paragraph 4.5 of the report representing an 8.8% uplift.

6 FINANCE REPORT

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis presented the monthly report detailing the latest financial position and progress against the agreed budget strategy.

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

- the net revenue budget for 2023/24 was £250.793m (£233.696m in 2022/23)
- an overspend of £2.780m was forecast for service and corporate budgets
- highlighted current risks and assumptions relating to corporate budgets and individual service areas
- detailed service savings and efficiencies for the 2023/24 budget (£8.172m)
- provided a general update on the Housing Revenue Account, Treasury Management, Capital Plan and major projects.

The Head of Finance and Audit guided members through the detail of the report. There had been a slight decrease in the forecasted overspend on service and corporate budgets at £2.780m with a movement of £60k compared to last month. Main areas of overspend continued to be Education and Children's Services, Highways and Environmental Services and Adults Social Care and Homelessness, with minimal changes from last month. The Housing Revenue Account had reported a slight reduction in underspend at £110k from £126k due to a reduction in rent with a forecast year-end balance of £812k. There was a slight change in the forecasted use of school reserves at £7.026m compared to £7.054m last month. The usual appendices had been included on the Capital Plan and major projects.

Due to closure of the Council's accounts at the end of the financial year the regular finance monitoring report would not be submitted to Cabinet in April; the finance report for April would focus on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan and include a high level strategy for future budget setting. The financial outturn report for 2023/24 would be submitted to Cabinet in May.

The following matters were raised during the ensuing debate –

- Rhyl Queen's Market Redevelopment – the facility had been handed over to the Council in February. Assurances were provided that there was no intention to seek additional funding with sufficient budget available to complete the project ready for operation. Due to reasons of commercial sensitivity further details regarding the appointment of an operator and opening of the facility could not be given at this time but that information would be shared with members and the wider public as soon as it was possible to do so. The Corporate Director: Economy and Environment confirmed that he would be willing to arrange a tour of the facility and asked members to let him know if they wanted to attend. He also agreed to ascertain the costs to the Council of taking interim responsibility for the facility and report back to Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts thereon
- Sustainable Communities for Learning – it was confirmed that the expenditure to date would be split between Welsh Government (WG) and the Council (DCC), which for schools with additional learning requirements amounted to a split of WG 75% / DCC 25% and for other schools a split of WG 65% / DCC 35%

- Underspend due to vacancy management – this phrase appeared a number of times in the Service Variance Narrative (Appendix 2 to the report) and reflected recruitment controls in place to consider every vacant post before it was filled with a view to reducing the overspend in service budgets. The process was followed for vacancies across the council and not just for a specific service area and provided evidence that management across the council realised the severity of the financial situation and were working to address it. It was likely that other local authorities were also taking the same approach to vacancy management.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the budgets set for 2023/24 and progress against the agreed strategy.

7 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet forward work programme was presented for consideration and members noted an addition to the April meeting relating to UK Government Levelling Up Funding Award (Round 3) – Vale of Clwyd Constituency.

RESOLVED that Cabinet's forward work programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.00 am.

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	23 rd April 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Emrys Wynne – Welsh Language, Culture & Heritage Liz Grieve - Head of Housing & Communities
Report author	Craig Berry – Joint Archive Service Manager
Title	North East Wales Archive Project

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. Denbighshire County Council (DCC) has a statutory duty to collect, preserve, and make accessible, documents of historical importance. DCC currently stores its archive material in Ruthin Gaol. The storage space is now full and the environmental management system and gas fire suppression systems (necessary to maintain air quality and to protect the materials) are at end of life. The current arrangements are therefore not sustainable, and an alternative, long-term solution needs to be found.
- 1.2. DCC and Flintshire County Council (FCC) have been working collaboratively for a number of years to create a long-term and sustainable solution. Both Council's face similar issues with buildings that are no longer fit for purpose in terms of storing archive material. This collaborative working resulted in the creation of a joint service called the North East Wales Archive (NEWA).

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. In November 2020, and again in October 2023, Cabinet authorised the submission of a joint funding bid with FCC to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Wales, seeking a capital grant of £7,371,397 to fund a new purpose-built net carbon zero building on the Theatr Clwyd campus in Mold. This was on the understanding that DCC and FCC would have to provide match contributions of £2,052,358 and £3,078,537 respectively.

2.2. That grant application was successful, and NLHF have offered a grant of £7,371,397 towards the cost of the new joint archive facility. This grant offer provides an opportunity to provide DCC with a brand-new, fit for purpose, archive facility for the next 50 years, at a capital cost of £2,052,358, to be funded through prudential borrowing.

3. What are the recommendations?

3.1. Cabinet confirms its support for NEWA to accept the NLHF grant offer of £7,371,397, subject to FCC Cabinet doing the same.

3.2. Cabinet confirms the commitment for DCC to contribute match-funding of £2,052,358 of capital funding which will be paid for via prudential borrowing, subject to FCC confirming their acceptance of the grant and their capital contribution. The maximum revenue cost to DCC is expected to be c£136k.

3.3. Cabinet authorises delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Lead Member – Welsh Language, Culture & Heritage, to sign a Collaboration Agreement that covers the construction of the new facility, and operation of NEWA, and a Heads of Terms for the Lease of the new building, subject to costs being containable within the overall budget of £12,892,294.

3.4. Cabinet confirms that it has read, understood, and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 1), as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

4.1. It has long been recognised that DCC has a problem with making proper arrangements for storing, care and preservation of archival documents. This is not only a statutory requirement, but these materials are also both precious and fragile, and they have great historical and cultural value. It was recognised by the previous Cabinet (in November 2020) and the current Cabinet (in October 2023) that the current archive facility in the Old Gaol in Ruthin is no longer fit for purpose, and that a long-term sustainable solution was required. It was also recognised that any solution would come at a financial cost.

4.2. All reasonable options for long-term safekeeping of precious archive materials have been considered (see Appendix 2). The most cost-effective and sustainable option is that which delivers a purpose-built archive centre in Mold and facilitates wider

community involvement (see Appendix 3), alongside a continued Archive presence in Ruthin. This option also releases Gaol space to allow the development of an enhanced visitor experience which would increase footfall and income to this important heritage asset. It is on this basis that Cabinet gave DCC approval to submit the NLHF grant application for a new joint archive facility in Mold. On 28th March 2024, the NLHF informed us that the bid has been successful.

- 4.3. It is clear that there is not a “do nothing” option as the current arrangements are failing and cannot fulfil our statutory duty. All the available options come with significant costs, and all the options have risks linked to potential increased costs, disruption to service, loss of accreditation etc. There is no ideal, no-cost, solution. All other options will either cost DCC more initially (or in the long run) than the joint facility in Mold or could cost marginally less but result in much inferior facility and archive service.
- 4.4. Work is underway to develop a Collaboration Agreement that will govern the arrangements between DCC and FCC, both for the delivery of the project, and the operation of the joint service. This will include a Heads of Terms for the Lease of the new archive centre in Mold. These agreements are being progressed by a multi-disciplinary team of officers from both authorities and are due to be completed later this month in line with the conditions of the grant.
- 4.5. Project activity is due to commence mid-May (see Appendix 4): a delegated decision will enable the project commencements on time and will minimise the risk of any additional cost associated with a delay.

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

- 5.1. This project supports the aim ‘A Healthier, Happier Caring Denbighshire’
- 5.2. The project is listed in DCC’s Corporate Plan - “Working in partnership to deliver an improved and sustainable archive service for North East Wales”.
- 5.3. The project will make a least a neutral contribution but more probably a positive contribution to the Council becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030.

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

- 6.1 DCC had agreed a match contribution of £2,052,358. This capital contribution will be incurred over the phases of the project (set out in Appendix 4) from financial years 2024/25 to 2027/28 and funded by borrowing. The revenue costs associated with the borrowing requires a pressure to be included in the capital financing budget that builds up to c£136k when the project is completed (based on current interest rates and borrowing over 25-year period as is the council's convention). Though it is intended that the Collaboration Agreement and Heads of Terms for the Lease of the building will be in place for 50 years
- 6.2 Technical support for the project from various departments across the Council will continue to be required, including Legal, Financial, HR, ICT, Design & Construction, Procurement, Building Maintenance, and Heritage Services

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

- 7.1 Given NEWA is a sub-regional service, the WBIA was considered across both counties. The assessment is shown in Appendix 1 and outcomes are as follows:
- i. A prosperous Denbighshire and Flintshire - Positive
 - ii. A resilient Denbighshire and Flintshire - Neutral
 - iii. A healthier Denbighshire and Flintshire – Positive
 - iv. A more equal Denbighshire and Flintshire- Positive
 - v. A Denbighshire and Flintshire of cohesive communities- Positive
 - vi. A Denbighshire and Flintshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language- Positive
 - vii. A globally responsible Denbighshire and Flintshire – Neutral

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

- CET July 2021, October 2022
- SIG Sept 2019, Dec 2020, Jan 2022
- Cabinet Briefing - November 2018, October 2019, November 2020, January 2023, September 2023, April 2024
- Cabinet November 2020, October 2023
- Capital Scrutiny Group September 2023

- AMG - July 2019
- Communities Scrutiny Committee – October 2019 & October 2020
- Ruthin MAG – October 2020 & November 2022
- Online public surveys (2019 and 2020)

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The decision to approve the project was made in principle in October 2023 taking into consideration the financial challenges the Council faces. That decision considered a range of options and concluded there was not a 'no cost' or a 'low cost' option, and that the preferred option had the benefit of leveraging in significant external funding with an asset that is fit for purpose for the long term. Work continues during the development phase of the project to confirm details of the new service structure and the exact costs of running the new building. It is hoped that these costs will be within the current budget allocation, but this cannot be guaranteed until the detailed work is done. Cabinet will have an opportunity to review these proposals once complete

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

10.1 The collaboration and lease agreements will provide DCC with assurance over the joint service and building arrangements over a period of 50 years.

10.2 A separate project risk register is in place for the project.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Local Government (Wales) Bill—General power of competence for Local Authorities.

11.2 The Local Government (Records) Act 1962 (i) - make records in their possession available for study and (ii) to contribute towards the expenses of persons looking after local records.

11.3 The Local Government Act 1972 Section 224 requires all principal councils to make proper arrangements for the care and preservation of any documents.

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North East Wales Joint Archive Project: 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: 703

Brief description: The North East Wales Joint Archive Project will provide a sustainable, efficient and improved archive service for Denbighshire and Flintshire and will be delivered in the following phases: - Phase I – Single Shared Service: the creation of a single shared service operating across Flintshire and Denbighshire - Phase II – New Building: A new purpose built Archive building with passivhaus storage. - Phase III - Activity Plan: An activity plan to widen and diversify the audience service and deliver a sustainable service.

Date Completed: 20/07/2023 09:46:25 Version: 2

Completed by: Sian Lloyd Price

Responsible Service: Housing and Communities Service

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? At the workshop the following people were identified: - Local people who use the archive - People using the proposed new site - Archive staff (business case assumes no FTE change but they will need to learn new skills) - Schools - Vacated building x 2 (opportunities for Ruthin Gaol heritage attraction to expand) - Better physical access for users - Health partners - New target audiences which will be developed by the project - Disability (mental health, Dementia, dyslexia); Young people (toddlers, schoolchildren 5 – 18, students 18 – 22, young people 14 – 21, young carers); LGBT+; Low income groups; Prisoners - Library users and staff -

North East Wales Joint Archive Project

Archive Volunteers - Archive Depositors (existing and potential) - Members and other politicians -
Theatr Clwyd (the organisation and its users) - Businesses in Ruthin

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

The proposed purpose built archive centre will be built to passivhaus standards in the storage area and net carbon zero in all other areas. This will help to reduce energy consumption and energy costs substantially. The plans are for Denbighshire's Heritage Service to use the vacated space at the Gaol to expand their visitor attraction. Ruthin Gaols should have reduced energy consumption and costs associated to it (with no archives being stored).

Prevention

The planned activity programme will improve the well-being and health of individuals. This should reduce reliance on other public services. The environmentally friendly new archive centre has been designed to minimise carbon emissions. The grounds and natural landscape will be developed.

Integration

The project links to the majority of well-being goals and the corporate priorities of both FCC & DCC and other public sector organisations.

Collaboration

The North East Wales Archives is a collaboration between Denbighshire County Council and Flintshire County Council. There are a lot of collaboration with other groups / organisations e.g.

Theatr Clwyd, HMP Berwyn, schools, libraries, care homes, voluntary organisations and this collaboration will continue once the building is open to the public.

Involvement

Engagement has been a fundamental aspect of this project. Current service users and non-users have all been consulted with. Partners, local MAG and other stakeholders have all been consulted with.

Summary of impact

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 responsible Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

Some of the details surrounding the proposed new archive centre are still to be determined but the fundamental principle of combining the resources of NEWA into one building, enables the service to deliver a 'hub and spoke' delivery model. This will see NEWA having an increased presence out in local communities. Taking archives out to local communities and using them to inform, educate and

North East Wales Joint Archive Project

entertain will deliver positive outcomes for all involved. Local communities will have better access to the service, be better informed about their history, heritage and culture, leading to greater awareness, improved well-being and lead to changes in behaviour.

The project's contribution to skills and volunteering also supports many of these wellbeing goals.

The vacated space at Ruthin Gaol will be used to expand the heritage attraction on this site. This will increase footfall and boost the local economy in Ruthin and surrounding areas.

The passivahus / net carbon zero design for the new building will help ensure NEWA is operating from a building that is contributing towards improved environmental standards.

On the whole this project will contribute greatly to the Council's duty under the Future Generations Act and meet its obligation in the Council Plan.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Positive as the new environmentally friendly archive centre will contribute positively to low carbon society and facilitate increases in visitors to the region.

The planned 'hub and spoke' operating model for NEWA should have a positive impact in Denbighshire communities.

Bringing NEWA's resources together under one roof will help to provide greater opportunities for upskilling team members, volunteers and apprentices.

The planned heritage expansion plans for Ruthin Gaol will increase footfall and improve the local economy in the local area. The expanded heritage attraction is likely to attract a far greater number of visitors compared to that of the archive service.

The project will deliver upskilling in staff and users and within target audiences.

Further actions required

We need to continue working on the heritage expansion plans for Ruthin Gaol and ensuring that an enhanced visitor attraction is developed.

Should consider more the positive impact this project can have on tourism across the region.

Bus services do stop at the site but this is not frequently. As demand is known pressure could be applied to consider improved transport links. Also consider electric vehicle availability for staff use which would be a mitigating factor.

There are extensive plans for the Ruthin Gaol site which will build on the offer that Ruthin has for its residents and visitors. This will benefit the local economy.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

The new building will be built to Passivhaus standards in the storage area and net carbon zero in all other areas. Reducing energy and carbon substantially.

There will be solar panels on the new building.

Reduced carbon emissions at Ruthin Gaol with archive's environmental management system not needing to be operated.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

We are removing the flood risk associated with remaining at Ruthin Gaol.

We are proposing to increase archives infrastructure and resilience by creating outreach services in easy to reach buildings and areas e.g. libraries, community centres, schools etc.

There is good mobile infrastructure.

Theatr Clwyd refurbishment plans may include changes to the bus services.

Economic development

The Heritage service's plans for an expanded attraction at Ruthin Gaol using the vacated space, will have a positive economic impact in Ruthin with increased footfall, community space, café, local engagement. This will attract footfall to Clwyd Street and improve the economy in this part of town.

Quality skills for the long term

Opportunities for archives to support schools with the new curriculum e.g. sense of place (Cynefin).

Increased engagement with groups e.g. libraries, schools, HMP Berwyn, Glyndwr University, helping to increase skills, literacy, numeracy and knowledge of local history.

The project will allow us to offer an much larger volunteers programme by having all staff in one location.

Opportunities for a more exciting and wider work programme for volunteers.

North East Wales Joint Archive Project

Also opportunities for staff to develop new skills for the long term.

The project will also allow us to take on more work experience and apprentices.

Succession options for conservator functions can be considered.

Quality jobs for the long term

Improved opportunities for up-skilling the workforce and for working with a wider range of users.

Skills transfer opportunities, working with partners and short terms contractors.

The improved access facilities will allow us to employ a more diverse workforce.

Easier for recruitment for NEWA by being in a new and modern archive centre.

Childcare

Having all of the NEWA team together and running one search-room an operating one building, will create enhanced opportunities for working from home.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Staff and users potentially travelling longer distances by private car, although there will be a lot of outreach work in libraries and schools which could be closer to their home. There is potential of having an electric vehicle available for staff to use too.

The Gaol will still need to be maintained and heated, continuing to contribute to DCC's carbon emissions (albeit at a lower consumption rate).

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Access to the proposed site via public transport is challenging. This is a challenge across both Counties in existing state- not necessarily any worse in new state but should be noted.

There is a safe walking route from the town to the site although the distance may be daunting to walkers.

Economic development

There is a risk that Heritage Service may not secure all of the necessary funding to develop all parts of the Gaol and this may limit the expanded heritage attraction and reduce the economic impact.

Quality skills for the long term

Sustainability of skills sets is reliant on training budgets, which have been reduced in recent times.

Quality jobs for the long term

Potential restructure over the longer term could affect staff.

Childcare

Not yet known

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

Passivhaus design of proposed new archive centre will contribute positively to energy and fuel consumption.. Ruthin Gaol energy use should also reduce with the archives environmental management system not needing to be used.

By working together and achieving the same aim of a positive outcome. The landscaping plans for the new site will enhance the natural area and connect to the surrounding landscape.

Further actions required

Loss of trees would be off set by re-landscaping the area

Electric vehicle for staff use.

Need to consider waste and recycling.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

No protected species currently on the site or at either existing site.

Biodiversity in the built environment

No protected species currently. Formalised garden and landscape area, particularly focussed on being dementia friendly.

We propose to take a re-wilding approach that is sympathetic to the preservation of archive materials (e.g. no increase in paper-eating insects).

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Construction will consider using sustainable recycled materials and there will be an emphasis on the contractor to reduce waste on site (as part of the waste management plan). There will be a cultural change in the new building on how we recycle and reuse.

When moving out of a building, consideration needs to be made with the furniture, fixtures and fittings left behind and whether these can potentially be gifted to schools or that CAD recycling can repurpose them. Archive racking in the Gaol could potentially be recycled by being used by Denbighshire Heritage service.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The passivhaus and carbon net zero building plans do include solar PV but may be substituted with link to solar farm when that comes online.

The planned heritage expansion plans at Ruthin Gaol are likely to require less energy consumption.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Proposed to have interpretation boards within the landscaped area along walk ways.

Spaces created for people to stop and sit and be with nature.

Iconic building will attract lots of people to the building as well as the archives service.

Flood risk management

Landscaping will factor in water attenuation and include sustainable drainage system.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Loss of some trees that are of limited ecological value. Landscaping will make up the removal of this.

Biodiversity in the built environment

Not yet known

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No known impacts - to be considered

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Possible increase in some staff travel

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Not yet known

Flood risk management

Not yet known

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Positive impact on mental health and wellbeing is a core aim of the this project, particularly the broad and exciting activity plan.

Need to manage carefully the change in location and approach of the archive service delivery for existing users so any detrimental impacts are lessened/avoided.

Further actions required

People with invisible disabilities who would like to participate but the environment might not be suitable - this needs to be considered.

Supporting change process amongst staff and users required

Positive impacts identified:

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

The 'hub and spoke' delivery model aims to use archives to improve the health and well-being of individuals.

NEWA will be designed to be more accessible to Denbighshire residents.

Dedicated space for learning. The well-being goals are being embedded in curriculum and there are opportunities to promote the facility to schools.

Physical space will be a safe place for all and more accessible to more people, with different needs.

Access to good quality, healthy food

Theatr Clwyd cafe and restaurant plans - using local food. Refreshments also available at another site within walking distance.

People's emotional and mental well-being

The outreach programme will take the archives out to local communities - educating and improving health and well-being of individuals

The 'hub and spoke' delivery model provides greater opportunities to deliver an outreach programme that will improve the health and well-being of the communities in Denbighshire.

Opportunities to bring people together to combat loneliness.

Opportunities to use primary archive material in dementia- visiting places of interest as well as archive material.

Helping people with loss - remembering loved ones, how and when and where they live.

Opportunities to learn and to volunteer which increase wellbeing.

Access to healthcare

Opportunities to link in with social prescribing to treat conditions.

Longer opening hours.

Planned engagement activities may relieve some pressure on care providers.

Participation in leisure opportunities

Activity programme out in communities.

Both increasing opportunities for participation. Also these activities will be designed to target groups that don't normally participate.

Negative impacts identified:

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

Reliance on cars to get to the NEW Archives Service location potentially reducing active travel

options.

Access to good quality, healthy food

None

People's emotional and mental well-being

Impact on regular users about this change- location of archive - need to be managed carefully

Access to healthcare

Not yet known

Participation in leisure opportunities

none

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The target audiences that this project will develop include those with protected characteristics.

To ensure this remains positive the project will need to manage the potential contention of increasing and opening access at same time as needing to deliver a resilient service.

Further actions required

Project will benefit from clear branding for activity programme and careful scheduling of activities at the site to ensure a welcoming and appropriate environment for all users.

Activity plan will have an increased focus on those from such groups

The building environment will ensure that its accessible and comfortable for all .

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

Target audiences include - living with dementia, mental health, families, LGBTQ+, those with protected characteristics and for those to be involved in a service where they may not have had an opportunity to do so before.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

Activity plan target audiences include: Prisoners, LGBTQ+, Dementia. The programme will include active engagement with such groups.

Ways archive operate and collections held may change by this engagement.

Creating vibrant environment.

Encourage a safe place for all.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Basic archive function will remain free at point of access.

Some targeted groups will receive free activities

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

Often those with other protected characteristics above also lower economic background too so increasing provision and outcomes for these groups will also be positive in this category.

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

none

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

Need to ensure that those on lower incomes are not excluded due to travel to new hub or any fees and charges regime

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Fees and charges may be a barrier.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

Facilitating people to come to site who may not be able to afford transport- may miss out

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The benefits of the project will bring to community participation, belonging, identity and reliance makes this impact positive.

Further actions required

The Activity Plan will involve working with many organisations across the 2 authorities and also include outreach work - taking the NEW Archives Service into all parts of the counties.

Scope to work with library services in the 2 counties and that a lot of community groups either meet at these locations or have close links with them.

The approaching area will be landscaped enabling visitors to enjoy the outdoors during their visit.

An archive presence will remain at Ruthin gaol.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

Skills building in partnership with HMP Berwyn reducing the likelihood of reoffending and increasing skills. Positive engagement with prison staff on how the project will work once opened.

Helping to create a feeling of sense and understanding of history and area for local communities.

Community participation and resilience

Activity Plan with under-represented parts of our community will help in collecting and preserving their stories and widen our collections.

The project aims to engage with a broader range of stakeholders.

Connection with the Theatre could lead to greater interaction with our shared heritage and history.

Opportunities for volunteering and apprenticeships will increase.

The attractiveness of the area

Local projects to improve the area- connecting people to deliver e.g. memorials- in villages etc.

An enhanced heritage visitor attraction at Ruthin Gaol will make this location more desirable.

Connected communities

A lot of the activity plan will involve work out in communities and therefore taking the offer out to them. There would also be online resources and digital availability was deemed high on a recent survey with users.

Using heritage to generate feeling of belonging.

Increased reason to visit local libraries and other community locations

Activity Plan will include student placements, and volunteering opportunities.

Rural resilience

Potential to increase visitors into Ruthin if ambitions around Ruthin Gaol are realised.

Activity programme- more outreach going to rural isolated areas.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

none

Community participation and resilience

Need to manage any sense of loss of service in Ruthin community. This will be mitigated via increased activities out in local communities.

An archive presence will remain at Ruthin Gaol with an Archivist onsite one day each week.

The attractiveness of the area

none

Connected communities

Longer travelling times for some, maybe a barrier. This will be mitigated through increased work out in communities. Many communities will have greater access to archives through the community engagement programme.

An archive presence will also remain at Ruthin Gaol.

Rural resilience

Feeling of loss of a key public service in Ruthin (although will be replaced with enhanced heritage attraction).

An archive presence will also remain at Ruthin Gaol.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

This project will increase the exposure to Denbighshire's rich culture and heritage and increase the access to it.

The collections have a lot of Welsh relevant aspects to them and the project will mean these are better cared for and interpreted and shared.

Individuals will have a greater understanding our our history, culture and heritage.

Further actions required

There are plans to build on the current offer of Ruthin Gaol once the archives service has vacated, this is part of a long term plan. The heritage service has plans to use the vacated space to create an enhanced heritage attraction. Some funds have been made available for this and other external sources of funding are being explored.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

All NEWA activities will be bilingual.

More opportunities for the wider NEWA team to learn Welsh.

Welsh language collections taken out to local communities.

Bilingual team

Promoting the Welsh language

Better utilisation of NEWA's Welsh language collections and using them to inform and educate

communities in Denbighshire of their rich cultural heritage.

Global draw.

Showcasing Welsh culture.

Bringing together Welsh language collections.

Bilingual team

Culture and heritage

Located near the Theatre will lead to the creation of a cultural/heritage campus.

Opportunity for expansion of existing heritage attraction at Ruthin Gaol (items of interest, education room etc).

The planned outreach work will help to promote and education on Denbighshire's culture and heritage.

The new curriculum in Wales promotes a sense of place (Cynefin), which can be supported via archives.

Facilities around culture and heritage in localities (libraries and temporary community programme)- more spread than just the 2 locations currently.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No negative impacts

Promoting the Welsh language

n/a

Culture and heritage

n/a

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

On the whole the project is assessed as positive on global responsibility.

Reduced emissions.

An archive service that is available across the region (rather than just having to travel to Ruthin)

Increased digital access

Further actions required

Opportunities around procurement/supply chain to facilitate good outcomes in this area should be taken at the appropriate time, especially with the construction contract.

Electric vehicle for staff

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The net carbon zero/passivhaus design reduces reliance on fuel which is a finite commodity and imported from abroad. Some materials may need to be sourced from further afield and there will be pressure on the contractor to purchase locally.

Human rights

Target audience include those with dementia which tend to be those who are older.

Potential partnership with Alzheimers society and contribute to being a Dementia Friendly organisation.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

Archives activities will be spread more broadly across Denbighshire, rather than the current situation with a focus on Ruthin.

There are great opportunities to engage with partners on the Activity Plan and to get them engaged once the funding is approved. This will help partners to achieve their objectives.

Reducing climate change

Net Carbon Zero/Passivhaus building.

Digital resources will reduce the need for people to travel.

Reduced omissions from new archive centre and Ruthin Gaol.

Taking the archive service out to local communities, should reduce the need to ravel for some.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

Materials used for the build potentially originated from further afield

Human rights

none

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

none

Reducing climate change

Possible increased staff travel.

	Option 1 - Joint Service 2 sites: Ruthin Gaol and Hawarden Rectory	Option 2 - Preferred Option Joint Service New Build Adjacent to Theatr Clwyd	Option 3 Joint service 2 sites - Hawarden Rectory & another site in Denbighshire	Option 4 - Joint Service Outsource Storage and Access at the Gaol
Capital costs	The archive specific M&E systems are at the end of their lives and a realistic cost to replace would be circa £1.13M – but life expectancy of the new systems would be limited due to the unsuitable building fabric – so would need replacing every 15 years. All for no tangible benefit – i.e. the building would still be too small and unsuitable.	£2,052,359 m from DCC (15.92% of total cost) £12,892,294 m in total £7.31 m from NLHF & £3,078,538 m from FCC	Based on feasibility work undertaken, minimum of £5.9m capital costs for a new building, but loss of opportunity cost relative to this site. Minimum of £6.7 for a refurbished building in DCC, but associated costs to relocate other goods/services. Opportunity to apply for grant funding, but not as attractive a proposition for funders. Likely that DCC would need to pay for a substantial proportion. Other project costs such as project management, ICT set up, decant and recant of archive, activity plan are not included. Cost to relocate any service displaced not included.	None
Revenue costs	Prudential borrowing estimated to be £103,414 + additional cost of off site storage & retrieval costs for all further deposits received, increasing year on year. Base budget insufficient to cover this. Exposed to market rate increases. All costs to be paid for by DCC	Prudential borrowing -£136,071k Operational costs going forwards shared with FCC.	Prudential borrowing - £274,953 Revenue costs per m2 associated with new build likely to be higher than those for new build next to the theatre, as costs based on achieving carbon net zero for the whole building, (i.e. repository not to PassivHaus specification). Revenue costs for a refurbishment likely to be higher again as retro fitting into existing building and systems. 100% of revenue costs to be borne by DCC.	An estimated extra £120k per year for storage, retrieval and return costs, and still need staff function and a facility for archive users to view archival material. Exposed to market rates and price increases. Estimated an addition £50k one off cost for collection and transfer of records. All costs to be paid for by DCC
Accreditation	Risks to losing accreditation status associated with concerns on storage, unfit buildings, flood risks, lack of engagement and digital preservation	Accreditation status assured for the long-term.	Accreditation risks associated with building are reduced- currently have joint accreditation so relates to both buildings	Will require consultation with WAG but potential loss of accreditation with limited access provision
Carbon emissions	Increasing carbon emissions continuing from 2 old sites	Significant reduction in carbon emissions from a passivhaus / carbon net zero single building. Carbon for new building wholly owned by FCC, but 40% of carbon in operation owned by DCC. Carbon emissions will continue to be emitted by Ruthin gaol but at a reduced rate as environmental management equipment not needed.	Unknown, but new build in DCC likely to be higher than Option 2 as whole building to carbon net zero. Refurbishment of existing building likely to be considerably higher as retro fitting. Carbon emissions for new build owned by DCC, and liable for 100% of carbon in operation	Increased carbon emissions with transporting of records between Ruthin Gaol and Storage provider
Staff resilience	Some staff resilience 9 staff in Hawarden and 4 at Ruthin Some flexibility with Officers able to support each site when there are staff shortages or skills are needed.	Excellent staff resilience. 13 members of the team being together and operating in one building	Some staff resilience 9 staff in Hawarden and 4 at Ruthin Officers able to support each site when there are staff shortages or skills are needed.	Some staff resilience 7 staff in Hawarden and 4 at Ruthin Officers able to support each site when there are staff shortages or skills are needed.
Staff Activities	Having 2 sites to manage and operate leaves little time for engagement, digitisation, volunteers management, cataloguing, promoting deposits of new collections etc. Focus on storage and search room activities only.	Just one building to manage and operate from will free up time for Officers to focus on other tasks, such as engagement, digitisation, volunteers management, cataloguing, promoting deposits of new collections etc. Allows for continual presence at Ruthin in 46 Clwyd Street.	Having 2 sites to manage and operate leaves little time for engagement, digitisation, volunteers management, cataloguing, promoting deposits of new collections etc. Focus on storage and search room activities only.	Mainly targeted at arranging the receiving and returning of archival documents, supporting service users with interpretation of documents, cataloguing, accessioning new deposits, conservation activities, managing bookings.
Opening Hours	Having 2 sites to manage and operate leaves little capacity to extend opening hours beyond the current 3 days each week in each site. Lack of demand for additional opening hours.	All of the team together in one building, presents opportunities to increase opening hours (possible evenings and weekends) Accommodate the anticipated extra demand.	Having 2 sites to manage and operate leaves little capacity to extend opening hours beyond the current 3 days each week in each site. Lack of demand for additional opening hours.	No capacity to increase hours
Numbers of service users	Little change in numbers of users visiting our sites is expected. A limited increase is expected in numbers of individuals using the service via the small-scale outreach programme	NEWA Ruthin received 500 visits during 2023 (1200 across both sites). A significant increase in visitors to the new archive centre is expected. The outreach programme will bring archives to thousands of additional people each year. Shared footfall with Theatr	Probable limited increase in numbers of users visiting our service at the new building- may be dependant on location chosen	Likely to decline. A reduced service with bookings only and no walk-ins

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Digitisation	A limited digitisation programme Some digitisation equipment at both sites	A significant digitisation programme A dedicated digitisation suite in new building Staff capacity available to commit to digitisation	A limited digitisation programme 1 Officer dedicated to digitising and supporting digital access Some digitisation equipment at both sites	Small scale digitisation achievable with staff resources
Conservation	Limited collections care 1 Conservator to look at collections care across both sites Collections split amongst 2 sites will hinder progress A conservation studio at Hawarden with old equipment No conservation facilities at Ruthin	Excellent collections care 1 Conservator to look at collections care. This is made easier when collections are all located in same building. A dedicated modern conservation studio	Limited collections care 1 Conservator to look at collections care across both sites Collections split amongst 2 sites will hinder progress A conservation studio at Hawarden with old equipment No conservation facilities at Ruthin	Minimal with collections held off site
Storage	No spare storage left at Ruthin. Will need to start paying for commercial storage outside of DCC (estimated £3k increase p.a) Some old shelving will need replacing at the Gaol at a cost	Collections protected and preserved for the long-term with new shelving and environmental management system 25 years storage and expansion Area identified adjacent to the repository for future expansion beyond initial 25 years, which would be subject to further investment at that point.	Storage requirements for now and the next 25 years could be met by new site	Storage at commercial provider that meets archival standards
Events & exhibitions	Limited opportunities No dedicated space for such activities	Increased staff capacity and facilities provides opportunities for events and exhibitions on Denbighshire's rich documentary history A dedicated education room available at centre for such activities Outreach programme provides opportunities for events and exhibitions out in local communities Digital exhibitions opportunities	New or refurbished building (as per costs stated above), don't have on site provision for anything but a basic service offer. Limited outreach programme could provide opportunities for events and exhibitions out in local communities Digital exhibitions opportunities	Minimal with collections held off site
Outreach	Minimal engagement work	Large scale outreach programme - bringing the stories from the archives out to local communities and being used to educate, inform, entertain and facilitate a change in behaviour. Partners will be used to support this - libraries, HMP Berwyn, schools, Charities, Voluntary Sector, Theatr Clwyd etc. Denbighshire's rich cultural heritage will be brought to life. A wider and diverse range of individuals will use archives Located in one building releases staff time to support this activity	Some limited engagement work - mainly at libraries. If wanting to attract NLHF funding for DCC build, a more extensive engagement programme would be required and included in the project cost.	Minimal with collections held off site and little staff capacity
Volunteers	Small scale volunteers programme (a handful on each site)	Large scale volunteers programme (20+ weekly)	Small scale volunteers programme (a handful on each site)	Minimal with collections held off site
Marketing & Comms	Small scale social media campaigns	Large scale social media campaigns	Small scale social media campaigns	Small scale social media presence achievable with staff resources
Knowledge transfer & upskilling	A team operating over 2 sites, provides limited opportunities for knowledge transfer and upskilling	All of the team operating in one building provides opportunities for knowledge transfer and upskilling across the workforce	A team operating over 2 sites, provides limited opportunities for knowledge transfer and upskilling	A team operating over 2 sites, provides limited opportunities for knowledge transfer and upskilling
Economic impact	No change in local economy for Ruthin Heritage expansion plans unable to proceed.	The expanded heritage offer planned for Ruthin Gaol is likely to provide an increased number of visitors to the area and have a positive economic impact on Ruthin and surrounding areas.	Probable positive economic impact for new location	Likely a negative impact on local economy with reduced numbers of visitors at Ruthin

	Option 1 - Joint Service 2 sites: Ruthin Gaol and Hawarden Rectory	Option 2 - Preferred Option Joint Service New Build Adjacent to Theatr Clwyd	Option 3 Joint service 2 sites - Hawarden Rectory & another site in Denbighshire	Option 4 - Joint Service Outsource Storage and Access at the Gaol
Collections	Limited collections care with 1 conservator looking after collections across both sites Collections at risk from flooding in Ruthin Collections at risk with old environmental equipment and storage at Ruthin Gaol Limited utilisation of collections Some collections will have to be stored at commercial storage providers. Limited opportunities for raising profile of collections and using them to educate, inform and entertain. Unable to proactively encourage deposits with lack of available storage Split collections remain Denbighshire's rich documentary heritage will remain hidden to many	Improved environmental conditions will mean that our collections are better protected and preserved for future generations. Denbighshire's collections better utilised and will be brought to life for all. Conservator able to better care for collections (all in one place with better facilities). Collections made more accessible. Greater awareness of collections. Increased storage enables proactive gathering of new collections. Can encourage new deposits Opportunities for widening and diversifying our collections, so that they better reflect local communities. Previously split collections can be reunited .	Improved environmental conditions will mean that our collections are better protected and preserved for future generations. Limited collections care with 1 conservator looking after collections across both sites Limited utilisation of collections Limited opportunities for raising profile of collections and using them to educate, inform and entertain. Can proactively encourage deposits with space available Split collections remain Denbighshire's rich documentary heritage will remain hidden to many	Existing collections kept at storage provider that meets standards Limited utilisation of collections Limited opportunities for raising profile of collections and using them to educate, inform and entertain. Unable to proactively encourage deposits with increase in storage costs every time we take in a new deposit Split collections remain. Unable to catalogue collectons or apply preservation. Denbighshire's rich documentary heritage will remain hidden to many Risk to collections care with travel back and forth
Income	Limited scope to increase income.	Although many activities will be free, combining resources, benefitting from the new building facilities and outreach programme, do all provide opportunities to increase income e.g. events, exhibitions, talks, seminars etc. Expansion of online shop facilitates provides extra income	Limited scope to increase income.	Limited scope to increase income.
Funding Cuts	Any future funding cuts will impact on public service delivery and also risk accreditation	Any future funding cuts could be asorbed without a significant deteremntal impact on public service delivery and accreditation	Any future funding cuts will impact on public service delivery and also risk accreditation. Less reliance in this model to manage future funding cuts	Any future funding cuts will impact on a further reduced public service
External Funding Opportunities	No NLHF investment Any increased capital or revenue costs will need to be met by DCC Any external grant applications are stronger by being a joint service FCC still left with building issues at Hawarden and will look for alternative site.	Increased probability of £7 million NLHF investment with co-location with Theatr Clwyd and opportunities for engagement Any external grant applications are stronger by being a joint service	Reduced likelihood of significant NLHF investment All capital costs likely to have to come from DCC Any external grant applications are stronger by being a joint service FCC still left with building issues at Hawarden and will look for alternative site. FCC and DCC may be in an embarrassing situation of competing for same funding pots.	Loss of accreditation will harm any future funding bids.

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Archifau Gogledd Ddwyrain Cymru
North East Wales Archives

Creative Archives/ Archifau Creadigol Project Overview

November 2023



Unlocking potential and innovation

Creative Archives will build a new joint archive for North East Wales Archives (NEWA) next to Theatr Clwyd, a nationally important producing theatre. Our partnership with Theatr Clwyd will enable us to use our rich collections as a source for storytelling and performance to reach out to new audiences, transforming our service and influencing archive audience engagement practice across the UK. This is our big idea and the thing that we will become known for.

NEWA, formed in April 2020 when Denbighshire Archives (Ruthin) and Flintshire Record Office (Hawarden) came together to offer a joint service for the region, bringing together their nationally important archive collections. The aim is to establish a stronger, more resilient and sustainable archive service for the region. Currently operating across its existing two offices in Ruthin and Hawarden, the joint service has a rich archive of 5,000 collections, in both Welsh and English, that tell the stories of individuals, communities, families, estates, businesses, local government and churches over 900 years and the impact their lives and decisions had on local, regional and national history and identity.

NEWA's ambition to reach out and engage with new audiences is hampered by a lack of resources, expertise and having two buildings that are not fit for purpose. NEWA's current buildings are not fit for purpose. They both lack quality public spaces for learning, exhibitions and relaxing. Ruthin Gaol and Hawarden Old Rectory are full, which makes proactive collection difficult and most of the stores are not compliant with British Standards for storage of archives. There are no dedicated facilities for document reception, sorting, accessioning, cataloguing, cleaning or isolation. Hawarden Old Rectory is prone to leaks and Ruthin Gaol experiences flooding, with the most recent incident occurring in January 2021. This is placing the collections at risk.

Given the lack of storage, minimal opportunities for growth, escalating costs and building limitations, staying at Ruthin Gaol and Hawarden Old Rectory do not represent long-term and sustainable options for the NEWA. The huge potential for more and a wider range of people across the region to engage with its documentary history is difficult to realise within the current facilities. A move to a purpose-built, net carbon zero archive centre, provides NEWA with the best opportunity to look after the rich documentary heritage for North East Wales for generations to come and to put people at the heart of the service.

The investment from the National Lottery Heritage Fund will unlock the potential of our archive collections and enable us to seize the opportunities for collaborative working and reaching new audiences.

Our relationship with Theatr Clwyd has been growing in strength over the past two years. In 2019 Theatr Clwyd recreated the Mold Riots on the streets of Mold, inspired by the stories in our archive and delivered by 200 community participants. During 2021 we piloted four filmed monologues, based on characters in the collections and now showing on YouTube. During 2023 we worked with the Theatr's creative writing group and introduced them to archives and their hidden stories. These joint projects mean that both organisations have come to realise the power of the stories held in the collections and the power of drama to reach new audiences. Our partnership with Theatr Clwyd underpins our outline activity programme and we can utilise their skills, experience and networks to reach our priority audiences.

Our priority audiences have been identified as:

- Prisoners in HMP Berwyn
- LGBTQ+ groups
- Young people 14-25

- People with dementia
- People with poor mental health
- Families with children under 11 years
- Schools

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and low-income communities will be cross-cutting themes across all seven target audiences.

We have spoken with representatives from every single one of these target audience groups and developed ideas for collaborative working and using their expertise to upskill our staff and volunteers and co-create and deliver the activity programmes.

Our innovative way of collaborative working, which uses the power of stories to engage new audiences, is exemplified by our opening exhibition. Created with the prisoners from HMP Berwyn, the exhibition will use their lived experiences to research and retell the lives of patients from records in the North Wales Asylum collection.

Drama, music, dance and creative writing will be woven into all our activity programmes, as a tool to unlock the stories in the archive. We will work with Theatr Clwyd to film monologues, to tell stories about LGBTQ+ lived experience, to create intergenerational performances based on the stories in the collections, unlocking memories for people with dementia and creating a new drama to tour to schools in the region. We are committed to delivering all our programmes bilingually.

The design of our joint archive centre reflects our ambition to engage with audiences in new and different ways. A net carbon zero building, it contains learning spaces for creative activities, a digital lab and separate research rooms for quiet researchers and noisy explorers. Behind the scenes there will be a state-of-the-art conservation studio and collections handling areas and storage areas, all adhering to the PD5454 standard.

Beyond the new building, NEWA is committed to delivering its services across the region through its network of libraries and in specific locations, such as the former archive location at Ruthin Gaol and in Gladstone's Library in Hawarden, where people might feel that their service has been withdrawn.

Online access to the collections is critical to engaging with new audiences and taking the archives out beyond our walls. The Covid 19 pandemic has emphasized the importance of digital engagement. The project will see a programme of digitisation of collections online, development of the NEWA website, social media channels and other digital activities.

We recognise that this is a massive transformation for our staff and volunteers. We have built in change management training to support people through the change. A revised team structure supported by a training programme will allow for the activity plan to be delivered using internal resources. Realigning internal resources strengthens the sustainability of the programme. By working in collaboration, we will learn from delivery partners.

Additional funding sources will be explored throughout the project's duration.

Throughout the development and delivery phases of the project, Welsh language, culture and heritage will be at its heart. Our Welsh language collections will be used as part of the activity programme and the archive centre will have a Welsh name. Welsh language standards will be followed throughout. As a local authority, all translation costs are paid for via a corporate budget.

PROJECT CHANGES SINCE HERITAGE HORIZON FUND APPLICATION

Following our unsuccessful application for the Heritage Horizon Fund, we have had to reduce project costs somewhat, so that it fits within the new funding envelope. We have attempted to achieve this whilst maintaining the project's ambition.

The project cost has been reduced from £16.5 million to circa £12 million.

The building design has undergone some changes. The building has been through a thorough re-evaluation exercise that has scrutinised every aspect of the initial design. This has resulted in several changes, which are outlined in detail within the feasibility report (see supporting document). The environmental standard for the building has changed from passivhaus to net carbon zero. Whilst passivhaus would have been the optimum standard to aim for, a net carbon zero building provides an exceptionally high environmental standard whilst reducing capital costs; that said, because of the strict environmental controls applied to the repository it will be built to passivhaus standards but not accredited. Discussions with Theatr Clwyd have presented opportunities to utilise their excellent exhibition facilities rather than have our own, so this has been removed from the building design. A new shelving layout has been developed that significantly reduces floor space in the repository area. The building has also seen a reduction in some room sizes, such as the self-service area, search-room, staff areas, storage areas and digitisation space. The changes outlined have resulted in the building size reducing from 3000m² to 2100m².

The activity plan remains intact and maintains the project's ambition to engage with priority audiences. A Community Engagement Officer was employed in December 2022 and has been working on building relationships with delivery partners, consulting with stakeholders and piloting some activities. This work has helped to further inform the development of the outline activity plan. The costs associated with the activity plan and worked with delivery partners in order to reduce them. An example of where this has been achieved is our opening exhibition, which will now be located in Theatr Clwyd's exhibition area and supported by a digital exhibition. Student placement costs have been eliminated, as funding is available via the further education and higher education sector (to be explored further in the Development Phase). Apprenticeship costs have been removed, as these will be included as part of the community benefits element of the construction framework.

Another key change has been a shift to using the NEWA team to develop and deliver the activity plan rather than hiring costly consultants. It's felt that a skills analysis and a revised team structure supported by a suitable training and mentoring programme will enable the NEWA team to deliver the activities. Sufficient time away from normal duties will be provided to the NEWA team in order to support the transition; this will include reducing opening hours and re-prioritising tasks during this period. This approach will also place the team in a better position to deliver activities for the long-term rather than just for the project's duration.

We have also had to provide assurance to both local authorities that a new build on the site next to Theatr Clwyd remains the best option. A feasibility study was undertaken during 2023 that looked at several sites and considered retrofitting of existing building and new builds. The conclusion from this study was that a new build next to Theatr Clwyd remains the best option both from a cost perspective and the opportunities it offers for engagement work.

COVID 19

We have analysed the programme in the light of the recent pandemic and concluded that the project proposals are still relevant and deliverable and that COVID has not had and will not have a negative impact on the project. The pandemic has demonstrated the growing importance of online access to information and digital engagement. Digital represents a key enabler for the Creative Archives project. A Digital Strategy has been developed to provide a strategic direction for NEWA. The digital strategy initiates the process of reimagining what an archives service for North East Wales can be in a digital age and outlines the approach NEWA will take in utilising its digital capabilities in order to widen its scope and audience base.

Digital will be a dimension of all activities of NEWA, its building, its people, processes and systems. It will be integrated within all our thinking. When a new activity is initiated, NEWA will identify whether this activity is primarily a digital activity, how digital media and technology can support it, and how it can contribute to the digital ambition of NEWA. Furthermore, digital will be used to make NEWA's processes more efficient and sustainable.

We will reach out beyond North East Wales through our website, social media and online resources, including webinars and podcasts.

Shared learning

NEWA wants to be the lead body in the archives sector for creative engagement. It's important that throughout the project, lessons are learned from this innovative work programme and that these are shared across the sector. The Creative Archives project will ensure a thorough evaluation is undertaken, the results of which will be published.

NEWA will also ensure that throughout the duration of the project and beyond, the knowledge gained is shared via meetings, seminars and workshops. Articles will be written for online media outlets and trade periodicals. NEWA is a member of various regional and national archive bodies and there is a commitment to share learning within these arenas, so that other archive services and the heritage sector as a whole, can learn from the Creative Archives project.

Priority outcomes

Engaging with new and different audiences is a driver for Creative Archives and through our evaluation we will demonstrate how we have brought about positive changes to people, places and the heritage sector as a whole.

We know, for example, that our current users are older, white, middle class and well educated and through our proactive engagement programmes we will be able to quantify the change in profile. Through the emphasis on local stories we will measure increased interest in the heritage of the local area and pride in the history, Welsh identity and culture.

There will be a training programme underpinning the activity programme for staff, volunteers and community partners, including skills training and change management training to prepare and up-skill the staff for the transition.

Our activity programme and project work will provide opportunities for our priority audiences to gain skills, such as prisoners in HMP Berwyn gaining research skills; LGBTQ+ individuals, young people and children learning new storytelling and media skills;

Duke of Edinburgh award volunteers gaining guiding and leadership skills and teachers learning about using the archives to support their teaching.

Two of our priority audiences are people with dementia and those with poor mental health. Theatr Clwyd already works successfully with these groups and with expert organisations to deliver their programmes. We will work with Theatr Clwyd's knowledge to build on their programmes and add new dimensions to their work.

But we aim to embed wellbeing opportunities throughout our activity programme through, for example, our work with prisoners, our onsite and online volunteering programmes, drama workshops for young people and reminiscence work with LGBTQ+ groups.

Through our evaluation we will test the wellbeing impact of these specific programmes and the more general programmes, such as our onsite and online volunteering programmes, drama workshops and reminiscence work, using recognised wellbeing measures to assess the impact, testing whether people feel happier, more satisfied, less anxious and more connected to people around them and to the place they live.

A Community Engagement Officer was appointed during late 2022 to begin building relationships with delivery partners and piloting activities. A Community Officer role will be created during the development phase to continue with this work. The role will also play a key role in furthering this work with development and delivery of the activity plan. The Community Officer will be supported by a revised NEWA team structure that's better aligned to the new delivery model. NEWA will undergo a change management process so that the new ways of working and new attitudes are firmly rooted in the organisation. At the same time new volunteers will be recruited and new expert delivery partners identified, expanding the knowledge, capacity and capability of the organisation.

We will measure the increase in management and staff skills through appraisals and workshops while diversification of income will be reflected in a robust business plan.

During the Covid pandemic we have seen how important digital provision and engagement has been and our programmes to make the collections more accessible online, virtual volunteering, improving our website and social media will make our service more resilient and able to cope with shut-down of our onsite services.

Together with Theatr Clwyd, NEWA will be a focal point for local and regional community engagement and pride. More than that, through family, adult and schools' programmes and online access, we will take the archives out into those communities into libraries and community centres.

We will measure the impact of NEWA and its outreach on the community through online surveys, individual and group consultation, with local people and tourists recognising the positive contribution that NEWA makes to the local area. We will pay particular attention to the feedback we receive from Ruthin and Hawarden residents and be responsive to their opinion and comment.

Already a major destination for North Wales, Theatr Clwyd's refurbished building is due to open in 2026 with the proposed new archive centre soon after, thereby creating a new, vibrant hub for the region.

Thinking about NEWA alone, the AIM economic impact toolkit suggests that the project will generate over £200,000 in the local economy and create 18.5 direct and indirect jobs locally. Combined with the might of Theatr Clwyd, the new cultural hub will have a more significant impact on the local economy.

Sustainability

The long-term sustainability of the project is assured. The creation of a Community Officer job role supported by a revised team structure will help ensure that NEWA can continue with this exciting transformative work programme for the long-term. This work is further supported by commitment from both Denbighshire and Flintshire local authorities, which have both agreed to provide a significant financial contribution and also have the project incorporated into high level corporate strategies.

As with any project, there are risks associated with it. These are mainly focussed on delays and increasing costs associated with capital build projects. However, both local authorities have significant experience and expertise in delivering large-scale capital build projects, such as schools, regeneration programmes etc. Procurement frameworks will be utilised and a generous contingency fund has been allocated.

We are committed to environmental sustainability and the joint archive building will be designed to net carbon zero standards for building comfort which relies on good building orientation, well insulated fabric, a high level of airtightness and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery to create an environment from the outset that requires little energy. We will make conscious choices about the goods and services that we purchase, implement a recycling policy for staff and our visitors, and will re-purpose items where possible, rather than disposing of them.

Ecological mitigation features will be incorporated into the building, such as provision for bird boxes and bat boxes, and landscaped features such as retaining walls will provide refugia for invertebrates.

Planting schemes will be selected for their biodiversity value from Spring through to Autumn, as well as to provide year-round interest and colour. Scented plants will be included adjacent to pathways and seating areas.

In conclusion

The idea at the heart of Creative Archives is distinctive and innovative – using drama, dance and storytelling to animate the archive collections and reach out to new audiences.

Everyone we talk to is captivated by the concept and our partners and collaborators are keen and ready to go. This funding will help to unlock that opportunity and potential to create something wonderful that will become a trailblazer for the sector.

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Appendix 4

Partner contribution by project phase

	Total Cost	HLF	FCC	DCC	Other
RIBA 1-3 Development Phase Grant (May 24-June 25)	£ 674,861	£ 172,000	£ 296,926	£ 205,935	
RIBA 4- Technical Design (June 2025-Dec 2025)	£ 300,145	£ -	£ 175,910	£ 124,235	
RIBA 5-7 Delivery Phase Grant (April 2026-July 2028)	£ 11,917,288	£ 7,199,397	£ 2,605,702	£ 1,722,189	£ 390,000
TOTALS	£ 12,892,294	£ 7,371,397	£ 3,078,538	£ 2,052,359	£ 390,000

Key Milestones

- Apr-26 Construction Contract award April 26
- May-26 Mobilisation April/May 26
- May-26 Start on site May 26
- Jul-27 completion and hand over July 2027
- Aug-27 ICT fit out decant/recant July - Sept 27
- Oct-27 Service commences operation from new facility Oct 27
- Jul-28 Retention payable Jul 28

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Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	23 rd April 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Gill German – Lead member for Education, Children and Families
Head of Service	Geraint Davies – Head of Education
Report author	James Curran – Principal Manager – School Support
Title	Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The Welsh Government has changed its approach to how it plans to deliver its Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme (formerly known as 21st Century Schools). The report explains the new process and seeks agreement on how to outline our intentions for phasing our proposed school investment over the next 9 years.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. A decision is required on the submission to Welsh Government of our Strategic Outline Programme for investment in the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 That the draft Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) for the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme as contained in Appendix 1 be submitted to the Welsh Government for their consideration.

3.2. That the Cabinet confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 3) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

- 4.1. For the next stage of investment in the school estate the Welsh Government have moved away from 5 year bands of investment (Band A and Band B of the 21st Century Schools Programme) to a more flexible approach over a longer 9-year time period with the 9 years divided into 3 blocks of 3 years each. All local authorities have been requested to update their vision to Welsh Government via the Strategic Outline Programme for investment by March 2024. For this revised Strategic Outline Programme local authorities have been asked to identify projects which are essentially ready for Business cases to be brought forward in the first three years, projects being developed and going through statutory consultation in the second three years and then pipeline projects for the final/third three years. These programmes will then be reviewed every three years.
- 4.2. The delivery of the formally committed 4 Band B projects (Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, Denbigh; Ysgol Pendref, Denbigh, Ysgol Bryn Collen / Ysgol Gwernant, Llangollen and Denbigh High School) have been impacted by various delays. This effectively means that these projects are not going to be delivered within the original Band B timescales. It is therefore recommended that they be incorporated into the new Strategic Outline Programme.
- 4.3. Given the current financial pressures faced by the Council we need to reconsider what is affordable over what time period, given the Council's capital contribution to any project will have to be funded by prudential borrowing, which adds to the annual budget pressures on our revenue account.
- 4.4. It is recommended we retain our commitment to developing all 4 Band B projects, but that the development timescales are reprofiled to spread out the revenue pressures over a longer period.
- 4.5. There is also scope to include an additional project within the Programme. Discussions have taken place regarding a small extension at Ysgol y Castell in Rhuddlan originally to be funded from Section 106 funds from a local housing development in Rhuddlan. The costs of the project have increased and the option of inclusion in the Programme would allow the project to proceed. With the 65% /35 % intervention rate the £384k of Section 106 funding could draw in an additional £713k from Welsh Government to provide a potential budget of

£1.1m. There would be no borrowing requirement from this project as the Council contribution would come entirely from S106 developer contributions that (i) have already been received from the developer and (ii) need to be spent by 2029 otherwise the risk is they are returned to the developer. It is recommended that Ysgol y Castell be added to the Programme to join the existing commitment to the 4 former Band B Projects.

- 4.6. In addition, beyond these identified projects there remains a need for further investment in the wider school estate. The SOP (see Appendix 1) describes where potentially this investment may be needed from 2030 onwards. In the primary sector there remains a need to meet areas where there is a current deficit of provision, responding to demographic changes particularly in the North of the county and ensuring that the demand for Welsh Medium education can be met. In the secondary sector there remains a need for investment in those sites which have not benefited from large scale investment, namely, Prestatyn High School, St Brigid's, Ysgol Brynhyfryd and Ysgol Dinas Bran. It is suggested that targeted investment be made to replace or refurbish the poorer areas of the secondary school estate as part of this phase of the Programme. Further work is also needed to identify potential work to school buildings to enable support to be provided for pupils where alternative provision beyond mainstream provision will be required.
- 4.7. These areas are currently high level considerations and further work is required in advance of the next submission of the Strategic Outline Programme in the spring of 2027 to identify where this investment could be made during the 2030/2033 period. It is important to note that this latter part of the programme is seen as a potential marker for ambitions and not as clear commitments. The ambition shown could be scaled up or down dependent on our financial position at the time.
- 4.8. The approach outlined seeks to retain the Council's ambition to invest in our school estate as per the corporate plan pledge to provide quality buildings and facilities that support learning but through an approach which assists affordability. The approach to staggering these projects, which have already experienced delays during the Band B period, will see a delay in respect of commencing construction on sites. Importantly this approach will also spread the revenue pressure over a longer period during a challenging time for the

Council's finances to ensure that we can both deliver on our overall ambition whilst reducing the wider financial pressures arising from this investment. This will limit revenue pressures on front line services such as schools over the coming years. The addition of the project at Rhuddlan funded from a commuted sum and the proposals for significant new projects beyond 2030 will demonstrate our clear ambition to build on previous investment in the school estate.

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

- 5.1. A prosperous Denbighshire – the progression of the programme could see significant investment in the County during the construction phases of the projects which will bring economic benefits to Denbighshire through local spend. The programme will be required to demonstrate community benefits.
- 5.2. A learning and growing Denbighshire - the progression of the programme will ensure that we provide high quality buildings and facilities that meet the needs of pupils, their families and the wider community, including working in partnership with Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.
- 5.3. A greener Denbighshire - The proposed programme will have a positive contribution to the Council becoming Net Carbon Zero by 2030. Welsh Government announced that from 1st January 2022 all new build projects will be required to demonstrate delivery of Net Zero Carbon in operation. Welsh Government have stated that they will fund 100% of this in line with current benchmarks that they have detailed.
- 5.4. The proposed programme will play a part in achieving one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050, by delivering the Welsh Language Strategy with partners and communities. The development of Welsh Medium provision during the programme will support children and families during their early years to develop confidence in using the Welsh Language.

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

- 6.1. The currently identified projects from Band B, plus the additional project at Ysgol y Castell, have a current provisional cost of £67.7m (see Appendix 2).

Based on current intervention rates the contribution from Denbighshire would be £20.6m with the Welsh Government requested to fund £47.1m. This would equate to an overall revenue pressure for borrowing of £1.3m per annum. The Welsh Government contribution would include an additional cost of £5.5m to meet net carbon zero requirements.

- 6.2. The costs included in the Strategic Outline Programme for Years 7 to 9 at this stage are high level estimates and will include an allowance for optimism bias. This level of investment of the region of £88m would see a potential contribution from Denbighshire of £26.6m which would equate to a prudential borrowing cost of £1.75m per annum.
- 6.3. Clearly these are significant costs within a challenging financial environment for local authorities. There will need to be a constant review of the affordability of the programme and the opportunity to resubmit the rolling programme in 2026/27 may see a change in the appetite for investment. However, at this stage a realistic programme has been developed for consideration.
- 6.4. The progression and delivery of the Programme would have an impact on a range of Council Services. Services such as Performance, Digital and Assets, Finance and Audit, People and Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services will play key roles in the development of proposals, procurement of contractors, change management and the delivery of the required digital infrastructure within the school building. A key aim of the programme is to deliver net carbon zero buildings and this will play a key role in meeting wider Council ambitions.

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

- 7.1. The progression of the programme for investment for Sustainable Communities for Learning should have a positive impact on Denbighshire (see Appendix 3). The construction phase will lead to increased investment in local companies and improve employment prospects. Site selection may have a negative impact on a resilient Denbighshire and this will need to be carefully considered. The provision of modern buildings should impact positively on a healthier and equal Denbighshire whilst providing an opportunity for a more cohesive community. The impact on Welsh Language will be guided by where investment is made.

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

8.1. The projects listed as those carried over from Band B have been subject to previous Cabinet and Scrutiny discussions. This suggested approach has been recommended by the Council's Corporate Executive Team to ensure that the delivery of the programme remains affordable. The proposals to emerge for future years from 2027 to 2033 will be subject to full discussions with relevant Member Area Groups and Schools prior to any decisions regarding further projects to be confirmed in the programme.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. Given the financial pressure the Council is under in the medium term it is appropriate the revenue consequences of capital decisions are considered as has been set out and recommended within this report. It is important to note that the recommendation is to widen the length of time taken to complete the Band B projects spreading out the impact of the borrowing costs over a longer period of time on our revenue budget. This does not reduce the council's ambition or commitments to those communities affected. The concern is that if we continue to progress all projects further cuts to service budgets will have to be made to afford the borrowing costs which of course includes delegated schools budgets.

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

10.1. The current Modernising Education Programme includes clear procedures for the management and escalation of risks at both the Programme and Project level. Should the programme be progressed, these procedures would continue. The main risk associated with the revised Strategic Outline Programme will be around finance affordability. At this stage there will be a need for an element of caution around expectations for the programme moving forward.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities to secure sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education.

Appendix 1 Rolling Programme Projects

Projects should be identified in the nine-year capital programme with:

- Years 1, 2 and 3 projects expected to reach full business case within the 3 years.
- Years 4, 5 and 6 projects being developed and going through statutory consultation.
- Years 7, 8 and 9 being pipeline projects.

How many projects do you intend to deliver in each segment of your rolling programme?

Years 1-3	2
Years 4-6	3
Years 7-9	Tbc

What are they? (Please note that details of the projects should also be included in the Project Data Collection spreadsheet and attached). The projects should be ranked in both documents in order of priority.

Years 1-3
500 words maximum

The following project was part of Denbighshire's Band B proposals and is intended to be taken over into the rolling programme.

Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, Denbigh – This project will deliver a new build 3-18 school for pupils with Autism. The school operates over three sites during school hours and the project will allow the school to be based on a single site. The project will allow demand for this provision to be met via the increase in capacity from the current 133 pupils to an overall capacity of 220. This will enable the recognised need for a larger school specialising in autism provision for pupils across the County and will have a positive impact on other schools where pupils currently supported in mainstream provision may be able to be admitted to Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn.

The need for this school has been supported by Cabinet, including the submission of a planning application for the preferred site and the proposals are advanced. The School Organisation proposals were determined in February 2023 and the Outline Business Case was approved by Welsh Government in 2022.

The project is currently at RIBA Stage 3 with the planning submission expected in early summer of 2024. The current programme would see construction taking place between Spring 2025 and Summer 2026. There are risks associated with the planning submission and failure to secure approval would see a need for a re-think of the proposals. This would delay the project with an alternative project coming forward in this first element of the rolling programme.

This is a new project for inclusion within the Programme

Ysgol y Castell, Rhuddlan – This project will allow a small extension to 4 classrooms and improvements to general areas of the school. The project will increase the capacity of the school in response to the recent completion of new housing in the village. The secured section 106 contribution is proposed to be used as match funding to enable this project to progress. The scheme has been developed to RIBA Stage 3 with planning permission obtained for the project in September 2023. The Outline Business Justification for the project will be submitted during 2024 with a view to construction commencing shortly afterwards.

Years 4-6

500 words maximum

The following projects were part of Denbighshire's Band B proposals and are intended to be taken over into the rolling programme.

Ysgol Pendref, Denbigh – This project will consolidate provision for the existing 3-11 primary school which is based on two adjoining sites. Both buildings are considered to be in grade C condition and have issues around accessibility and flexibility. The project is currently at RIBA Stage 1. The progression of the current project has involved lengthy discussions around site selection. The conclusion of this has seen a focus now on the existing school site with the options of remodelling and extensions or new build the focus of the current feasibility studies. The current programme would see construction taking place during 2027 to 2028.

Ysgol Bryn Collen / Ysgol Gwernant, Llangollen – This project will provide an upgrade to the existing accommodation for the two primary schools in Llangollen and to ensure future need can be met, particularly for Welsh medium education. Ysgol Gwernant was established as a Welsh medium school in the Ysgol Bryn

Collen site in 2005 and has grown in size. The present arrangements provide limited demarcation between the two schools and the restrictions in provision are impacting delivery in the schools. This project was considered as part of the Sustainable Schools Challenge in late 2022. A revised approach has now been adopted. The project is currently at RIBA Stage 1. Upon completion of this stage the project will be on hold pending design work being resumed in 2026. The current programme would see construction taking place between 2027 and 2029.

Denbigh High School, Denbigh – This project will see the refurbishment / remodelling of the 11-18 English medium secondary school in the town of Denbigh. The project is heavily linked to the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn project as the secondary provision of Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn is delivered from the Denbigh High School and the proposed location of the new Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn is one of the High School playing fields. The proposal would see the High School utilising the accommodation vacated by Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn and the current accommodation being evaluated for areas which can be demolished, remodelled or rebuilt. The project is at the design brief stage pending the planning determination of the Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn project. The current programme would see construction taking place between 2027 and 2029.

Years 7-9

500 words maximum

Primary School Provision

The focus during 2026 – 2027 will be to identify areas for investment in the primary school estate between 2030 to 2033. At present demand for places sees 5 of Denbighshire's 45 primary schools having a deficit of spaces in excess of 10%. Particularly pressures exist in the North of the County and the focus will be on the areas around Rhyl, Bodelwyddan, St Asaph and Denbigh. This will be reviewed in greater detail to reflect where intervention may be needed via extension of provision. This will need to reflect expectations around reductions in pupil numbers over the next ten years which will create challenges for individual schools.

Secondary School Provision

The investment taken place as part of Band A together with the project to be delivered in Years 1 to 6 at Denbigh will have seen 50% of secondary schools benefiting from significant investment. The work between 2026-2027 in advance of the next SOP will be to identify specific investment in the remaining Secondary

Schools, namely Prestatyn High School, St Brigid's School, Ysgol Brynhyfryd and Ysgol Dinas Bran to enhance the poorest areas of accommodation in Denbighshire's secondary schools. This will allow detailed consideration of projects for potential delivery across years 2030 – 33.

Additional Support for Pupils

Over recent years it has become clear that further consideration is needed to support provision for pupils who need additional support beyond what can be provided in mainstream provision but whose needs may not be appropriate for our special schools. The work during 2024-2026 will be to identify the best approach to alternative provision with clearer recommendations emerging in the next SOP.

The pace of progress will be dependent on available resources and affordability.

Appendix 2 - Strategic Outline Programme

Phase	Project	Total Capital Costs Estimate	WG Capital Contribution	Other Sources	DCC Capital Contribution	DCC annual prudential borrowing cost	Period of annual borrowing cost
2024 - 2027	Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn	£30,751,452	£23,063,589		£7,687,863	£506,246	2027-52
	Ysgol y Castell *	£1,097,143	£713,143		£384,000		
	Total	£31,848,595	£23,776,732		£8,071,863	£506,246	
2027 - 2030	Ysgol Pendref	£11,744,051	£7,633,633		£4,110,418	£270,671	2030-55
	Ysgol Bryn Collen / Ysgol Gwernant	£6,528,686	£4,243,646		£2,285,040	£150,470	2030-55
	Denbigh High School	£17,632,511	£11,461,132		£6,171,379	£406,385	2030-55
	Total	£35,905,249	£23,338,412		£12,566,837	£827,526	
2030 - 2033	Primary School Investment	£30,904,789	£20,088,113		£10,816,676	£712,279	2033-58
	Secondary School Investment	£43,466,595	£29,924,190	£1,253,177	£12,289,228	£809,246	2033-58
	Alternative Support Provision	£14,000,000	£10,500,000		£3,500,000	£230,475	2033-58
	Total	£88,371,384	£60,512,303	£1,253,177	£26,605,904	£1,752,000	
	Overall Total	£156,125,227	£107,627,446	£1,253,177	£47,244,604	£3,085,772	

* DCC Contribution via Section 106 agreements

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Sustainable Communities for Learning - Rolling Programme: 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: 268

Brief description: The proposals for Sustainable Communities for Learning which would be delivered in partnership with the Welsh Government

Date Completed: 01/09/2020 11:51:54 Version: 5

Completed by: James Curran

Responsible Service: Education and Children's Services

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? The proposals will impact on the school communities of Denbighshire directly and indirectly through the investment applied will have an impact on the economic community of Denbighshire and beyond.

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 : 33 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

The Programme is looking at future investment and requires a long term approach to be considered. Future buildings will need to consider community use and achieve Net Carbon Zero.

Prevention

The proposals will impact on schools based in areas of socio economic disadvantage. The approach for greater community use and links could encourage additional community provision to develop in their communities.

Integration

The proposals will reflect areas of demographic change and likely changes around population, particularly arising from housing development from the Local Development Plan.

Collaboration

Individual projects will be developed with the school community and where appropriate active external stakeholders will be encouraged to contribute to the progression of projects.

Involvement

Sustainable Communities for Learning - Rolling Programme

The extent of consultation will be impacted by whether there is a need for formal consultation for any proposals from a school organisation perspective. This process is prescriptive and includes a number of stages which are mandated. Consultation will also take place with communities as part of the planning process including pre-planning consultation on medium / large sized projects.

Summary of impact

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 responsible Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

The progression of the programme for investment for Sustainable Communities for Learning should have a positive impact on Denbighshire. The construction phase will lead to increased investment in local companies and improve employment prospects. Site selection may have a negative impact on a resilient Denbighshire and this will need to be carefully considered. The provision of modern buildings should impact positively on a healthier and equal Denbighshire whilst providing an opportunity for a more cohesive community. The impact on Welsh Language will be guided by where investment is made.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The investment in Sustainable Communities for Learning will provide school buildings which may be more energy efficient, provide economic regeneration during the construction phase and should increase the skill base of the local labour market. Lessons learnt from previous projects will need to be applied to the future approach to energy management.

Further actions required

The short term nature of construction projects may lead to jobs being available for a limited period. By working with the framework across North Wales to plan projects some of these issues may be overcome.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Any projects progressed for new or refurbished buildings are likely to see significant improvements towards energy efficiency in those buildings. Through learning lessons from previous projects and by developing, delivering and managing-in-use zero/low carbon buildings the Sustainable Communities for Learning projects could reduce the running costs for the Authority from both a financial and carbon point of view alongside creating exemplar learning environments.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

In many instances we will seek to redevelop existing sites thus minimising change and seeking to take advantage of existing infrastructure. The development of new sites may encourage neighbouring sites to become active assisting development opportunities. The provision of new sites could act as a catalyst for investment in super fast broadband etc.

Economic development

The projects will contribute towards economic regeneration via the indicators to secure local spend and employment as part of the contract. The securement of contracts for local suppliers and trades will boost economic conditions in the short term.

Quality skills for the long term

An emphasis will be placed on employment of apprentices and work experience opportunities. The application of framework requirements should assist to enhance the skill base of the local labour market and allow such apprentices to be seen to be more skilled for the future.

Quality jobs for the long term

The main boost for quality jobs will be during the construction phase which will generally be between 12 - 24 months.

Childcare

The projects will seek to examine options for pre-school provision to be located with schools. This will be developed based on existing provision to ensure that a balance is achieved to ensure that existing providers remain viable.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Projects which involve refurbishment will provide greater challenges in achieving net carbon zero within existing buildings.

The overall number of journeys within an area will be increased via the construction project. This will include delivery of materials and the travel of site workers. The re-location of schools may create additional journeys for pupils.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

No negative impacts identified.

Economic development

No negative impacts identified.

Quality skills for the long term

The need for increased training opportunities through the community benefits requirements may lead to a number of skilled operatives unable to secure long term jobs.

Quality jobs for the long term

The short term nature of the construction industry may lead to scenarios where trained up apprentices are unable to secure long term employment.

Childcare

No negative impacts identified.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The development of new sites or significant refurbishments could have an unintended negative consequence on the landscape of Denbighshire as the period of construction will lead to a disturbance of the natural environment. Any proposals will seek to mitigate these impacts.

Further actions required

Where possible design site layouts to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum and areas such as hedgerows be retained where possible. All projects will be required to consider diversity issues and undertake environmental impact assessments as part of the statutory planning process. Consideration will need to be given to the future use of redundant sites which may arise from these proposals and how these may be used to assist targets re becoming net carbon zero by 2030.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Within the external layout of school sites opportunities to preserve or enhance natural habitats will be maximised to allow such areas to be used to deliver the curriculum.

Biodiversity in the built environment

Options will be explored for new buildings to have nesting / roosting areas elsewhere on the site should existing habitat's be disturbed in the provision of a new / refurbished building.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Projects are encouraged to meet stringent recycling targets and minimise waste being taken off site. Where demolition takes place unused rubble is sought to be kept onsite for use as base materials for car parks etc.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The improvement to buildings will lead to energy efficiency. Any rationalisation of buildings in poor condition will also have a positive impact on energy consumption.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

The development of projects will give the opportunity for pupils and the local community to become more aware of the existing habitat where a project is taking place. Scope for contractors supporting biodiversity projects will be actively pursued.

Flood risk management

The selection of any site will consider land use policies and relevant WG guidance. Where any risk does arise the need to engineer a solution could lead to an overall reduction in flood risk.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Development of new school buildings on green spaces is likely to have a greater impact on the

natural environment which will need to be mitigated with supportive measures.

Biodiversity in the built environment

The refurbishment or demolition of existing properties is likely to lead to the disturbance of wildlife who may occupy such properties.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

In many instances the buildings may be in a condition where they need replacing rather than refurbishment. This will require careful consideration to the treatment of the waste arising from the disused building.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Should the number of school sites be reduced there is a risk that traffic patterns for parents / pupils may be amended with longer journeys required. Refurbishment of buildings may present greater challenges to ensure that optimum energy management processes can be achieved.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Concerns may arise from the amendments to the local habitat leading to resistance to any individual project.

Flood risk management

There is a risk that the development of sites will reduce the extent of permeable land and increase risk of flood in extreme weather.

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The development of improved school buildings can have a positive impact on health by providing safer transport links with pedestrian and cycle access considered as part of the design. Improved learning environments can have a positive impact on the mental well-being of pupils and staff through better planned facilities which seek to maximise natural light etc.

Further actions required

Such buildings are likely to be utilised more by the community and this needs to be considered very carefully in the design process. The change process can have a detrimental impact on people's emotional and mental well-being and the planning for transition needs to be considered sympathetically, and where appropriate individual plans may be required for pupils.

Positive impacts identified:

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

Any project will consider as a matter of course issues around access for the community both in terms of physical accessibility to the site and also how the building and site can be better utilised by the community outside of core school hours.

Access to good quality, healthy food

Any improvements to schools will see consideration to the catering experience for pupils attending schools. The investment in kitchen areas will enable improvements to the provision, and in recent projects there has been an increase in the number of pupils accessing school meals following the improvements in this area.

People's emotional and mental well-being

An improved learning environment will improve staff, pupil and community morale. The design of classrooms to modern standards will produce a better emotional environment for pupils i.e. noise reduction in classrooms, light levels. Consideration will be given to support areas within school buildings for pupils with greater requirements for designated support.

Access to healthcare

Options for community links for projects may have a positive impact via links with Health and the provision of support services from school sites.

Participation in leisure opportunities

The development of school facilities, particularly at secondary level may see consideration to the improvement in leisure facilities.

Negative impacts identified:

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

No negative impacts identified.

Access to good quality, healthy food

No negative impacts identified.

People's emotional and mental well-being

Any change in provision can lead to resistance from staff, pupils, parents etc. Disruption may occur to local residents during the construction phase and we will work with contractors to minimise the impact of issues.

Access to healthcare

No negative impacts identified.

Participation in leisure opportunities

Improvements to school safeguarding may decrease access to school sites and informal play on school sites out of hours.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The design of schools will be considered carefully to eliminate areas of concern which could be a barrier for people with protected characteristics.

Further actions required

Ongoing consultation with the schools to minimise the short term impact on pupils during any construction phases.

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

All projects will consider accessibility as a key theme during the design stage to ensure that pupils with a disability are not denied access to the full learning experience. Consideration has been given to the provision of unisex toilets or non designation of toilet areas to ensure that transgender users are not discriminated against.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

The proposals will equally positively impact on all groups.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

By improving the educational offer through new school facilities the performance of pupils could improve increasing scope for gaining employment.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

The provision of improved facilities in areas of socio-economic deprivation can lead to an improvement to the sense of value of individuals. This could be via improved access to learning to provide the route for children to escape existing inequalities. The scope for improved community access will also be considered during this process.

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

Careful consideration will be needed to ensure that during any phasing of projects, particularly with refurbishments, that access to the learning environment is not reduced. The interim arrangements may impact the wellbeing of pupils and consideration will be given to how this may be mitigated.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No negative impacts identified.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

No negative impacts identified.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

No negative impacts identified.

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

By careful and considered design improved facilities can provide a positive impact on cohesive communities by providing facilities which can draw together the local community.

Further actions required

The construction stage is likely to have a negative impact on the local community on a short term basis. The project team will need to work with the contractor and the local community to minimise risks and to ensure clear communication at key times.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The design of any projects will ensure that careful consideration is given to site safety both during the construction phase and then when the site is fully occupied. Where possible improved surveillance will be sought in the design of buildings with passive supervision encouraged. Safeguarding will be considered with a clear demarcation between public and private zones both within the building and the overall site.

Community participation and resilience

The design of the school with more community access could allow the scope for local groups to use the sites, particularly outside of school hours. Consideration should be given to the provision of other activities taking place at the site.

The attractiveness of the area

The design of the buildings should enhance any area and this will be considered at the planning stage and form part of the consultation.

Connected communities

Issues around access to school will be considered as part of the planning process for any proposals / projects. Links to potential active travel routes to schools will be promoted as appropriate.

Rural resilience

Proposals will consider the impact on the rural community of any change in provision.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The construction phase will have an impact on the community via increased traffic and access to the site for employees and the delivery of building supplies. This could have an impact on individuals during this phase.

Community participation and resilience

In considering community facilities there is a need to ensure that the overall provision is not saturated leading to existing providers becoming unviable.

The attractiveness of the area

The construction phase is likely to have a short term detrimental impact on the local community. If any sites or buildings are no longer to be used a clear direction for the future use of the site should be considered at the business case stage of the project.

Connected communities

Proposals for change may require amendments to school locations and this may impact on existing patterns within the community.

Rural resilience

The loss of facilities in the rural community can have a negative impact on rural resilience and any proposal would need to consider options to negate any areas.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The impact will be dependent upon whether investment is made in schools / areas to promote Welsh Medium education. Without confirmation of projects it is difficult to confirm whether this is positive. As part of Band A of 21st Century Schools Programme the Council has invested significantly to increase access to Welsh Medium education. The Council has also recently received permission to submit business cases for investment in Welsh Medium Capital Projects by the Welsh Government. This investment to meet current need will need to be considered carefully in determining which projects move forward and whether they will impact on the Welsh Language.

Further actions required

Ensure that overall the benefits for Welsh Medium education are understood by parents when making decisions regarding school choices.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

An increase in capacity for Welsh Medium education will be a key theme nationally for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and reflects the priorities in the Corporate Plan. An increase in the number of Welsh learners could increase the overall number of speakers within Denbighshire and Wales.

Promoting the Welsh language

The building should be encouraged to deliver bilingual signage within the school should it be an English medium school. All public areas will be required to have bilingual signage. Communication with residents and the local community will be bilingual.

Culture and heritage

Consideration will be given in the design stage to the local heritage of an area so that any building is sympathetic to its neighbourhood.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The development of new facilities for English medium schools could see parents choose English medium schools rather than Welsh medium based on the quality of facilities rather than the offer available.

Promoting the Welsh language

No negative impacts identified

Culture and heritage

No negative impacts identified

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The procurement of contractors and the subsequent construction periods should have a positive impact. Adherence to procurement regulations and statutory responsibilities around Health and Safety will ensure that the projects address such areas. The requirement for Net Carbon Zero buildings as part of the Programme will support Denbighshire's position around reducing climate change.

Further actions required

Ensure that the requirements of the programme on a local and regional level are communicated to Framework providers so they are aware of future workstreams.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The provision of new projects will include community benefits as a key part of the procurement process. This will ensure that the local supply chain can be involved in projects. Main contractors will be encouraged to hold meet the buyer events and provide opportunities for local suppliers to compete for work.

Human rights

All contractors will be expected to have first class health and safety procedures in place and these will be rigorously examined during the delivery of the project. Workers employed during the process will be expected to be treated equitably.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

The scoping of projects for the Programme will consider co-location of services on school sites to improve the overall quality of service for the community.

Reducing climate change

The proposed programme will have a positive contribution to the Council becoming Net Carbon Zero by 2030. Welsh Government announced that from 1st January 2022 all new build projects will be required to demonstrate delivery of Net Zero Carbon in operation.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

Risk that an increase in work creates unintended issues for the capacity of the local supply chain.

Human rights

No negative impacts identified

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No negative impacts identified

Reducing climate change

Projects which involve refurbishment will provide greater challenges in achieving net carbon zero within existing buildings.

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Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	23 rd April 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Member for Finance Performance and Assets, Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
Report author	Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
Title	Update to Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan for 2025/26 – 2027/28 and review of the Council’s Financial Resilience and Sustainability.

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The report provides an update on outstanding matters relating to 2024/25 budget, sets the scene for budget setting in the medium term (2025/26 – 2027/28), and self-assesses the council’s current level of financial resilience and sustainability.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To update Cabinet on

- outstanding matters relating to the 2024/25 budget
- proposed budget strategy for setting the budget for 2025/26 as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- financial projections for the 3 year period 2025/26 to 2027/28 in the high-level Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and
- a self-assessment of the council’s financial resilience and sustainability

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. Cabinet considers, approves and provides feedback on the updates listed in 2.1 above.

3.2. Cabinet approves the commencement of the design phase for Ysgol Bro Elwern, Ysgol Henllan, Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch and Ysgol y Llys projects to enable the Full Business Case to be submitted to Welsh Government for approval as detailed in section 4.7 and Appendices 6 to 9

4. Report details

Summary of 2024/25 budget setting position – Appendices 1 and 2

4.1. A summary of the 2024/25 budget setting position has been included at Appendix 1. This includes an update on the Final Funding Settlement received from Welsh Government, the Voluntary Exit Scheme and the savings tracker at Appendix 2.

Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28 – Appendices 3 and 4

4.2. Appendix 3 sets out the current budget projections for 2025/26 – 2027/28 along with the assumptions that underpin the projections. At this stage in the budget process the MTFP shows high level estimates of known pressures along with the impact of estimated increases in Council Tax and funding from Welsh Government. The table includes a range of assumptions to provide a low, medium and high estimates of costs for each pressure, illustrating both the uncertainty of the figures and the amount of work that still needs to be carried out to refine these projections.

4.3. Appendix 4 is the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and outlines some of the financial issues that will face the Council over the next three years.

4.4. This is the first iteration of the MTFS 2025/26 – 2027/28 and it has been compiled with data and information available as at the end of March 2024. The document is an early version, it will be subject to refinement as the financial year 2024/25 progresses and will identify workstreams that need progressing during the year.

4.5. The council has faced a significant financial challenge in setting its 2024/25 budget, which is set to continue in the medium term due to a combination of no increases in funding from Welsh Government (working assumption), the continued impact of inflation and increases in demand for and complexity of needs for services. The scale

of the financial challenge facing the council should not be underestimated. Key points are:

- Pressures are difficult to forecast but are ranging from £15m to £27m in 2025/26 with a mid range of £21m. Similar ranges are forecast for 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- The 2024/25 funding settlement from Welsh Government provided no future indication of funding as it has done for the past 2 years. Future funding within the MTFP is based on assessments by Wales Fiscal Analysis at slightly negative reductions in the absence of anything else.
- Assumptions made about Council Tax increases in the MTFP range from 6% - 12% for 2025/26 and a 5.5% long term average thereafter for both years though it is important to note that no decisions have been made yet. A mid-range assumption of a Council Tax increase of 9% for 2025/26 yields an additional £6.8m but only addresses a third of the funding gap, the remaining gap is substantial at £15m.
- The council should be planning to take action to reduce the projected net expenditure by c£21m in 2025/26 to set a balanced budget. That reduces to c£15m were a Council Tax increase in the region of 9% to be supported.

Self-assessment of Financial Resilience and Sustainability – Appendix 5

4.6. At the January 2024 meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee a request was made to stress test the Council's budget processes. In particular, reference was made to guidance and a report written by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy). Appendix 5 is an assessment of the Council's position against common themes and issues identified by CIPFA.

Approval of Welsh Government Capital Programme Funding – Appendices 6 – 9

4.7. The Capital Scrutiny Group has reviewed and supported business cases for the commencement of the design phase for Ysgol Bro Elwern, Ysgol Henllan, Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch and Ysgol Y Llys projects to enable the full business case to be submitted for approval by the Welsh Language and Childcare and Early Years Welsh

Government Capital Grant Programmes as detailed in Appendices 6 to 9. Confirmation has been provided that should the Full Business Case not be successful these design phase costs will still be eligible for grant funding.

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

5.1. Effective management of the council's budgets and delivery of the agreed budget strategy underpins activity in all areas. The proposals include allocations to continue to support both corporate and service priorities.

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

6.1. As set out within the budget reports to date for 2024/25. Financial and other implications for future budgets will become clearer as we progress the budget strategy.

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

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) was completed for each major savings proposal in setting the 2024/25 budget. All assessments were collated and reviewed by strategic planning and performance officers to highlight any themes and patterns emerging to provide regular updates on the aggregate impact in respect of each of the well-being goals and whether the savings were disproportionately affecting any particular protected group. This was collated to form an overall WIA regarding the impact of necessary budget reduction measures to form a high-level aggregation of the combined budget reduction measures, and this work continues as savings proposals continue to be refined.

7.2. A similar process will be implemented for 2025/26 budget setting.

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

8.1. As set out within the MTFs a Communication Plan has been developed for the budget to ensure that the following groups are consulted at the appropriate times: Governance and Audit Committee, SLT, Cabinet, Group Leaders, all Council Members, the School Budget Forum, Trade Unions, our employees, local businesses, and our residents.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. The Council, along with all other Welsh councils, faces unprecedented financial challenges. The report summarises and concludes work on financial planning for 2024/25, the work now transfers to monitoring the 2024/25 budget. Updates will be provided to Members through the monthly finance update report to Cabinet.
- 9.2. The aim of the MTFS is to ensure that the council delivers future balanced budgets. Setting out the projections and strategy early through this report will help ensure that the Council is informed and prepared to set a budget at this challenging time.

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

- 10.1. The budget process itself is a risk management measure with the aim of identifying, assessing and agreeing budget proposals in a planned and timely way. Failure to agree these proposals without viable alternatives will risk not achieving a balanced budget for 2025/26.
- 10.2. A detailed section on risk is included in the MTFS in appendix 4.
- 10.3. There are risks with regard to the capacity of the Finance team that Members need to be aware of. The team are currently working with Audit Wales on the audit of the 2022/23 accounts, and also the closure of the 2023/24 accounts in April and May. Usually there is very limited capacity for anything else other than closedown the accounts during April and May. This year however there is the added complexity of a new financial system being introduced from 1st April. As with the introduction of any new system that effects hundreds of users across all our financial systems there will be some disruption before things settle down.
- 10.4. Monthly finance updates from the new financial year are normally up and running by June, it is likely to be July this year if progress with the new system goes well but there is a risk it could be September. This poses a risk to the Council in not being able to fully report spend against budget during the first few months of the financial year. In mitigation of this risk, we will report by

exception any areas of significant overspend and report the savings tracker regularly. Regular updates will be provided to Cabinet on these risks.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Local authorities are required under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.

Summary of 2024/25 Budget Setting Position

In setting its budget for 2024/25 the Council faced pressures of £24.561m from inflationary increases such as pay and increases in demand and costs of providing Social Care. The Draft Local Government Settlement for 2024/25 was received by the council on 20th December and resulted in a positive settlement of 3.7%, compared to the Welsh average of 3.1%. Denbighshire has seen an increase in population and free school meals data which are factors used in the formula to distribute funding to councils. These increases will result in higher demands for services.

The increase in Welsh Government funding equated to £6.720m, which considering the council's pressures resulted in a significant funding gap of £17.841m. This was bridged by the categories listed and summarised in the table below;

- Increasing Council Tax by 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%.
- Major Savings Proposals – Heads of Service were tasked with bringing forward large-scale saving projects, in discussion with Lead Members.
- Non-strategic savings - Heads of Service (in conjunction with their Lead Members) are delivering a range of non-strategic efficiencies/smaller scale savings across service areas.
- School received funding to cover inflationary pressures for pay, pensions, energy etc totalling £7.616m. Given the scale of the challenges faced however, schools were asked to find savings of 3%. The schools net budget increased by £4.9m (5.82%) in cash terms.
- Despite efficiencies, savings, and reductions in costs/services to date, in total they were insufficient to set a balanced budget. All Heads of Service were therefore issued with further savings targets totalling £3m.

	£m	£m	%
Pressures		24.6	
Savings;			
Schools	(2.7)		
Non-Strategic	(2.3)		
Target	(3.0)		
Major Savings	(2.4)		
Total Savings		(10.4)	42%
Council Tax		(7.5)	31%
AEF (RSG & NDR)		(6.7)	27%
Total		0	

No cash from reserves was required to support the budget following the strategy to minimise the use of cash reserves in setting future budgets as far as possible as reliance on reserves is not sustainable. However, we were aware of a heightened level of risk in the budget given the scale of the savings needed to be found, continued uncertainty around cost pressures on items such as pay and those services that have recently struggled to stay within the budgets set at the beginning of the year (eg adult's and children's social care, homelessness, highways and environment).

Monitoring Delivery of Savings

Achievement of savings will be tracked in the monthly finance report to Cabinet and the draft savings tracker is included at Appendix 2 for Members review and feedback.

Update on Voluntary Exit Process

One of the Major Savings Proposals was a Voluntary Exit Scheme which opened on 20th November and closed on 8th January 2024 for employees to apply. Heads of Services reviewed each application and completed a business case for the Corporate Executive Team (CET) to consider.

The purpose of this scheme was to find financial savings from people leaving the organisation which would minimise the need to make compulsory exits. Submitting a request did not constitute a commitment by either the employee or the employer to agree the exit. All applications have been carefully considered against agreed criteria:

- The cost of allowing the employee to leave (redundancy payment, pension strain costs etc.)
- The saving that will be made
- The impact on service delivery

As this is a voluntary scheme, the Council can decide which applications they wish to agree. Similarly, employees can choose whether to apply and accept any offer made.

CET have considered all circa 138 applications received, the combined savings would have been £5m with exit costs of £6.7m (which includes redundancy costs individuals will receive, and pension strain costs the Council under Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations would have to pay to the pension fund for employees over 55 only, the latter if applicable can be a significant amount). 33 employees have accepted the offer, 11 employees were offered but rejected the offer and 94 were not approved by CET. The savings are estimated at £1.3m – £1.5m and the one-off exit costs are funded by reserve are c£800k. The process has taken time but has been thorough. It has provided savings, prompted reviews of how services are organised and delivered in the future.

Final Local Government Settlement 2024/25

The Final Local Government Settlement for 2024/25 was published on 27th February 2024. There has been an increase of £6.051m between draft and final settlement. It is important to stress that the bulk of that figure comes from grants transferring into the settlement see table below and has very little effect on the Council's budget position for 2024/25. All this means is that funding comes via the WG Revenue Support Grant (RSG) rather than a specific grant. For budget setting purposes we passport the funding to the relevant service area to offset the loss of grant.

Transfers In 2024/25	£m
Coastal Risk Management Programme	5.270
Performance and Improvement Framework	0.040
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management	0.225
Child Burials	0.032
Total	5.567

WG have received a £25m consequential from UK gov as a result of increased spending on Social Care in England. £10m has been used to maintain the Social Care Workforce Grant at existing levels, it had been planned to be cut by £10m. The remaining funding has gone into the RSG. The remaining balance £0.484m (difference between £6.051m and £5.567m above) equates to our share of the consequential funding WG have had. In the budget report to Council, delegated authority was given to Head of Finance in conjunction with Lead Member for Finance to balance the budget using reserves to manage any movement between draft and final settlement. The £0.484m will be set aside as a contingency to provide further safeguard against the risk of an in year overspend, or in not being able to achieve full year savings in 2024/25.

For completeness, the final increase in funding from WG compared to 2023/24 was 3.8%, compared to the Welsh average of 3.3%. This resulted in additional funding of £7.204m (£6.720m reported in the draft plus the £0.484m) (excluding the transfers in).

Appendix 2: Major Savings Proposals

Service: Title	Brief Description	Budget Saving £'000	Current Status	Current Update
Childrens' Services: Fostering Care	Project to invest to save in the fostering service - aim to reduce reliance on external agencies and increase in house foster carers.	141	In Progress	Recruitment officer (grant funded) has started to make an impact, have seen an upturn in enquires, 2 general approvals have been made with a further 3 in assessment. In addition, 9 Connected Person Foster Carers have been approved, with 3 more in assessment. Project to improve the corporate offer to foster carers is ongoing.
PPP: Car Parking fees and project to review provision	Report detailing proposals went to Scrutiny in October - main aspect to review fees that has been delayed due to the pandemic.	700	In Progress	New charges implemented from the 4th of March.
H&C: Review of Libraries Provision	Reduction in opening hours but keeping all libraries open.	360	In Progress	The new model will go live on 1st June creating a pressure for Year 1. St Asaph City Council has maintained its annual contribution; Rhuddlan Town Council has increased its contribution for one year in order to maintain current opening hours.
ASC&H: Social Care Packages	Review of adult social care packages.	416	In Progress	Changes to practice guidance for adult services' packages of care are being finalised and will be implemented throughout March and into April, which will support the right-sizing of care packages.
ASC&H: Homelessness prevention	Homelessness Prevention Service - Rapid rehousing plan	421	In Progress	Homelessness activity over the last 3- 4 months has already seen a reduction in numbers in emergency accommodation. This work will continue in 2024/25
CSSPDA: Asset Strategy	Review of all aspects of asset management. Revenue savings on a number of properties already agreed for disposal. Consideration to reduce office accommodation and possible alternative uses.	150	In Progress	Caledfryn decant project progressing well, with all staff & storage being relocated to County Hall, Russell House or Bodelwyddan Depot on track by end of August. Estimated saving figure assumes 'moth balling' the site. Removal of running cost base budget will only come once DCC vacated so only 6 months worth of saving expected in 2024/25. Opportunity is to not only remove running costs but also increase income coming in (either capital receipt or annual rental) dependent on exit strategy secured.
HES: Public Conveniences	Project to review provision	200	In Progress	A needs analysis is being undertaken to inform an updated PC Strategy. Consultation on the strategy will begin once the needs analysis has been completed.
		2,388		

Not reported as major project:

HES: Reduction to capital investment in highways	Highways capital budget is funded by prudential borrowing, by reducing the capital budget the associated costs of borrowing (revenue) also reduce.	150	Achieved
CSSPDA: Reduce net carbon zero and ecologically positive council 2030 pressure	During 2024/25 prioritise workstreams that reduce costs as well as carbon (buildings and fleet) at an investment level that enables the prudential borrowing costs in 2024/25 and 2025/26 for new projects initiated in 2024/25 to be funded from reserves held.	200	Achieved

Appendix 2: Non Strategic Savings

Service	Category	Current Status	Saving at budget setting £'000	Revised saving proposal £'000	Service Total £'000
Childrens Service	Insourcing of contracts	In Progress	30	22	35
	Service Change	In Progress	13	13	
Education	Service Review	In Progress	22	15	50
	Service Review	In Progress	44	35	
Adult Social Care and Homelessness	External Income Maximisation	Not Achieved	8	0	219
	Service Review	In Progress	75	75	
	Service Review	In Progress	108	108	
	External Income Maximisation	In Progress	36	36	
Corporate Support Services: Performance Digital and Assets	Technical Budget Reduction	Achieved	40	40	248
	Technical Budget Reduction	Achieved	14	14	
	New Ways of Working	In Progress	50	50	
	Systems Changes	Achieved	43	43	
	Service Review	Achieved	31	31	
	Technical Budget Reduction	Achieved	27	27	
	Review of vacant posts	Achieved	43	43	
Corporate Support Services: People	Review of vacant posts	Achieved	28	31	95
	Review of vacant posts	Not Achieved	14	0	
	Systems Changes	Not Achieved	15	0	
	Service change	Achieved	1	1	
	Service Review	Achieved	52	63	
Finance and Audit	External Income Maximisation	In Progress	150	150	200
	Systems Changes	In Progress	50	50	
Capital and Corporate	Technical Budget Reduction	Achieved	500	500	928
	Technical Budget Reduction	In Progress	300	300	
	Capital Financing Budget	Achieved	128	128	

Appendix 2: Non Strategic Savings

Service	Category	Current Status	Saving at budget setting £'000	Revised saving proposal £'000	Service Total £'000
Highways and Environment Service	Service Change	Not Achieved	136	0	258
	Service Change	Not Achieved	10	0	
	Technical Budget Reduction	Achieved	50	50	
	Service Change	Achieved	55	55	
	External Income Maximisation	Achieved	25	25	
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	Service Review	Achieved	20	20	198
	Service Review	Achieved	51	51	
	Collaboration	Achieved	10	10	
	Review of vacant posts	Achieved	32	32	
	Review of vacant posts	Achieved	30	30	
	Technical Budget Reduction	Achieved	5	5	
	Service Review	Achieved	40	40	
	Service Change	Achieved	10	10	

variance

OVERALL SUMMARY	2,295	2,102	193
		92%	

Summary:	£'000	£'000	%
Savings Achieved		1,249	59
Savings In Progress		853	41
Total		2,102	100

Savings Not Achieved / Reduced	193
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Appendix 2: £3m Savings Target

Service	Category	RAYG Status	Estimated Savings £'000	Service Total £'000	Service Target £'000	Shortfall / Over (-/+) £'000
Education & Childrens Service	Service Change	Green	62			
	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Green	5			
	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Green	41			
	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Amber	40			
	Review of vacant posts	Green	53			
	SUMMARY:					
Adult Social Care and Homelessness	Other	RED	104			
	Service Review	Amber	137			
	Service Review	Green	20			
	External Income Maximisation	Green	11			
	SUMMARY:					
Corporate Support Services: Performance Digital and Assets	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Green	213			
	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Yellow	114			
	Review of vacant posts	Yellow	95			
	Technical Budget Reduction	Green	3			
	Technical Budget Reduction	Green	7			
	External Income Maximisation	Green	18			
	SUMMARY:					
Corporate Support Sevices: People	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Yellow	120			
	Service Review	Green	36			
	Service Review	Green	3			
	Systems Changes	Green	4			
	Service Review	Green	13			
	External Income Maximisation	Yellow	20			
	Review of vacant posts	Yellow	21			
	Technical Budget Reduction	Green	4			
	Systems Changes	Green	7			
	Systems Changes	Yellow	5			
	SUMMARY:					

Appendix 2: £3m Savings Target

Service	Category	RAYG Status	Estimated Savings £'000	Service Total £'000	Service Target £'000	Shortfall / Over (-/+) £'000
Finance and Audit	Review of vacant posts	Green	80	207	207	0
	Service Review	Amber	65			
	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Green	62			
	SUMMARY:					
Housing and Communities	Review of vacant posts	Green	93	190	190	0
	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Green	28			
	Service Review	Green	17			
	Service Review	Yellow	52			
	SUMMARY:					
Highways and Environment Service	Service Review	Yellow	244	1,017	881	136
	External Income Maximisation	Green	300			
	Service Review	Amber	100			
	External Income Maximisation	Yellow	140			
	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Yellow	100			
	Review of vacant posts	Amber	73			
	Service Review	Green	60			
	SUMMARY:					
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	Voluntary Exit Scheme	Green	440	637	637	0
	Other	Green	40			
	Service Review	Green	27			
	Service Review	Green	55			
	Service Change	Green	25			
	External Income Maximisation	Green	50			
	SUMMARY:					
OVERALL SUMMARY				3,207	3,000	207

Overachievement of the '£3m target' is to offset the shortfall against the 'non-strategic savings' agreed at budget setting

Green	1,897
Yellow	791
Amber	415
Red	104
	3,207

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APPENDIX 3

MTFS Summary	Forecast 2025/26			Forecast 2026/27			Forecast 2027/28		
	Low Gap	Medium Gap	High Gap	Low Gap	Medium Gap	High Gap	Low Gap	Medium Gap	High Gap
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Pay Pressure	2,769	3,462	4,154	2,880	3,635	4,403	2,995	3,817	4,668
Pay Grades Pressure	1,300	1,300	1,300	0	0	0	0	0	0
Price Inflation (inc Energy)	250	250	250	250	250	500	250	250	500
CTRS	500	500	950	350	500	700	350	500	700
Fire Levy	400	500	600	200	300	400	200	300	400
Social Services	3,000	5,000	6,000	2,000	3,000	5,000	2,000	3,000	5,000
Childrens Services	2,600	3,900	5,900	2,000	3,000	4,000	2,000	3,000	4,000
Schools Inflation	3,000	4,000	5,000	3,000	4,000	5,000	3,000	4,000	5,000
Schools Demography	350	700	800	350	700	800	350	700	800
Investment in Priorities	0	250	500	967	967	1,500	892	892	1,000
Additional Service Pressures	1,000	1,500	2,000	1,000	1,500	2,000	1,000	1,500	2,000
Total Pressures	15,169	21,362	27,454	12,997	17,852	24,303	13,037	17,959	24,068
Inc/dec in Revenue Support Grant	-2,008	602	2,008	-2,002	1,001	2,002	-2,002	0	2,002
Council Tax Increase	-8,944	-6,822	-4,700	-4,764	-4,764	-4,764	-5,055	-5,055	-5,055
Total Increase in Revenue	-10,952	-6,219	-2,692	-6,766	-3,763	-2,762	-7,057	-5,055	-3,053
Annual Budget Gap	4,217	15,143	24,762	6,231	14,089	21,541	5,980	12,904	21,015
Cumulative Budget Gap	4,217	15,143	24,762	10,448	29,231	46,303	16,428	42,135	67,318

Note on Main Assumptions:

- Pay: based on 4% (L), 5%(M) and 6% (H) increase for each year
- Priorities: 25/26 - Carbon Project only
26/27 - Carbon (£250k), and Coastal Schemes (£717)
27/28 - Carbon (£250k), Schools Building (£506k) and Archives (£136k)
- Childrens Pressure: 25/26 - Based on current overspend plus known additional placements. Worst case assumes additional new complex placements will occur
- Social Care Pressure: 25/26 - Mid case based on last year's ongoing pressures only (ie one-off pressures excluded). Inflation may lessen the scale of fee increases but other issues such as re-contracting and the 'Let's agree to agree' methodology may increase costs.
- Schools Pressure: No detailed calculation done yet but broadly in line with pay pressure elsewhere (most of inflation is pay)
- Revenue Support Grant: Based on Wales Fiscal Analysis data (-0.3%, -0.5%, 0%). No other analysis available at this stage.
- Council Tax: 25/26: 6% (L), 9% (M) & 12% (H)
26/27 and 27/8: all scenarios based on the long term average of 5.5%

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Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28 (April 2024 Update)

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and outlines some of the financial issues that will face the Council over the next three years.

This is the first iteration of the MTFS 2025/26 – 2027/28 and it has been compiled with data and information available as at the end of March 2024. The document is an early version, it will be subject to refinement as the financial year 2024/25 progresses and will identify workstreams that need progressing during the year.

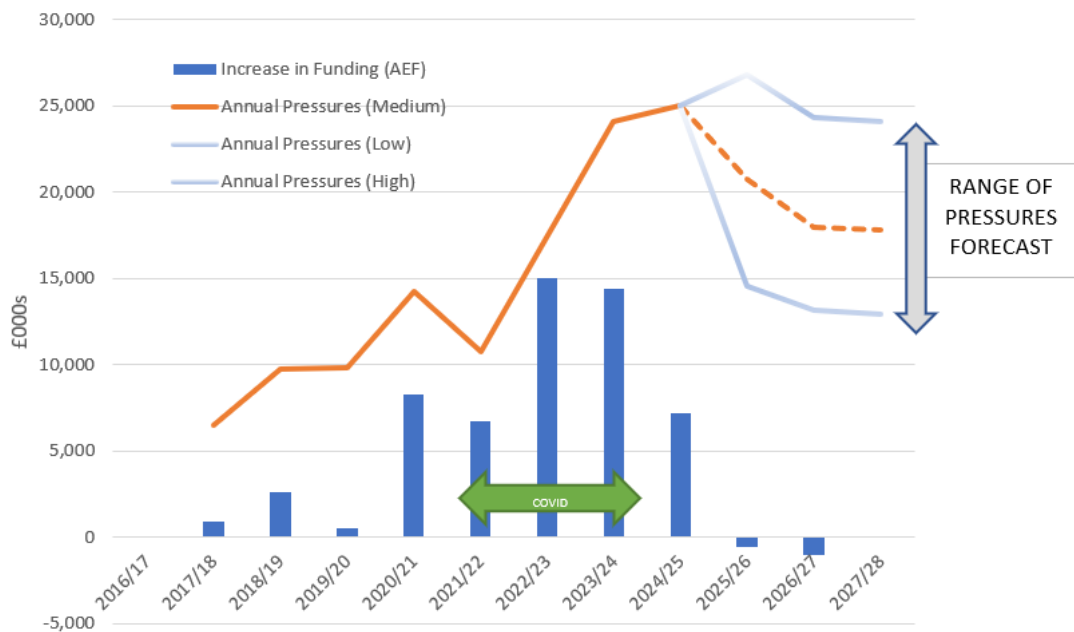
Summary of the Financial Outlook

The medium term economic and political environment within which the Council operates remains extremely uncertain making forecasting budget projections with accuracy difficult. Whilst inflation has eased from its peak it will continue to have an impact by increasing costs of service delivery through the pressure on pay, commissioned care, food and fuel prices etc. General demand for services from our communities continues to grow and the complexity of needs has intensified in areas such as education and children's services and adult social care.

The 2024/25 funding settlement from Welsh Government provided no future indication of funding as it has done for the past 2 years. As circa 75% of the council's budget (net) is funded by the settlement this adds a level of uncertainty. Predictions on future funding from Welsh Government are based on latest forecasts from the Wales Fiscal Analysis for cash flat and even slightly negative funding settlements.

The graph below shows how funding received from Welsh Government compares with the cost pressures the council is subject to. It covers a 10-year period, looking back to 2017/18 and forecasts forward to 2027/28 using current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) estimates of pressures using a range of cost assumptions from low to high.

WG FUNDING COMPARED WITH PRESSURES



The council has faced a significant financial challenge in setting its 2024/25 budget, which is set to continue in the medium term due to a combination of no increases in funding from Welsh Government (working assumption), the continued impact of inflation and increases in demand for and complexity of needs for services. It is possible that the forthcoming general election and increases in funding from UK and Welsh governments could change the position, but this is unlikely to change the scale of the financial challenge facing the council which should not be underestimated.

Appendix 3 sets out the current revised budget projections in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2025/26 – 2027/28 along with the assumptions that underpin the projections. At this stage in the budget process the MTFP shows high level estimates of known pressures along with the impact of increases in Council Tax and funding from Welsh Government. The table includes a range of assumptions to provide a low, medium and high estimate of costs for each pressure, illustrating both the uncertainty of the figures and the amount of work that still needs to be carried out to refine these projections.

Budget Pressures

Corporate pressures currently included in the MTFP;

- Pay pressure - Non-Teaching Pay Awards.

- Pay Grades Pressure - In recent years increases to the National Living Wage driven by high levels of inflation has had an impact on the Council's pay structure. Grades have compressed at the lower end of the structure due to the removal of some spinal points and there is an increasing need to review the structure.
- Price inflation including energy
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme - Funding for CTRS transferred into the Local Government settlement a number of years ago and has not changed. Additional costs as a result of increases in Council Tax fall on the council
- Levy from North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
- Schools inflation – covering teaching and non-teaching pay awards for those employees working in schools, and price inflation.
- Schools Demography – reflecting changes in overall pupil numbers.
- Investment in Priorities - impact of capital programme repayment of borrowing and interest costs.

Service Pressures currently included in the MTFP;

- Adult Social Care – based on ongoing pressures identified
- Children's Services – based on current overspend plus known additional placements

Current figures included are at a high level and both pressures need refinement as the year develops to reflect updated demands. Demands for some service provision is increasing in Adults and Childrens Services but also the complexity of care required by individuals is increasing.

There is a need to consider additional service pressures not currently specified in the MTFP. A relatively modest sum covering all pressures has been included in the MTFP for each of the 3 years. A short process whereby Heads of Service submit a short and focused business case that is supported by the Corporate Director, for approval by CET will be run this year and concluded by the summer.

The majority of the pressures faced by the council are outside of its control, for example pay inflation is set nationally.

Risks

This section of the MTFS provides details of the strategic risks that the council is facing that it has not been possible to quantify in the MTFP at this stage, or there is still a degree of uncertainty if it will materialise.

- Pay Awards – The 2024/25 pay awards have yet to be confirmed. Should they be settled at amounts in excess of what has been set aside in the 2024/25 budget the council would need to use reserves in year to fund and to correct the base budget in 2025/26 which adds to the overall pressures in the MTFP for 2025/26. The employees' side in the pay negotiations are currently requesting 10% or a lump sum of £3,000 whichever the greater, the council has budgeted for 5% in 2024/25.
- Clwyd Pension Fund Triennial Review – revised employer contributions would take effect from 2026/27.
- Children's Services Placements – demand is difficult to forecast, complexity of needs coupled with inflation have driven up costs significantly in recent years. WG have set a priority of eliminating private profit from the care of looked after children, this could have an impact on the market in Wales.
- Adult Social Care – care fees and an increase in the number of complex cases could be in excess of budgeted levels.
- Homelessness – The general lack of social and affordable housing coupled with changes in legislation during the pandemic has seen a significant increase in the number of people presenting as homeless in recent years. This has led to significant additional cost, particularly in relation to temporary accommodation. Whilst there are a number of workstreams being progressed with positive results to reduce the costs and numbers in temporary accommodation the situation can change quickly.
- Council Tax Reforms – WG has plans to reform the way CT is calculated and charged, this has the potential to impact on how much funding the council receives.

Funding Additional Pressures

The net revenue budget is funded from Aggregate External Finance (AEF) (75%) and Council Tax (25%). The AEF is made up of Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Non Domestic Rates Pool funding (NDR).

Aggregate External Funding - Projected funding from Welsh Government.

The 2024/25 funding settlement from Welsh Government provided no future indication of funding as it has done for the past 2 years. Future funding within the MTFP is based on assessments by Wales Fiscal Analysis at slightly negative reductions of -0.3% in 2025/26, -0.5% in 2026/27, and 0% in 2027//28 in the absence of anything else.

In recent years draft settlements have not been announced until mid-December. Given a general election will be held at some point this year, there is unlikely to be any certainty regards funding settlements. It is essential that we continue advocating for more resources from national governments especially considering increasing demand in services or rising costs as a result of policy decisions. It is worth noting that a 1% increase in AEF equates to an additional £2m in funding.

Council Tax

In 2024/25, Denbighshire's Band D Council Tax is £1,679 which compares to the Welsh average of £1,631 and the North Wales average of £1,666. Across Wales, Band D Council Tax varies between £1,446 (Caerphilly) and £1,975 (Merthyr Tydfil) and in North Wales between £1,572 (Ynys Mon) and £1,755 (Gwynedd). The Band D Council Tax of our immediate neighbours is £1,733 at Conwy and £1,658 at Flintshire. We are the 3rd highest in North Wales.

Assumptions made about Council Tax increases in the MTFP range from 6% - 12% for 2025/26 and a 5.5% long term average thereafter for both years though it is important to note that no decisions have been made yet. A mid-range assumption of a Council Tax increase of 9% for 2025/26 yields an additional £6.8m but only addresses a third of the funding gap, the remaining gap is substantial at £14.5m.

To the extent that increases in AEF and Council Tax are insufficient to meet the financial demand, then the Council is faced with the need to make budget reductions, generate income or use its one-off reserves and balances to fund any remaining resource shortfall.

Budget Reductions, Savings and Efficiencies

Given the scale of the council's current financial position and the cumulative impact of finding annual efficiencies over the past decade, no service can be protected from reductions in budget and a need to transform the way services are delivered, this unfortunately includes front line services. Prioritisation of services will need to feature in future discussions. The council is faced with stopping or reducing some services in areas that are less of a priority or are discretionary in nature. Given the scale of the challenge, we are also faced with reducing the levels of service provision for those services that we have a statutory duty to deliver. The strategy will be to limit the impact of budget reductions on front line services providing services to the most vulnerable in our communities, those needing social care and in our schools.

It is important to understand that there are some budgets within the overall net revenue budget where it is not possible to implement any savings, for example the Levy to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, Members' allowances etc. Furthermore, that the council cannot operate without support services functions, however they will need to be reshaped so that they operate effectively and as efficiently as possible.

The scope for efficiencies is limited given the scale of budget reductions over the past ten years, which has delivered a wide range of efficiencies. However, technologies and other practices continue to evolve, and we therefore need to work hard to identify and deliver further efficiencies where we can in order to preserve services for residents.

There is a need to develop a more transformational approach to the council's need to reduce its costs (see below). Our approach to transformation is a priority and is under development but it will take time and investment. For the next few years, the approach will be for all services to model how a percentage service reduction could be achieved and what services will look like as a result. The combined percentage reduction to budgets will equate to the council's funding gap. Percentages will be considered early on in the annual budget setting process and will be treated in a broad sense. It will not be appropriate to apply a consistent level of budget reductions across all services.

To assist with the approach outlined above the following tasks will be completed:

- An exercise is being developed aimed at providing Members with high level information on all activities and associated costs to determine what are Members collective service priorities.
- A small exercise with services will be undertaken early in the budget process to capture the full year effect of some savings that are only part year in 2024/25 and any small-scale efficiency type savings that Heads of Service are able to offer up. We will aim to conclude this work and report back as soon as we can in the year.

Budgetary control measures introduced covering recruitment, and use of overtime and agency will continue into 2025/26.

Fees and Charges

Annual work on fees and charges has always been undertaken every year as part of budget setting, however a more focused review of fees and charges is planned. The fees and charges policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary. This will indicate which fees are statutory and which are not. The workstream will be led by the Finance team who will aim to conclude the work and report back to Cabinet in October. The workstream could identify opportunities to generate or maximise income which will need to feed through to the transformation agenda.

Schools

There is a need to consider the position of the delegated schools' budget as early as possible in the process so that this can be communicated clearly with schools and they can plan accordingly. The approach will be to continue to fully fund inflationary pressures including pay awards, pension contributions, energy, etc and demography, and then apply a budget reduction. In 2024/25 this equated to a gross increase to schools of £7.616m before we applied savings of 3% which equated to £2.7m. The net position was an increase of £4.916m a 5.82% increase in the schools' budget. The schools' budget is our biggest budget, the council cannot fund all inflationary pressures without expecting our schools to contribute to the savings effort. The additional level of funding the council received from WG in broad terms at 3.8% in 2024/25, did not cover inflationary costs

including that of our schools. The impacts of decisions and changes in 2024/25 will need to be assessed and considered in reaching decisions on the percentage reduction for schools in 2025/26.

Reserves and Balances

The table below set outs the useable reserves held by the Council as at 1 April 2023. However, activities during 2023/24 will already have meant some of the reserves have been spent by now. The council is currently forecasting a net 2023/24 in-year overspend which will need to be funded from earmarked reserves. The level of overspend is currently £2.7m (March Finance update to Cabinet). Balances will be confirmed for 1st April 2024 as part of year end close down and will be reported to Cabinet as part of year end reporting 2023/24.

Useable Reserves	1st April 2023 (£m)	Purpose
Council Fund balance	5.577	Sums set aside for more general purposes to meet any unforeseen costs pressures and unexpected events outside of the council's control.
Earmarked Revenue Reserves – Services	14.994	Sums set aside for specific purposes to support Service needs.
Earmarked Reserves - Corporate	16.669	Sums set aside for specific purposes to support corporate needs.
Earmarked Revenue Reserves - Schools	8.939	School reserves which are delegated to school governing bodies.
Housing Revenue Account Reserve	1.566	Housing reserves which are ringfenced for housing purposes as required in law.
Earmarked Capital	19.240	Capital monies set aside for funding ongoing capital schemes per the Capital Plan.
Capital Reserves (capital receipts reserve and capital grants unapplied account reserve)	15.122	Capital receipts and grants to fund ongoing capital schemes per the Capital Plan. These sums generally cannot be used to support Revenue expenditure.
Total Useable Reserves	82.107	

The Council Fund balance currently stands at £5.6m. The current convention is to keep a minimum £5m unearmarked reserve, to meet any unforeseen cost pressures and unexpected events outside of the council's control. It would be imprudent to plan to use the first £5m of this reserve. Furthermore, it is not proposed to plan to use the £0.6m above the £5m base level reserve given the increased level of risk that is inherent in the budget set in 2024/25. Should there ever be a call on this reserve, there would need to be a plan to replenish the reserve to its target level of £5m.

There is no determined level of reserves that is necessary for councils to hold as that is a matter of judgement for each council to make. £5m has been the level for some years and as the council's net revenue budget has increased (due to high levels of inflation) in recent years its value has been eroded. £5m is 1.84% of the current net revenue budget (2024/25) and consideration needs to be given during the year to reviewing the policy. Given the scale of the financial challenge it will not be feasible to plan to build our general balance by earmarking budget. A target level could be set however, with intentions to increase the balance should any opportunity arise, e.g., from windfall income etc.

The council also has earmarked reserves which are set aside for specific purposes. Some are restricted in their use by, for example, the terms and conditions of grants where their source is government funding. Earmarked reserves are also used by services to manage their budgets and are reviewed regularly as part of budget monitoring.

The council holds limited centrally held earmarked reserves including its budget mitigation reserve which will fund the current in year overspend. In setting the 2024/25 budget the council approved targeted use of corporate earmarked reserves to cover one-off exit costs, and as mitigation for risks from ongoing discussions around reviewing the council's pay structure which is necessary given the unprecedented financial position faced.

Over the next few months, a workstream to review the council's policy for reserves will be undertaken and this will include a review and challenge of both corporate and service reserves held to confirm that they are still needed. This may identify modest reserves that could be transferred into setting a reserve to fund 'invest to save' projects that require modest amounts of upfront costs to unlock savings proposals going forward. The timescales for concluding this work would be a report to Cabinet in July.

Transformation

Whilst we are developing a transformation agenda with the primary purpose being to reduce the costs to the council, this will take some time to develop and, in all probability, may not materialise in time for 2025/26 budget setting.

High level discussions to develop the transformation agenda have been taking place in recent months at Corporate Executive Team (CET) and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) levels and informally with Cabinet around the broad themes set out below;

- Reducing Demand
- Collaboration & Partnership
- Regional Working
- Alternative Delivery Models
- Income Generation and Maximisation
- Internal Initiatives

These are initial themes that may evolve as work to refine them continues. A series of workshops around the budget and transformation (see timetable below) for all Members is planned, with the first in the diary for early June for Members initial input into the council's approach to transformation.

Processes for keeping Members informed and Governance of the Budget

The process for setting the 2024/25 budget evolved during the last financial year reflecting the severity of the budgetary situation.

Heads of Service came forward with proposals for budget reductions following discussions with Lead Members. Proposals were categorised into 2; Major Savings Proposals and Non-Strategic Savings.

Each Major Savings Proposal was reviewed by CET for deliverability before being reported informally to Cabinet for political challenge/acceptability. If a project was informally supported by Cabinet, the relevant Lead Member ensured that all Members were advised of the project by sharing a brief report and a Wellbeing Impact Assessment. Each project was the subject of a virtual Teams meeting for all Members so the proposal could be

further explained, and any initial questions answered. Some projects needed to be reported to Scrutiny and were the subject of a public consultation. Final decisions were taken as appropriate e.g. at Cabinet, Lead Member Delegated Decision, Head of Service delegated decision etc.

Heads of Service also proposed a range of non-strategic efficiencies/smaller scale reductions to budgets. These efficiencies/reductions to budget were discussed with Lead Members and in most cases were progressed via a Head of Service delegated decision.

These processes for sharing information with Members will continue going forward as in general feedback from Members has been that they did feel informed about the budget.

Regular Council Workshops/Member Briefings will be arranged to update Members on development of MTFS (overall budget approach), latest projections in MTFP, progress on delivery regarding closing the budget gap and the transformation agenda.

There will also be more reporting to update the MTFS and MTFP this year, with updates for Cabinet planned in July, October and January, before the budget is set a month later in February. These reports will be the subject of agenda items for Governance and Audit Committee for assurance that the council has robust processes in place to make effective decisions in a timely manner to deliver balanced budgets in future and a scrutiny committee to review those decisions. It is also planned to debate budget setting proposals at Council much earlier on than in recent years and a report is planned for November. Final budget proposals will need to be approved with Council Tax setting at a Council meeting in February, when the settlement from WG is known.

Communications Plan

The communications plan for the budget is as follows:

- Elected Members – as per processes for keeping Members informed section (above).
- The Leader, Chief Executive and Corporate Director Governance & Business meet regularly with Group Leaders, who update their Groups. Groups can invite Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and Section 151 Officer to any of their meetings to discuss the budget proposals.

- Employees - Regular updates on budget are provided at the monthly Staff Council meetings. Staff roadshows are taking place 12th March – 1st May to give employees an opportunity to better understand the Council’s financial position and to ask questions / offer feedback. Further briefing sessions will be arranged as necessary.
- Trade Unions - Senior Officers meet regularly with the Unions to update them on saving proposals.
- Schools - Senior Officers attend the School Budget Forum on a regular basis to update them on saving proposals, particularly regarding implications for schools.
- Public / residents - Major projects have and will continue to be subject to specific public consultation e.g. reduction in library opening hours, and public conveniences. Engagement with the public last year focused on developing budgetary information on the council’s website which was shared through our social media channels. Further work is needed this year to develop our residents understanding of the council’s financial challenges and the impact it will have on our ability to deliver services.
- City, Town and Community Councils – We plan to hold an information session with all of our City, Town and Community Councils to fully brief them of the council’s financial situation in June. Further briefing sessions will be arranged as necessary.

Wellbeing impact assessments were completed on all major savings proposals along with an overarching assessment for the whole of the budget. This is being updated periodically as proposals are refined and reported to the Strategic Equalities and Diversity Group.

Timetable

Table below includes a timetable of budget activity likely from now until the summer recess;

Budget Activity	Date
Staff Roadshows - Budget	12 th March – 1 st May
Members Budget Workshop - Governance and Business	13 th March
Members Budget Workshop – Economy and Environment	15 th March

Members Budget Workshop – Social Service and Education	11 th April
Cabinet – Medium Term Financial Strategy (including MTFP update) and assessment of financial resilience report.	23 rd April
Governance and Audit Committee - Medium Term Financial Strategy (including MTFP update) and assessment of financial resilience report.	24 th April
Budget discussion with Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny	20 th May
Performance Scrutiny – Medium Term Financial Strategy (including MTFP update) and assessment of financial resilience report. (Proposed – tbc with Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny)	6 th June
Members Budget Workshop - Transformation	6 th June
Members Budget Workshop – MTFS / MTFP update	July (TBC)
Cabinet MTFS / MTFP update	30 th July
Governance and Audit Committee MTFS / MTFP update	24 th July
Performance Scrutiny MTFS / MTFP update (Proposed – tbc with Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny)	26 th September
Members Budget Workshop – MTFS / MTFP update	October / November
Cabinet MTFS / MTFP update	22 nd October
Governance and Audit Committee MTFS / MTFP update	20 th November
Performance Scrutiny MTFS / MTFP update (Proposed – tbc with Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny)	28 th November
Full Council – Early debate – Budget 2025/26	12 th November

Conclusion

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out the financial forecast for the next three years. It is based on a range of assumptions, most of which at this stage are uncertain and are likely to change. However, the level of uncertainty, both in terms of the UK economic outlook, funding from Welsh government and service demands, leaves us with significant risk. As a result of the volatility, the plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Whilst the plan does not provide us with any real certainty, it nonetheless does provide a clear indication of the direction of travel and scale of the financial pressures, to determine actions and strategic considerations we need to take in the immediate term (to set the 2025/26 budget) and mid-term (to set the 2026/27 and 2027/28 budgets) and sets out the need for transformation.

Consideration, and response to, CIPFAs report ‘Learning lessons: what Section 114s can teach us’.

At the January 2024 meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee during discussions around the processes for setting balanced budgets a request was made to stress test the Council’s budget processes.

In particular, reference was made to a report written by CIPFA (Chartered institute of public finance and accountancy) dating to September 2022

<https://www.cipfa.org/cipfa-thinks/insight/learning-lessons-what-section-114-can-teach-us>

Background

The term ‘Section 114’ refers to this section of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, part (3) of which sets out the duty of the chief finance officer (CFO) to

“make a report under this section if it appears to him that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenses it proposes to occur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure”.

Issuing the notice under Section 114(3) immediately suspends all financial activity apart from that which is necessary to maintain statutory duties; it also initiates a 21-day period for full council to consider the report and agree urgent action to start to remedy the situation. The authority’s external auditors and in Wales the Welsh Government would also be notified and could step in to provide advice and support.

CIPFA notes in its report, ‘It is unlikely that a Section 114 notice would be issued out of the blue – warnings may have been raised by the CFO, auditors or others before the point at which a notice becomes unavoidable. To issue a notice is a public admission that the authority cannot balance the books, and therefore indicates that warnings regarding the seriousness of the financial situation have been ignored. The severity of the position may not have been appreciated by those in leadership until it is too late, while the problems only become more severe the longer they are neglected.

Since 2018 eight English authorities have issued section 114 notices. Each notice has its own unique set of circumstances however the context in which this has occurred is important. English authorities were responding to a reduction in funding from central government in real terms of 10.2% from 2009/10 to 2021/22 (source institute for government). At the same time demands for services, particularly children’s and adult social care has increased substantially, whilst more recently the cost of providing services has risen due to high levels of inflation not experienced for decades. In response, a number of English local authorities have looked to source income from elsewhere. Some have borrowed to invest to generate income in commercial property. The pandemic, changing societal patterns and rising interest

rates have all combined to make it more difficult for local authorities to service their debt, contributing to lower financial resilience.

According to a Local Government Association survey carried out in December 2023, (albeit before modest amounts of additional money were announced), one in five council leaders and chief executives in England think it is very or fairly likely their Chief Finance Officer will need to issue a Section 114 notice in 2023/24 or 2024/25. Half are not confident they will have enough funding to fulfil their legal duties in 2024/25. This includes the delivery of statutory services.

It is important to explain that there are clear differences in funding that exist between funding of councils in England and Wales. Welsh councils are funded from Welsh Government and have not seen the same levels of reductions in funding that English councils have faced.

Welsh councils do however face similar pressures from increased costs in delivering services to their English counterparts, and Welsh councils are more reliant on funding from Welsh Government than English council's are on the UK Government.

To date no Welsh council has issued a Section 114 notice.

Denbighshire's Self-Assessment

As requested by the Committee what follows in this appendix is an assessment of the Council's position against common themes and issues identified by CIPFA in reviews of English council's that have issued S114 notices from their learning lessons report and subsequent work. This assessment has been completed by the Statutory Officers (the Section 151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive Officer).

Common Symptoms Identified	Consideration / Response
<p>Over-ambitious savings - over-ambitious savings targets that are not well evidenced. This is particularly concerning when historically records show savings have not been achieved.</p> <p>CIPFA advice - The savings process should be effective and engaging, with budget holders actively involved in identifying and delivering savings. Savings need to be identified by budget holders, who can then commit to delivering them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has a good track record of achieving savings required as evidenced prior to the pandemic. Admittedly since the pandemic the test has been somewhat limited. Savings required in 2023/24 were in the main found through corporate initiatives. • The budget setting report to Council is clear the increased risk that the 2024/25 budget contains which requires £10.4m of savings to be realised. Reserves provide a level of mitigation should savings not be deliverable in year, and therefore the strategy in balancing the budget therefore is to protect the reserves available as far as possible. • Steps are being taken to strengthen financial management across the Council. Members workshops have been held to review progress on delivery of savings for each service (including the £3m target savings included in the 2024/25 budget setting report). Achievement of savings will be tracked regularly in the finance report to Cabinet. Performance indicators specifically related to budget will be set and monitored in every service plan. • To improve processes and consistency across services it is planned to introduce statements in support of all pressures and savings included in the MTFP to document the calculations and any assumptions made. • The approach adopted by the Council is that Heads of Service propose and take responsibility for savings in conjunction with their Lead Member to ensure the savings process is effective and engaging. Furthermore, through management/leadership processes including regular 1-2-1 meetings taking place, delivery of identified savings are part of these discussions and processes. This will take place at Chief Executive and Corporate Director level, Corporate Director and Head of Service level, and Head of Service and with their Managers. • Corporate Executive Team (CET) meets weekly and considers savings updates regularly.

<p>Lack of a MTFP - even with the current fluid financial landscape, medium-term planning indicates an understanding and assurance that support financial sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has an MTFP in place covering 3 years. This is discussed regularly at Cabinet and at informal meeting including monthly Cabinet Briefing, weekly CET, fortnightly at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and at the fortnightly Cabinet / CET budget meetings. • Council has a MTFS and updates on budget process is reported regularly to Governance and Audit Committee. See covering report and other appendices to this report which includes developments to enhance both the MTFP and MTFS this year.
<p>Leadership - as financial sustainability becomes increasingly challenging it is essential for the leadership team to work together. Increasingly organisations that have been subject to intervention have experienced change at senior level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be recognition that some Senior Officers and the Cabinet are relatively new to their roles, and this represents an element of risk in the Council's ability to set future balanced budgets. • Leadership and Culture important aspects for CEO. CET + Section 151 Officer work very closely as do SLT and Cabinet. This is reflected in our Well Run Council Theme in the Corporate Plan. • CET meets weekly, SLT fortnightly, CET Cabinet meeting fortnightly to discuss budget since Summer and will continue to do so. • Result is a committed and dedicated Leadership team balanced with some individuals that have worked for the Council for some years and have the history, knowledge and experience of the organisation, and other individuals who bring knowledge and experience from having worked elsewhere. • Leadership team constantly striving towards our shared vision to create 'One Council' culture with strong visible leadership and effective management.
<p>Inadequate governance – the depth of financial problems indicates a serious lack of oversight, with audit and governance committees not exercising their function and roles not understood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Councils Governance arrangements are considered appropriate. Good Governance goes hand in hand with strong Leadership. • As a learning authority (part of our culture) we are always reflecting on how we can do things better. • Our shared vision is underpinned by 4 core values which include respect and integrity, and our 5 principles which includes Member and Officer relations.

<p>CIPFA Advice - Governance arrangements should be strengthened and include the ability to speak truth to power.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Officers are empowered by the CEO to discuss improvements and to challenge appropriately the way things are done. Similar relationship with Members – our culture is very much of openness and the ability to speak truth to power. • Comprehensive discussions are ongoing regards the role of the Governance and Audit Committee, and the Terms of Reference for the audit committee is being reviewed. • Currently reviewing role of Scrutiny in budget setting process for both Revenue and Capital • As required the Council produces and Annual Governance Statement. • Section 151 officer, Monitoring Officer and Head of Internal Audit all have direct access to Chief Executive Officer and to the Governance and Audit Committee. • All Members are able to attend Cabinet and raise questions on each agenda item before Cabinet makes decisions. • Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets regularly attends Governance and Audit Committee.
<p>Weak financial management – the importance of good financial management in relation to reporting and monitoring provides assurance and evidence for effective budgetary decision making.</p> <p>CIPFA Advice - The quality of financial management should be assessed. Understand where your financial management strengths and weaknesses are. The CIPFA FM (Financial Management) Code is a good place to start.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is about doing the basics of financial management well which the Council has always done. • During the year a detailed monthly finance report covering revenue, capital, Housing Revenue Account, Schools, and the treasury (investments and borrowing) position is reported to Cabinet. • Each service is allocated dedicated support from the Finance Team who they work in partnership with on all aspects of financial management. Relationships have been developed into business partners which offer support and guidance but also offer appropriate challenge. • See earlier comments regarding regular discussions at 1-2-1s regards savings etc which filters from CEO and Corporate Directors throughout the organisation – this is part of strong financial management as finance/savings important part of such discussions.

<p>Elected members must receive training on financial matters, improving their understanding of complex issues. Ensure that members understand enough about financial matters to realise the seriousness and implications of the decision they are making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overspends in 2023/24 and 2022/23 were identified quickly with actions to mitigate put in place to reduce the level of overspend in year. • See earlier comments regarding steps being taken to strengthen financial management tracking savings, budget performance indicators included in service plans. We will also introduce additional reporting in 2024/25 when a service reaches a certain trigger of overspend in the next monthly finance report. • The CIPFA FM Code is reviewed annually with the results reported in the Annual Governance Statement. • Positive and supportive professional networks in Wales at all levels (Section 151 Officers, CEOs, Monitoring Officers, etc). Particularly in North Wales therefore mutual support / shared experiences. • Elected Members have received training, more could be arranged if necessary. Democratic Services committee recently agreed to recommend that Local Govt Finance and Budget Setting be mandatory training for all Members. Report to Council in May. • Consider elected Members were engaged in the 2024/25 budget process and understood the implications of decisions made. Informal meetings were held to discuss each Major Savings proposal alongside wellbeing impact assessments which continue to be updated. As a learning organisation always willing to receive feedback from all Members. CEO and Section 151 Officer have held informal sessions with all groups to reflect on 2024/25 budget setting.
<p>Lack of reserves – while the economic climate continues to be difficult, organisations that have little to no reserves face significantly higher risks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has a modest amount of revenue reserves available, though the trend in recent years is negative as the council has had to use reserves to cover in year unplanned overspends. • See budget report in January for reserves section. • See MTFs review of reserves and of reserves policy planned. • Difficult to compare reserves across councils and draw meaningful conclusions as each council is different.

<p>CIPFA Advice - Commercialism. The risks around commercial activities must be clearly understood, with effective oversight of council-owned companies. Make sure the risks are understood and there is effective oversight.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has undertaken some commercial activity with the setting up of Denbighshire Leisure Limited. Effective governance arrangements are in place to manage the contract, risk and oversight which are working well. A strategic governance board consisting of CEO, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Leader, Lead Member for Finance, Chair of Governance and Audit Committee and a Scrutiny Chair. • Any future proposals would need careful consideration by the Council.
<p>CIPFA Advice - Internal audit should review the effectiveness of financial rules and processes, and knowledge of and compliance with financial regulations. Review your financial regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Internal Audit plan for 2024/25 is in the final stages of development. Audits will include review budget setting process in 2023/24, process for tracking savings, and reviews within services for assurance that savings have been achieved in line with service expectations and to measuring impact on performance. • Internal audits would always consider compliance with financial and procurement laws and regulations. • Admittedly the regular review and update of Financial Regulations by Finance has not been completed recently. A new finance system is being implemented during April which replaces all our financial IT systems. IA have been involved in the project as a critical friend to advise on risks in changing systems and processes. Additional audit work will be carried out in 2024/25 for assurance purposes because of the change in systems. The aim would be to review and update financial procedures in 2025/26 post implementation of new financial systems. Capacity within the Finance Team is unlikely to allow the review to take place in 2024/25.
<p>CIPFA Advice - A financial resilience review may be obtained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Wales undertaking review locally and nationally across Welsh local government on financial sustainability. The results of which will be available in July 2024 • Panel Performance Assessment as part LG and Elections (Wales) Act later this year. The Act places a duty on councils to arrange for a panel to undertake and respond to a corporate, organisational level assessment, of the extent

	<p>to which the council is meeting its performance requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration could be given to obtaining an external independent review of financial resilience in totality or for a specific service. This could be completed by WLGA, CIPFA etc.
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BUSINESS CASE – CAPITAL INVESTMENT

This Business Case provides justification for undertaking a project. The completed form will be reviewed by the Capital Scrutiny Group who will make a recommendation to Cabinet or CET whether the bid should be approved and included within the Capital Plan.

PLEASE COMPLETE SECTIONS 1-14 ONLY AND SEND TO CAPITALBIDS@DENBIGHSHIRE.GOV.UK.
PLEASE TURN OFF TRACK CHANGES AND REMOVE ANY COMMENTS BEFORE SENDING
 THE CAPITAL TEAM WILL REQUEST SUPPORTING STATEMENTS FOR SECTIONS 15-18 TO BE SENT TO THE BUSINESS CASE AUTHOR FOR INSERTION TO THE BUSINESS CASE.
 PLEASE SEND THE FINAL BUSINESS CASE (WITH APPENDIX A COMPLETED) TO CAPITALBIDS@DENBIGHSHIRE.GOV.UK

For details of Capital Scrutiny Group Meeting dates and deadlines for the submission of this form, please contact capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk

Project Name:	Ysgol Bro Elwern Extension
Project Manager:	Emma Jones, Modernising Education
Work stream/Programme (if applicable):	Modernising Education (Welsh Capital Grant)
Verto project reference	PR006889

1. PROJECT TYPE

Head of Service i.e. Project Sponsor	Geraint Davies, Head of Education	Lead member:	Cllr Gill German,
Service:	Education	LM Portfolio:	Lead Member for Education, Children and Families
Form completed by:	Emma Jones (Modernising Education)	Date:	07/02/2024
Finance Capital Team contact:	Sian Jackson	Service Accountant (for revenue implications if applicable)	Chris Speed

Please categorise your project type. Mark **one** box only.

SMALL <£250k	<input type="checkbox"/>
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MEDIUM >£251 - £999k	<input type="checkbox"/>
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LARGE >£1m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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DECISION SOUGHT FROM CAPITAL SCRUTINY GROUP:	To recommend that this business case proceeds for submission to the Welsh Governments Welsh Language Capital Grant Programme.
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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights the key points in the Business Case to include: -

- what the project will achieve / important benefits
- estimated costs
- how the project will be funded

This project will deliver a one-classroom extension for Ysgol Bro Elwern to increase the capacity from 48 pupils to 60 pupils. The estimated cost for the project is **£1,066,546**. Of the £1,066,546 required to fund this project the Council will seek to draw down 100% of the cost via the Welsh Government’s Welsh Medium Capital Grant funding stream. All costs have been revised in January 2024 and take into account increases in construction and client-side costs.

Ysgol Bro Elwern is a Welsh Medium primary school located within the village of Gwyddelwern. The school draws pupils from the communities of Gwyddelwern, Corwen and Bryn SM. The current full time school capacity is **48**, there are currently **56** full time pupils on roll. Pupil projections indicate that the school will significantly exceed its capacity in the next few years, this is detailed below:

Pupil Projections 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Jan 2027	Jan 2028
Ysgol Bro Elwern	54	59	61	61	65

There are minimal Welsh medium surplus places available in the wider Dee Valley area, in addition to Ysgol Bro Elwern there are three further Welsh Medium primary schools – Ysgol Betws GG, Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy (Cynwyd) and Ysgol Gymraeg Y Gwernant (Llangollen). There are currently only 7 surplus full-time places (January 2023 PLASC) across the 4 schools combined.

The school building has a lack of ancillary facilities, circulation space and doesn’t have a hall or separate dining facilities. The teaching accommodation is split between three rooms, two in the main building and one in the adjacent schoolhouse. Only one room can accommodate 30 pupils and therefore what appears to be a two-classroom school requires 3 teachers. As a result, additional funding is provided to the school to ensure it can remain sustainable.

The current condition of the school is C which is defined as ‘Poor; teaching methods are inhibited, and condition can have an adverse impact on school organisation’. The building isn’t energy efficient and currently has the highest consumption per sqm of our primary schools. It currently has an oil fuelled heating system and convector heaters. As part of the investment in the building it is intended to initiate changes which would also deliver a more energy efficient building which will also reduce the energy bills of the school.

The project would support the delivery of **Outcome 1** and **Outcome 2** of Denbighshire’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) by increasing the number of primary Welsh medium places available within the County but specifically building in capacity in an area with minimal Welsh primary surplus capacity.

The school also supports the principles of colocation. Alongside this proposal there is a LUF funded project for a new Community Hub to be built on the school fields which will be utilised by the school, Cylch Meithrin and community groups. Both projects will deliver a co-located pre-school provision

and primary provision from the ages of 2 to 11. The co-location of the pre-school and primary school will provide both settings with flexibility especially between the pre-school provision and Foundation Phase providing pupils with continuity of provision. At present the Cylch Meithrin are using the village hall.

3. BUSINESS OPTIONS

Analysis and reasoned recommendation for the base business options of: do nothing / do the minimal or do something.

You must include an environmentally enhanced (net carbon zero/ecologically positive compatible) option. If your project is a business development project, then this may not be relevant.

Option 1:		Do nothing – maintain the existing situation			
Please provide brief details:					
Continue with existing provision at Ysgol Bro Elwern					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less	X		Is quicker to deliver	X
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality	X		Worsens benefits	X
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option does not meet the key business objectives of the project. This option would lead to pupils being refused places at Ysgol Bro Elwern and additional funding being allocated to the school to manage class sizes. The maintenance backlog wouldn't be addressed, and the school would still face high energy bills. This option would not lead to any improvement in the overall school / learning environment, opportunities for carbon reduction and biodiversity could not be addressed.					

Option 2:		Environmentally enhanced option			
Please provide brief details:					
Alongside the proposed extension of a classroom to the school, conducting a wholesale site decarbonisation. This would include, complete new system of radiators and pipework, significantly improved fabric – increased levels of wall, roof and possibly floor insulation and possibly improved u-values on the windows and a concerted draught proofing exercise					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more	X	Time	Takes longer to deliver	X
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	

Quality	Improves the quality	X	Benefits	Improves benefits	X
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	

What is the main reason this option has not been selected?

The current funding agreed in principle from Welsh Government would not be able to deliver both the classroom extension and the wholesale site decarbonisation. This maybe a possibility if we are able to secure grants through the Carbon Reduction Team but isn't a certainty. The classroom extension is needed as a priority due to the increase in pupil numbers.

Option 3: Preferred Option

Please provide brief details:

This option would result in a one classroom extension, introduce a more energy efficient form of heating to the school and remodel of existing areas as workable practical and ancillary areas. This would result in an increase of overall full-time capacity from 48 to 60.

Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:

Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same	X		Takes the same to deliver	X
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	X
	Is the same quality	X		No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	

What is the main reason this option has been selected?

This option is the preferred option as it meets all of the key business objectives and drivers for the project. It is compliant with the WESP and supports the Welsh Governments aspirations for 'Cymraeg 2050'. With the building of the LUF funded community centre on site, it is also a strategic fit for colocation / cohesive communities' principles and meets a number of the goals outlined in the Future Well-being of Generations Act. This option will deliver a learning environment that is flexible and fit for the future which meets parental local demand. This option will deliver energy efficient accommodation as Net Carbon Zero principles will be applied to the design and construction of the facility. This option is affordable within the requested funding envelope.

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

The benefits that the project will deliver expressed in measurable terms against the situation as it exists prior to the project. Remember to capture co-benefits (the added benefits we get from this action/project as well as the direct benefits it will realise).

This project would deliver a number of benefits, namely:

- Increase Welsh medium primary provision in the Dee Valley West area and therefore for the County.
- The expansion of places would assist the local authority in meeting the goals of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, specifically Outcomes 1 & 2
- The project would support the 'Cymraeg 2050' aspirations of the Welsh Government to increase the number of Welsh speakers.
- The project would deliver an overall improved learning environment with flexibility for the future.
- The project would assist in delivering a key benefit of colocation with the Cylch, and Community Groups all able to utilise the school site.
- Pupils will benefit from the colocation through ease of transition from the childcare setting to the foundation phase.

These are some high-level benefits that the project would deliver, as the project progress other more detailed benefits will emerge. Community benefits will also be delivered, these benefits have not been identified as a contractor would need to be appointed before engagement on community benefits can take place.

5. EXPECTED DIS-BENEFITS

Outcomes perceived as negative by one or more stakeholders

The project would result in works being undertaken at the school whilst it is a live school site. Robust site management protocols will be in place during the construction elements. The Local Authority will work with the contractor on enabling works for the childcare setting.

6. CARBON IMPACT

Denbighshire has committed to reducing its carbon emissions from buildings and fleet by 60% by 2030, for the Council to be net carbon zero by 2030 (buildings, fleet, waste, business travel, staff commuting, street lighting) and for the Council to reduce its supply chain emissions by 35% by 2030.

Please consult with Council's Principal Energy Manager (robert.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk) and the Council's Climate & Ecological Change Programme team (climatechange@denbighshire.gov.uk) to complete this section.

Please provide brief details of the carbon impact of this project, and detail specific actions that will be taken to reduce carbon emissions. If carbon emissions are expected to increase as a result of this project, please provide details of proposed actions to compensate for this increase in other areas of the Service's activity and/or via tree planting/land management for the benefit of carbon sequestration.

The project will be delivered in line with the Net Carbon Zero principles. The new building will make use of energy efficient / carbon neutral technologies to meet both the Local Authorities Corporate Priority 'A Greener Denbighshire' to become a Net Zero Carbon organisation by 2030 and the Welsh Governments 'Net Zero Wales' plan.

However, it is accepted that Ysgol Bro Elwern currently has the highest consumption per sqm of our primary schools. It currently uses an oil heating system and convector heaters (on what is called a CT circuit). To comply with the corporate 'major refurbishment' or new build requirements the requirement would be 'net zero carbon in operation' – this will be challenging. Every effort will be made to deliver at least a proportionate improvement to the school site through the project. This could potentially be achieved through Solar PV could being sized to provide load for the whole site. Hot water duties could be run from an air source water heater that also has a solar PV immersion diversion switch – to avoid having to use oil outside of space heating season. LED lighting could also be installed to existing. There is a possibility if the PV was large enough (as with above, maybe 40kW+) that a battery could make a valuable contribution.

7. TIMESCALE

Over which the project will run (summary of the Project Plan) and the period over which the benefits will be realised

Date	Milestone
Spring 2024	Start
Summer 2024	Planning
Autumn 2024	Procurement
Winter 2025	End of construction

8. CAPITAL COSTS – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed. Note that even some Business Development Projects may have a requirement for capital costs, for example to fund the acquisition of new ICT hardware or undertaking alterations to buildings.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				
Building alterations				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				
Furniture				
Other professional support (legal, etc.)				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (gateway review, etc.)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
TOTAL				

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
Welsh Government Welsh Language Capital Programme	Approached				
TOTAL					

NOTE: For funding status, please only use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

9. CAPITAL COSTS – CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION IF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SECTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS ONLY

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department.
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services.

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				28,000
Land/property acquisition				
Land preparation/remediation				
Demolition and/or site security				
Construction, refurbishment or maintenance				433,046
BREEAM rating of "Excellent"				
Security measures (CCTV, door entry, etc.)				
Fire prevention measures (sprinklers, etc.)				
External landscaping and other works				204,282
Highways work				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				
Fixtures & fittings				
Furniture				14,652
Planning/Building Regulation Costs				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				117,268
Legal Costs and Fees				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (e.g. gateway review)				
Contingency				95,599
Client contingency				173,699
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
TOTAL				1,066,546

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
Welsh Government Welsh Language Capital Programme	Approached		1,066,546		1,066,546
TOTAL			1,066,546		1,066,546

NOTE: For funding status, please only use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

10. REVENUE COST IMPACT

TO BE COMPLETED FOR ALL PROJECTS

*In considering whether a project should be developed due regard should be made to the potential impact on revenue budgets. **Please consult with your revenue finance officer for this section and ensure they sign at the end of the section to confirm they have reviewed the figures provided.***

If the activity will result in a requirement for additional revenue funding, please provide details below:			
What is the impact of this project in terms of the <u>annual</u> revenue requirement for:	Existing Revenue Budget £	Post-project Revenue Budget £	Increase/ (Decrease) £
staff costs (salaries and associated)	288,825	289,519	694
energy costs (heating, lighting, ICT, etc.)	11,837	11,837	0
property maintenance and servicing costs	15,276	15,276	0
other property related costs (rental, insurance, etc.)	0	0	0
ongoing ICT costs (licences, etc.)	0	0	0
mileage of Denbighshire fleet vehicles	0	0	0
mileage for business travel by Denbighshire employees using their personal vehicles	0	0	0
OTHER (please enter)			
OTHER (please enter)			
OVERALL REVENUE REQUIREMENT	315,938	316,632	694

Please provide brief details of the revenue impact of this project:

- Where revenue savings are forecast, you should detail what is proposed for the saving (e.g. reduction of an existing revenue budget, re-allocation of revenue to alternative services area, etc.)
- Where revenue increases are forecast, you should provide details of how the revenue shortfall will be addressed. In this instance you should also append a three-year surplus/deficit forecast.
- Details of any one-off revenue cost requirements that may be required post-project implementation (e.g. recruitment, redundancies, etc.). DO NOT include any costs detailed in the capital section of this Business Case

Revenue changes for this project will be met through the School funding formula. For example the project will increase the floor area of the school but this will deliver an increase in funding as a consequence on that element.

From a staffing perspective there is a potential revenue saving however this will be reviewed by the school and its governors. Currently the school have 3 classrooms but only one can accommodate 30 pupils which means the school are running three classes. The delivery of this project will enable the school to have two classrooms which can accommodate 30 pupils and an overall capacity of 60 full time pupils.

Approx. 1 extra hour per week for cleaning the new classroom.

If we carry out some energy efficiency improvements to the existing school the overall impact on budgets will be zero at worse but probably better. Energy costs for last year were £11,837. The costs after the works have been completed will be similar although oil and electricity prices are falling this year so cost should be less.

Approx £2.5 will be required as one-off capitation when the new classroom opens.

Approx. £5k one-off cost for furniture and IT peripherals

Signature of service accountant to confirm the above figures:

Signed:	Date:
C Speed – School finance manager – Ruthin primaries	28/02/2024

11. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Please provide details of proposed project management – Establishment of Project Board etc.

The project will be overseen by a Project Manager based in the Modernising Education Team which sits within the wider Education and Children’s Services department. The scheme will be included within a wider portfolio of projects for the Welsh Language Capital Grant for Denbighshire. All project progress will be reported quarterly to the Modernising Education Board, this is made up of the following members:

- Corporate Director- Communities
- Head of Education
- Head of Finance and Audit
- Lead member for Education, Children’s Services and Public Engagement

- Lead member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
- Lead officer Corporate Property and Housing
- Principal Manager – School Support

The project sponsor will be Geraint Davies, Head of Education. The project will be reported via Denbighshire's internal Project Management software system VERTO. This is based on Prince2 methodology which ensures that the project is properly led, planned, resourced, monitored and controlled. All risks, issues and benefits are managed at an individual level by the project manager via Verto.

12. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS / HEALTH & SAFETY

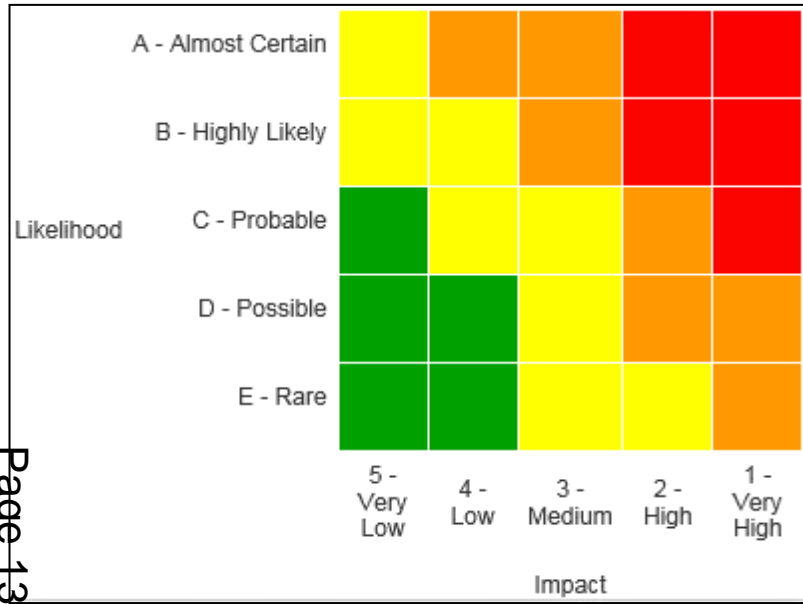
This section should identify how the activity will help Denbighshire meet any of its statutory requirements. Please include any Health & Safety Issues that the activity will address in this section. Please leave blank if not applicable.

The project would result in works being undertaken at the school whilst it is a live school site. Robust site management protocols will be in place during the construction elements. The Local Authority will work with the contractor on enabling works for the childcare setting.

13. MAJOR RISKS TO THE PROJECT

A summary of the key risks associated with the project together with the likely impact and plans should they occur is provided below:

Title	Inherent Risk	Mitigating Action	Residual Risk
Cost escalation / over budget		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust monitoring of costs throughout the project lifecycle, most crucially ensuring the design brief is reflective of the proposed scheme to ensure cost is within procurement period is within the funding envelope. 	
Project slippage / delivered late		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme of works will be closely monitored by the client. Any issues arising that may cause slippage will be escalated as appropriate. 	
Failure to gain planning permission		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement with the planning department will be undertaken to understand any issues that may arise at the site. Engagement with local residents and other impacted groups will also take place to minimise the likelihood of potential objections. 	
Disruption to live school site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live site management arrangements will be made to minimise the disruption during the construction period. Engagement will take place with the school prior to works commencing on site to agree site management arrangements. 	



14. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Please list any supporting documents that accompany this Business Case

Documents required to be presented with Business Cases:

For bids >£1m: Wellbeing Impact Assessment

For grant funded schemes: Grant application or offer letter

For external contributions: written confirmation from contributor

For CERA: confirmation from Management accounts

For Prudential Borrowing: quote from Capital Team

Offer letter.

Wellbeing Impact Assessment

**WHEN SECTIONS 1-14 HAVE BEEN COMPLETED PLEASE SEND TO
CAPITALBIDS@DENBIGHSHIRE.GOV.UK.**

THE CAPITAL TEAM WILL REQUEST STATEMENTS FOR SECTIONS 15-18 TO BE SENT TO THE BUSINESS CASE AUTHOR

PLEASE INSERT THE STATEMENTS AND SEND THE FINAL BUSINESS CASE (WITH APPENDIX A COMPLETED) TO CAPITALBIDS@DENBIGHSHIRE.GOV.UK

15. CARBON MANAGEMENT IMPACT

For completion by the Climate & Ecological Change Programme team and / or the Council's Principal Energy Manager. The Business Case requires you to make a forecast for the anticipated carbon emissions impact of the project.

Annual Forecasts:	Annual (current)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Annual (Post Project)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Carbon Variance	Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)			15,276	2,169	2,169	
Energy consumption in buildings: (UNIT = kWh)	106,329	27,041	106,329	27,041	0	Assuming the whole site energy use does not increase
Energy consumption in Street Lighting: (UNIT = kWh)						
Fuel consumption of Denbighshire Fleet vehicles: (UNIT = litres/ kWh)						
Mileage of Business Travel (personal vehicles): (UNIT = miles travelled)						
Mileage of Staff Commute: (UNIT = miles travelled)						
Tonnes of waste produced: (UNIT = tonnes)						
One off Forecasts:			Project cost (£)	Carbon (kgCO2e)		Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)	Design		£117,268	18,411		SIC 71 / EF 0.157
	Project Mgmt		£28,000	4,172		SIC 74 / EF 0.149
	Building works		£433,046	103,931		SIC 41.2 / EF 0.24
	Landscape works		£204,282	48,619		SIC 42.99 / EF 0.238
	Furniture		£14,652	8,249		SIC 31 / EF 0.563
TOTAL CARBON EMISSIONS			£797,248	183,382		NB Not including the contingency sum

Annual Forecasts:	Current	Carbon Absorption (kgCO2e)	Post Project	Carbon Absorption (kgCO2e)	Carbon Absorption Variance	Comments
Hectare of Grassland (UNIT=ha)					0	Assuming no loss of vegetation as part of the development. There is a possible opportunity to increase absorption by tree planting.
Hectares of Forestland (UNIT=ha)					0	
TOTAL CARBON ABSORPTION					0	

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council's goal to become net carbon zero by 2030 (reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption).

Net Carbon Zero Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Climate Change Lead Officer statement:

The estimated greenhouse gas emissions associated with the capital spending are 183 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (183tCO₂e) plus an additional 2t/year associated with maintenance. While these emissions would *hinder* the Council's net zero goal, the strategic geographical need for developing here at Ysgol Bro Elwern to suit the projected pupil numbers is recognised and so it is assumed that this project would displace the need to develop other sites in the Dee Valley with potentially greater carbon footprints. It is also acknowledged and welcomed that the design aims for the building extensions to be **net carbon zero in operation** and that there are a number of potential improvements to the existing building that could be implemented to deliver incremental emission reductions.

Although the "Sustainable Communities for Learning - Welsh-Medium Capital Grant" secured from the Welsh Government would not cover the wholesale decarbonisation of the school (including the existing building) that is set out in rejected Option 2, the Climate Change team would nevertheless encourage dialogue to continue with the DCC Buildings Energy team to explore the possibility of applying for the "Low Carbon Heat Grant" for the additional elements. While it is no certainty, as stated by the PM, the Welsh Government has recently extended the dates for this grant because of low take-up so the probability of a successful grant may have improved substantially.

The Council has a 'plus' target to reduce Supply Chain emissions as well as its own direct emissions (by 35% of the 2019 baseline by 2030) and building work represents a carbon-intensive sector. Early engagement with Procurement Business Partners at design stage (including Roberta Bailey for supply chain decarbonisation) is encouraged to maximise low carbon / carbon sequestration opportunities from the supply chain associated with this project.

We would advocate for the community benefits sought through the contract to be environmental actions to address climate and ecological change (thinking globally, acting locally), which could also be linked to education. For example, it would be helpful for the contractor to fund the Biodiversity Management Plan for the school (or at least the tree planting element to take tree canopy cover to >20%) to link with the pupil's sustainability studies and outdoor activities. Ellie Wainwright can advise on the current BMP status/future plans. (The community hub in the linked LUF project may also be a suitable future venue to host some sort of local sustainability event for the village sponsored by the contractor. Karen Bellis and/or Aileen Charteris and/or the community development team may be able to suggest event ideas.)

Supplied by: Keith Bennett **Date:** 8 March 2024

16. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT

For completion by Denbighshire's Biodiversity Lead Officer – Joel Walley
joel.walley@denbighshire.gov.uk.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure compliance and enforcement of the Habitats Regulations (as amended in 2017). Furthermore, the Environment (Wales) Act, 2016 requires the Council to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and promote the resilience of ecosystems. At this pre-feasibility

stage, please determine the anticipated impact of the project on biodiversity, and proposed measures to ensure the project results in an overall biodiversity enhancement.

Please mark a cross in the appropriate box.

Will this project impact on a habitat that supports living organisms (plant or animal), or involve physical works to property or Land?	Yes		No	
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If you have answered yes to the above question, please complete all the following biodiversity sections. If answered no, please leave blank

IMPACTS ON BIODIVERSITY	Yes		No	
Has an ecological appraisal or survey of the site or proposals taken place?				
Cofnod eMapper Link:				
Please provide brief summary of survey findings, or provide a copy of the ecological report for review:				

Please provide brief details of how the project will avoid harm to biodiversity.

Please provide brief details of how the project will mitigate and compensate for any harm to biodiversity.

Please provide brief details of how the project will enhance biodiversity and restore ecosystem resilience.

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council's goal to become ecologically positive by 2030 (increasing the species richness of land).

Ecologically Positive Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Ecology Officer summary:

Name:	Date:
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17. COUNTY LANDLORD STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the County Landlord and where applicable the recommendation of the Asset Management Group..

Supplied by:	Date:
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18. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the Chief Finance Officer.

The project which is 100% grant funding from Welsh Language Capital Grant Programme will assist the council to manage demand for school places through the medium of Welsh in the Corwen area and meet the goals of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which are positives. There are revenue cost implications of extending the school which need to be considered as part of any decision made at CSG.

Supplied by: Liz Thomas **Date:** 18 March 2024

APPENDIX A – PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

		COMPLETED DATE
Draft Business case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk for distribution to relevant officers	N.B. A minimum of five working days must be allowed for these officers to respond	29/02/2024
TO BE COMPLETED BY CAPITAL TEAM:		
VAT accountant rhys.i.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk to check for vat implications	N.B. The Chief Finance Officer must be copied in to the email to these officers to demonstrate they have been advised/consulted	
Finance Capital Team contact as detailed on page 1		01/03/2024
Service accountant if revenue implications applicable		28/02/2024
Chief Finance Officer statement obtained		18/03/2024
County Landlord statement obtained		
Carbon management impact statement obtained		08/03/2024
Biodiversity impact statement obtained		
Final completed Business Case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk		11/03/2024

Ysgol Bro Elwern: 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: 1334

Brief description: This project will deliver a single classroom extension to increase capacity from 48 to 60 full time pupils.

Date Completed: 23/02/2024 10:39:14 Version: 1

Completed by: Emma Jones

Responsible Service: Education and Children's Services

Localities affected by the proposal: Dee Valley,

Who will be affected by the proposal? Pupils and staff of Ysgol Bro Elwern and parents and carers of current/prospective pupils.

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 : 29 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

There are minimal Welsh medium surplus places available in the wider Dee Valley area, in addition to Ysgol Bro Elwern there are three further Welsh Medium primary schools. The new build elements of the project will be designed to ensure long term sustainability, including the use of technologies to meet the Council's aspiration of Net Carbon Zero by 2030.

Prevention

A key benefit will be the increased capacity of the school for full time pupils. Alongside this project there is a LUF funded project that will see a new Community Hub being built on the school fields alongside the school. Securing primary education provision for all local pupils in the area will strengthen community ties.

Integration

The project would support the delivery of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 of Denbighshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) by increasing the number of primary Welsh medium places available within the County but specifically building in capacity in an area with minimal Welsh primary surplus capacity.

Collaboration

The proposal has been developed by the Education team in consultation with the school. Should the project be progressed and funding agreed further more intensive consultation will take place with key stakeholders regarding the design of the extension and ancillary areas.

Involvement

Robust engagement will take place once funding has been allocated for the project, this will be within the wider Education team and the school (including the Governing Body). Engagement will be wider at various stages of the project, including linking with Active Travel, Climate Change and Design and Construction teams within the Council when needed.

Summary of impact

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 responsible Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

Although some potential negative impacts have been identified over the short term (in terms of disruption associated with the planned construction works), longer term the benefits of increasing the

Ysgol Bro Elwern

capacity of the school and the increased flexibility in opportunities for the school to make use of the school site (eg freeing up ancillary/intervention space), mean the proposal is positive overall. The increased suitability of school facilities will support the ongoing health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff. The procurement of contractors and the subsequent construction periods should have a positive economic impact. The aims of achieving Net Carbon Zero for the project support Denbighshire's position around reducing climate change, however we acknowledge there may be challenges associated with improving the energy efficiency of an existing building. Consultation with Denbighshire's energy team will be ongoing to establish the best solutions for reducing energy usage on the site.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The project will support the school by providing the extra classroom that is needed for the current increase in capacity. The extension will be designed with consideration of NCZ principles and support continued economic development.

Further actions required

Ongoing consultation will be undertaken with the DCC energy team during the design process to maximise opportunities for use of the funding for energy saving technologies within the build.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Plans for the extension will be developed in line with Net Carbon Zero principles which will be applied to the design and construction of the facility in order to strive for accommodation with energy rating A.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

The building will be provided with infrastructure to support digital resources such as data points and whole building wifi coverage.

Economic development

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. Due to the value of the project this will fall within Lot 2. This ensures the baseline social value and economic benefits (economic, employment & environmental) are met as standard. The 'softer' community benefits are to be agreed with key stakeholders following a successful appointment of a contractor.

Quality skills for the long term

Community benefits will be identified in connection with the constructions works.

Quality jobs for the long term

The increased provision of pupil numbers within the school will ensure that local parents are able to place their child in the closest school to their home, meaning a shorter commute for them to jobs.

Childcare

Alongside this project is the LUF Gwyddelwern Community Hub project. This will see the Cylch using the new Community Hub which will be sited on the school fields.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Refurbishment and extension of existing buildings can pose significantly challenges in terms of the ability to achieve NCZ . As such it is a possibility that energy usage for the site could increase overall.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

No negative impacts identified.

Economic development

No negative impacts identified.

Quality skills for the long term

No negative impacts identified.

Quality jobs for the long term

No negative impacts identified.

Childcare

No negative impacts identified.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The new facility will be designed around Net Carbon Zero principles however the challenges of achieving NCZ when extending an existing site is acknowledged.

Further actions required

Consultation will be ongoing with the energy team to establish the best solutions for reducing energy usage on the site. Opportunities for improving biodiversity on the site as part of the construction works will be explored.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Within the external layout of the school opportunities to preserve or enhance natural habitats will be maximised to allow such areas to be used to deliver the curriculum.

Biodiversity in the built environment

No positive impact identified

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

The procurement process will have a focus on reducing waste and recycling as part of the project.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The new classroom will be designed around Net Carbon Zero principles.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Environmental benefits brought about by the project will be highlighted and publicised for key stakeholders. Scope for contractors supporting biodiversity projects will be actively pursued.

Flood risk management

The facility is not being proposed to be built on a flood risk area. However detailed surveys are to be carried out.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

No negative impacts identified.

Biodiversity in the built environment

No negative impacts identified.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No negative impacts identified.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Refurbishment of buildings may present greater challenges to ensure that optimum energy management processes can be achieved.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

No negative impacts identified.

Flood risk management

No negative impacts identified.

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The increased suitability of school facilities will also support the ongoing health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff.

Further actions required

Engagement will be undertaken with key stakeholders to develop agreed site constraints plans to minimise disruption during the construction phase.

Positive impacts identified:

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

A larger classroom for pupils will ensure teachers are more easily able to deliver the curriculum and will free up space for intervention.

Access to good quality, healthy food

No positive impacts have been identified

People's emotional and mental well-being

The increased suitability of school facilities will also support the ongoing health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff.

Access to healthcare

No positive impacts have been identified

Participation in leisure opportunities

No positive impacts have been identified

Negative impacts identified:

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

Any change in provision can lead to resistance from staff, pupils, parents etc. Disruption may occur to local residents during the construction phase and we will work with contractors to minimise the impact of issues.

Access to good quality, healthy food

No negative impacts have been identified.

People's emotional and mental well-being

Careful consideration will be needed to ensure that during any phasing of the project that access to the learning environment is not reduced. Construction would be undertaken on a live school site and as such any interim arrangements may have a short term impact on the wellbeing of pupils and staff and consideration will be given to how this may be mitigated.

Access to healthcare

No negative impacts have been identified.

Participation in leisure opportunities

No negative impacts have been identified.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

This proposal if progressed will be designed according to 'inclusive by design' principles.

Further actions required

Consultation will be undertaken with the school to develop agreed site constraint and interim mitigation plans in order to minimise the impacts on pupils and staff during the school build. Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

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

This proposal if progressed will be designed according to 'inclusive by design' principles.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

The proposal will equally positively impact on all groups.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

increased pupil numbers would mean that parents who live locally with primary aged pupils and are materially disadvantaged wont be disadvantaged by their location. They can access the local school for their child. By improving the educational offer through new school facilities the performance of pupils could improve increasing scope for gaining employment.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

Whilst Gwyddelwern isn't an area of socio-economic disadvantage, the classroom extension will provide much needed space in the school to enhance the education of the pupils from the community.

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

Careful consideration will be needed to ensure that during any phasing of the project that access to

the learning environment is not reduced. The interim arrangements may impact the wellbeing of pupils and consideration will be given to how this may be mitigated.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No negative impacts have been identified.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

No negative impacts have been identified.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

No negative impacts have been identified.

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Although some potential negative impacts have been identified over the short term in terms of disruption associated with the planned construction works, longer term the benefits of the increased flexibility in opportunities for the school to make use of the school site mean the proposal is positive overall.

Further actions required

The construction stage is likely to have a negative impact on the local community on a short term basis. The project team will need to work with the contractor and the local community to minimise risks and to ensure clear communication at key times.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The project will be designed in conjunction with the Designing out Crime guidelines.

Community participation and resilience

The facility, although primarily a primary education building, will be sited next to the new Community hub. The project seeks to build on the foundations of the current cohesive nature of the site to strengthen for the future.

The attractiveness of the area

The works at the site will be in keeping with the current building and also will reflect the rural nature of the surrounding area and village.

Connected communities

By adding a classroom, this will free up areas within the school that can be used by external organisations to deliver support that is needed for the pupils.

Rural resilience

The school is located in a small village setting within a rural area. The expansion and improvement at the school will ensure that the facility is viable in the longer term, protecting this rural asset.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The construction phase will have an impact on the community via increased traffic and access to the site for employees and the delivery of building supplies. This could have an impact on individuals during this phase.

Community participation and resilience

No negative impacts have been identified

The attractiveness of the area

The construction phase may have a short term detrimental impact on the local community.

Connected communities

Increase community use may create additional management/administration pressures for the school.

Rural resilience

No negative impacts have been identified

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

This project will increase the capacity of a Welsh medium school and secure the future of a Welsh language preschool provision. As such there will be increased opportunities for young people in Denbighshire to access their education through the medium of Welsh. Additionally an increase in the number of Welsh learners could increase the overall number of speakers within Denbighshire and Wales.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The project will expand the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in the West Dee Valley area.

Therefore this will increase the numbers of people speaking and using Welsh in line with the Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050' plan.

Promoting the Welsh language

The delivery of the project is within an existing Welsh medium primary school site. During the

procurement process use of bilingual signage for site management will be discussed with the contractor. The project itself will be publicised via DCC communications team to raise a general awareness of the project. Communication with residents and the local community will be bilingual.

Culture and heritage

The project will expand the availability of Welsh medium places, therefore providing opportunity for more pupils to learn and participate in cultural events via the medium of Welsh.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No negative impacts identified

Promoting the Welsh language

No negative impacts identified

Culture and heritage

No negative impacts identified

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The procurement of contractors and the subsequent construction periods should have a positive impact. Adherence to procurement regulations and statutory responsibilities around Health and Safety will ensure that the projects address such areas. The aims of achieving Net Carbon Zero for the project support Denbighshire's position around reducing climate change however we are aware there may be challenges associated with improving the energy efficiency of an existing building.

Further actions required

Opportunities for improving the energy efficiency of the site in order to compensate for the increased floor area will be considered at an early stage of the design.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. This ensures that the baseline economic, employment and environmental benefits are met.

Human rights

All contractors will be expected to have first class health and safety procedures in place and these will be rigorously examined during the delivery of the project. Workers employed during the process will be expected to be treated equally.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

As the project would free up additional resource space, it increases opportunities for external organisations to attend the school and support pupils

Reducing climate change

Opportunities for improving the energy efficiency of the site in order to compensate for the increased floor area will be considered at an early stage of the design.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

No negative impacts identified.

Human rights

No negative impacts identified.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No negative impacts identified.

Reducing climate change

Due to the nature of extending and refurbishing older buildings there may be challenges in terms of achieving a carbon neutral build overall.

BUSINESS CASE – CAPITAL INVESTMENT

This Business Case provides justification for undertaking a project. The completed form will be reviewed by the Capital Scrutiny Group who will make a recommendation to Cabinet or CET whether the bid should be approved and included within the Capital Plan.

PLEASE COMPLETE SECTIONS 1-14 ONLY AND SEND TO CAPITALBIDS@DENBIGHSHIRE.GOV.UK.
PLEASE TURN OFF TRACK CHANGES AND REMOVE ANY COMMENTS BEFORE SENDING
 THE CAPITAL TEAM WILL REQUEST SUPPORTING STATEMENTS FOR SECTIONS 15-18 TO BE SENT TO THE BUSINESS CASE AUTHOR FOR INSERTION TO THE BUSINESS CASE.
 PLEASE SEND THE FINAL BUSINESS CASE (WITH APPENDIX A COMPLETED) TO CAPITALBIDS@DENBIGHSHIRE.GOV.UK

For details of Capital Scrutiny Group Meeting dates and deadlines for the submission of this form, please contact capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk

Project Name:	Ysgol Henllan Extension
Project Manager:	Isobel Bourke-Richardson, Modernising Education
Work stream/Programme (if applicable):	Modernising Education (Welsh Capital Grant)
Verto project reference	

1. PROJECT TYPE

Head of Service i.e. Project Sponsor	Geraint Davies, Head of Education	Lead member:	Cllr Gill German
Service:	Education	LM Portfolio:	Lead Member for Education, Children and Families
Form completed by:	Isobel Bourke-Richardson (Modernising Education)	Date:	6 March 2024
Finance Capital Team contact:	Sian Jackson	Service Accountant (for revenue implications if applicable)	Caryl Williams

Please categorise your project type. Mark **one** box only.

<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 30px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">SMALL <£250k</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> </table>	SMALL <£250k		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 30px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">MEDIUM >£251 - £999k</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">x</td> </tr> </table>	MEDIUM >£251 - £999k	x	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 30px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">LARGE >£1m</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> </table>	LARGE >£1m		
SMALL <£250k									
MEDIUM >£251 - £999k	x								
LARGE >£1m									

DECISION SOUGHT FROM CAPITAL SCRUTINY GROUP:	To recommend that this business case proceeds for submission to the Welsh Governments Welsh Language Capital Grant Programme.
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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights the key points in the Business Case to include: -

- what the project will achieve / important benefits
- estimated costs
- how the project will be funded

This project will deliver a single classroom extension for Ysgol Henllan to increase the capacity from 65 to 80 full time pupils. The estimated cost for the project is **£558,341**. Of the £558,341 required to fund this project the Council will seek to draw down 100% of the cost via the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Capital Grant funding stream.

Ysgol Henllan is a Welsh Medium primary school located within the village of Henllan, which is on the outskirts of the town of Denbigh in Denbighshire. The school draws pupils primarily from Henllan but also from the communities of St Asaph and Denbigh.

The school's current full time pupil capacity is 65 and there are currently 63 full time pupils on roll. Pupil projections indicate that the school's pupil numbers will evolve as below:

Pupil Projections 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Jan 2027
NOR	64	59	52	54
Surplus places	1	6	13	11
Surplus %	1.54%	8.72%	19.83%	16.70%

There are minimal surplus places available in the wider Denbigh area but particularly within Welsh Medium schools. In addition to Ysgol Henllan there are three further Welsh Medium primary schools – Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch (Pentre Llanrhaeadr), Ysgol Pant Pastynog (Prion) and Ysgol Twm o'r Nant (Denbigh). Between these 4 schools there are currently only 7 surplus full-time places (January 2023 PLASC). There are also two new home developments within close proximity to Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch, plus an outstanding permission for a further development near Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch and an enquiry for a development near Ysgol Henllan.

Ysgol Henllan currently has a lack of ancillary facilities and space to accommodate any future growth. The school currently timetables the use of their hall to ensure that the preschool provision can be hosted in this space, however this causes operational difficulties due to the need to share access with the school.

It is proposed to construct a one classroom extension and circulation area to increase the overall capacity by 15 places thereby creating a 80 full time pupil capacity school. The new classroom extension would be used for the nursery/reception class. The relocation of this class would then allow the space used currently by nursery / reception pupils to be re divided into two spaces - one for

use by the Cylch Meithrin preschool provision and the other as an additional space for the school. We would also look to improve the entrance area into the school in order to facilitate increased community use of the site.

The project would support the delivery of **Outcome 1** and **Outcome 2** of Denbighshire’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) by increasing the number of primary Welsh medium places available within the County but specifically building in capacity in an area with minimal Welsh primary surplus capacity. Increasing the school’s capacity also supports the preschool Cylch provision ensuring that children accessing Welsh medium preschool provision can access primary Welsh medium education in the Denbigh area which has minimal capacity at present.

The school also supports the principles of colocation, with the school, Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi making use of the school site. The project will ultimately mean that a dedicated space is available for the pre-school provision, and this will support the continued co-location of preschool and primary provision for pupils aged 2 to 11 years. The ongoing co-location of the pre-school and primary school will provide both settings with flexibility, especially between the pre-school provision and Foundation Phase, providing pupils with continuity of provision. Having a dedicated space for the delivery of the pre-school provision will also free up the school hall for use throughout the school day. Ti a Fi will continue to make use of the school hall to deliver their sessions.

3. BUSINESS OPTIONS

Analysis and reasoned recommendation for the base business options of: do nothing / do the minimal or do something.

You must include an environmentally enhanced (net carbon zero/ecologically positive compatible) option. If your project is a business development project, then this may not be relevant.

Option 1:		Do nothing – maintain the existing situation			
Please provide brief details:					
Continue with existing provision at Ysgol Henllan.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less	x		Is quicker to deliver	x
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality	x		Worsens benefits	x
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option does not meet the key business objectives of the project. This option would see the school become oversubscribed with minimal surplus places available in the wider Welsh medium primary provision within the Denbigh area. Although the Cylch and Ti a Fi would remain on the site, it would continue to operate as it does now which poses operational issues for both the childcare setting and the school. This option would not lead to any improvement in the overall school / learning environment.					

Option 2:		Do Minimum – Refurbish existing school (no extension)			
Please provide brief details:					
Undertake a minor refurbishment of the existing school to improve the overall learning environment.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less	x		Is quicker to deliver	x
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality	x		Worsens benefits	x
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option has not been selected as it would not deliver sufficient increase in space or the flexibility required and would not result in an increase in Welsh medium places. This option would deliver a minor improvement to address some building flow issues but overall it would not address issues such as the lack of space for the Welsh medium childcare provision.					

Option 3:		Preferred Option - Environmentally enhance, Extend and refurbish existing school			
Please provide brief details:					
This option would result in a one classroom extension and improvements to classroom layout and site entrance. This would result in an increase of overall full time capacity from 65 to 80.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same	x		Takes the same to deliver	x
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	x
	Is the same quality	x		No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	
What is the main reason this option has been selected?					
This option is the preferred option as it meets all of the key business objectives and drivers for the project. It is compliant with the WESP and supports the Welsh Governments aspirations for 'Cymraeg 2050'. It is also a strategic fit for colocation / cohesive communities principles and meets a number of the goals outlined in the Future Well-being of Generations Act. This option will deliver a learning environment that is flexible and fit for the future which meets parental local demand. This option will provide energy efficient accommodation in line with Net Carbon Zero principles which will be applied to the design and construction of the facility. This option is affordable within the requested funding envelope.					

Option 4:		Do Maximum – New School Build			
Please provide brief details:					
Deliver a new purpose built 80 FTE Welsh medium primary school to replace the existing accommodation.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more	x	Time	Takes longer to deliver	x
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	x
	Is the same quality	x		No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	
What is the main reason this option has been selected?					
This option has not been selected as it would result in significantly higher costs to deliver very similar benefits as could be achieved from the preferred option. Secondly there is limited land available for a new build within the village. Although it would meet some of the key drivers for the project such as the increase in Welsh medium places, colocation etc. this can also be achieved via the preferred option which provides better value for money and could be delivered more quickly.					

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

The benefits that the project will deliver expressed in measurable terms against the situation as it exists prior to the project. Remember to capture co-benefits (the added benefits we get from this action/project as well as the direct benefits it will realise).

This project would deliver a number of benefits, namely:

- Increase Welsh medium primary provision in the Denbigh area and therefore for the County
- The expansion of places would assist the local authority in meeting the goals of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan specifically Outcomes 1 & 2
- The project would support the 'Cymraeg 2050' aspirations of the Welsh Government to increase the number of Welsh speakers
- The project would deliver an overall improved learning environment with flexibility for the future
- The project would deliver a key benefit of colocation with the Cylch and Ti a Fi and provide increased opportunities for Community Groups to utilise the site
- Pupils will continue to benefit from the colocation through ease of transition from the childcare setting to the foundation phase
- The extension will be designed in line with NCZ principles in order to strive towards minimising emissions in operation

These are some high-level benefits that the project would deliver, as the project progress other more detailed benefits will emerge. Community benefits will also be delivered, these benefits have not been identified as a contractor would need to be appointed before engagement on community benefits can take place

5. EXPECTED DIS-BENEFITS

Outcomes perceived as negative by one or more stakeholders

The project would result in works being undertaken at the school whilst it is a live school site. Robust site management protocols will be in place during the construction elements. The Local Authority will work with the contractor on enabling works.

6. CARBON IMPACT

Denbighshire has committed to reducing its carbon emissions from buildings and fleet by 60% by 2030, for the Council to be net carbon zero by 2030 (buildings, fleet, waste, business travel, staff commuting, street lighting) and for the Council to reduce its supply chain emissions by 35% by 2030.

Please consult with Council’s Principal Energy Manager (robert.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk) and the Council’s Climate & Ecological Change Programme team (climatechange@denbighshire.gov.uk) to complete this section.

Please provide brief details of the carbon impact of this project, and detail specific actions that will be taken to reduce carbon emissions. If carbon emissions are expected to increase as a result of this project, please provide details of proposed actions to compensate for this increase in other areas of the Service’s activity and/or via tree planting/land management for the benefit of carbon sequestration.

The project will be delivered in line with the Net Carbon Zero principles. The new building will make use of energy efficient / carbon neutral technologies to meet both the Local Authorities Corporate Priority ‘A Greener Denbighshire’ to become a Net Zero Carbon organisation by 2030 and the Welsh Governments ‘Net Zero Wales’ plan. The design specification will request an A rated energy use building.

Consultation will also be undertaken with DCC’s energy team to review options for the installation of energy saving measures within the existing school building to compensate for the slight increased energy usage in the extension.

However, it is accepted that not all carbon incurred during the construction phase can be offset and therefore this proposal will hinder the aim of achieving NCZ.

7. TIMESCALE

Over which the project will run (summary of the Project Plan) and the period over which the benefits will be realised

Date	Milestone
Spring 2024	Project commencement
Autumn 2024	Planning submitted
Winter 2024	Procurement
Summer/Autumn 2025	End of Construction

8. CAPITAL COSTS – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed. Note that even some Business Development Projects may have a requirement for capital costs, for example to fund the acquisition of new ICT hardware or undertaking alterations to buildings.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				
Building alterations				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				
Furniture				
Other professional support (legal, etc.)				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (gateway review, etc.)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
TOTAL				

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
TOTAL					

NOTE: For funding status, please only use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

9. CAPITAL COSTS – CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION IF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SECTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS ONLY

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department.
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services.

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				25,000
Land/property acquisition				
Land preparation/remediation				
Demolition and/or site security				5,750
Construction, refurbishment or maintenance				322,310
BREEAM rating of "Excellent"				
Security measures (CCTV, door entry, etc.)				
Fire prevention measures (sprinklers, etc.)				
External landscaping and other works				
Highways work				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				8,325
Fixtures & fittings				
Furniture				18,315
Planning/Building Regulation Costs				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				75,167
Legal Costs and Fees				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (e.g. gateway review)				
Contingency				57,410
Client Contingency				46,064
TOTAL		223,336.40	335,004.60	558,341

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
Welsh Government Welsh Language Capital Programme	Approached		223,336.40	335,004.60	558,341.00
TOTAL			223,336.40	335,004.60	558,341.00

NOTE: For funding status, please only use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

10. REVENUE COST IMPACT

TO BE COMPLETED FOR ALL PROJECTS

*In considering whether a project should be developed due regard should be made to the potential impact on revenue budgets. **Please consult with your revenue finance officer for this section and ensure they sign at the end of the section to confirm they have reviewed the figures provided.***

If the activity will result in a requirement for additional revenue funding, please provide details below:			
What is the impact of this project in terms of the <u>annual</u> revenue requirement for:	Existing Revenue Budget £	Post-project Revenue Budget £	Increase/ (Decrease) £
staff costs (salaries and associated)	388,538	391,143	Increase by £2,605 based on 56m2 extension
energy costs (heating, lighting, ICT, etc.)	15,705	15,705	
property maintenance and servicing costs	19,399	19,399	
other property related costs (rental, insurance, etc.)	3,765	3,765	
ongoing ICT costs (licences, etc.)	2,000	2,000	
mileage of Denbighshire fleet vehicles			
mileage for business travel by Denbighshire employees using their personal vehicles			
OTHER (please enter)	60,193	60,193	
OVERALL REVENUE REQUIREMENT	489,600	492,205	

Please provide brief details of the revenue impact of this project:

- Where revenue savings are forecast, you should detail what is proposed for the saving (e.g. reduction of an existing revenue budget, re-allocation of revenue to alternative services area, etc.)
- Where revenue increases are forecast, you should provide details of how the revenue shortfall will be addressed. In this instance you should also append a three-year surplus/deficit forecast.
- Details of any one-off revenue cost requirements that may be required post-project implementation (e.g. recruitment, redundancies, etc.). DO NOT include any costs detailed in the capital section of this Business Case

Revenue changes for this project will be met through the School funding formula. For example, the project will increase the floor area of the school but this will deliver an increase in funding as a consequence on that element. Additionally, as mentioned in section 12 we will review the option of implementing carbon reduction measures in the existing school and as such there should not be a net increase in carbon/costs from energy use. From a staffing perspective the provision of an extra classroom will increase the staffing costs in line with pupil numbers.

Signature of service accountant to confirm the above figures:

Signed: Caryl Williams	Date: 04/03/24
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11. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Please provide details of proposed project management – Establishment of Project Board etc.

The project will be overseen by a Project Manager based in the Modernising Education Team which sits within the wider Education and Children’s Services department. The scheme will be included within a wider portfolio of projects for the Welsh Language Capital Grant for Denbighshire. All project progress will be reported quarterly to the Modernising Education Board, this is made up of the following members:

- Corporate Director- Communities
- Head of Education
- Head of Finance and Audit
- Lead member for Education, Children’s Services and Public Engagement
- Lead member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
- Lead officer Corporate Property and Housing
- Principal Manager – School Support

The project sponsor will be Geraint Davies, Head of Education. The project will be reported via Denbighshire’s internal Project Management software system VERTO. This is based on Prince2 methodology which ensures that the project is properly led, planned, resourced, monitored and

controlled. All risks, issues and benefits are managed at an individual level by the project manager via Verto.

12. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS / HEALTH & SAFETY

This section should identify how the activity will help Denbighshire meet any of its statutory requirements. Please include any Health & Safety Issues that the activity will address in this section. Please leave blank if not applicable.

The project would result in works being undertaken at the school whilst it is a live school site. Robust site management protocols will be in place during the construction elements. The Local Authority will work with the contractor on enabling works.

13. MAJOR RISKS TO THE PROJECT

A summary of the key risks associated with the project together with the likely impact and plans should they occur is provided below:

Title	Inherent Risk	Mitigating Action	Residual Risk
Cost escalation / over budget		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust monitoring of costs throughout the project lifecycle, most crucially ensuring the design brief is reflective of the proposed scheme to ensure cost is within procurement period is within the funding envelope. 	
Project slippage / delivered late		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme of works will be closely monitored by the client. Any issues arising that may cause slippage will be escalated as appropriate. 	
Failure to gain planning permission		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement with the planning department will be undertaken to understand any issues that may arise at the site. Engagement with local residents and other impacted groups will also take place to minimise the likelihood of potential objections. 	
Disruption to live school site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live site management arrangements will be made to minimise the disruption during the construction period. Engagement will take place with the school and Cylch prior to works commencing on site to agree site management arrangements. 	

Likelihood	A - Almost Certain	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Red	Red
	B - Highly Likely	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red
	C - Probable	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Red
	D - Possible	Green	Green	Yellow	Orange	Orange
	E - Rare	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Orange
		5 - Very Low	4 - Low	3 - Medium	2 - High	1 - Very High
		Impact				

14. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Please list any supporting documents that accompany this Business Case

Documents required to be presented with Business Cases:

For bids >£1m: Wellbeing Impact Assessment

For grant funded schemes: Grant application or offer letter

For external contributions: written confirmation from contributor

For CERA: confirmation from Management accounts

For Prudential Borrowing: quote from Capital Team

- Well-being Impact Assessment

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PLEASE INSERT THE STATEMENTS AND SEND THE FINAL BUSINESS CASE (WITH
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15. CARBON MANAGEMENT IMPACT

For completion by the Climate & Ecological Change Programme team and / or the Council's Principal Energy Manager. The Business Case requires you to make a forecast for the anticipated carbon emissions impact of the project.

Annual Forecasts:	Annual (current)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Annual (Post Project)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Carbon Variance	Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)						
Energy consumption in buildings: (UNIT = kWh)	72,594	21,396	72,594	21,396	0	If carbon reduction measures are carried out in the existing school there should not be a net increase in carbon from energy use.
Energy consumption in Street Lighting: (UNIT = kWh)						
Fuel consumption of Denbighshire Fleet vehicles: (UNIT = litres/ kWh)						
Mileage of Business Travel (personal vehicles): (UNIT = miles travelled)						
Mileage of Staff Commute: (UNIT = miles travelled)						
Tonnes of waste produced: (UNIT = tonnes)						
One off Forecasts:			Project cost (£)	Carbon (kgCO2e)		Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)			£454,867			Carbon calculated on costs of £454,867, NOT including contingency costs of £103,474. The majority of the project's carbon impact is from construction.
Project management			25,000	3,725		SIC74 (EF 0.149)
Demolition			5,750	1,369		SIC42.99 (EF 0.238)
Construction			322,310	77,354		SIC41.2 (EF 0.24)
ICT			8,325	3,896		SIC26 (EF 0.468)
Furniture			18,315	10,311		SIC31 (EF 0.563)
Design Fees			75,167	11,801		SIC71 (EF 0.157)
TOTAL CARBON EMISSIONS				108 tonnes		

Annual Forecasts:	Current	Carbon Absorption (kgCO2e)	Post Project	Carbon Absorption (kgCO2e)	Carbon Absorption Variance	Comments
Hectare of Grassland (UNIT=ha)					0	Assuming no loss of vegetation as part of the development. (There is a possible opportunity
Hectares of Forestland					0	

(UNIT=ha)						to increase absorption by tree planting.)
TOTAL CARBON ABSORPTION					0	

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council’s goal to become net carbon zero by 2030 (reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption).

Net Carbon Zero Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Climate Change Lead Officer statement:

The estimated greenhouse gas emissions associated with the capital spending are 108 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (108tCO₂e). While these emissions would *hinder* the Council’s net zero goal, the strategic geographical need for developing here at Ysgol Henllan to suit the projected pupil numbers is recognised. It is also acknowledged that the design aims for the building extension to be thermally isolated and **net carbon zero in operation** and that there are a number of potential improvements to the existing building that could be implemented to deliver some additional emission reductions.

Although the “Sustainable Communities for Learning - Welsh-Medium Capital Grant” secured from the Welsh Government would not cover the wholesale decarbonisation of the school (including the existing building), the Climate Change team would nevertheless recommend and encourage dialogue with the DCC Buildings Energy team to explore the possibility of applying for the “Low Carbon Heat Grant” for the additional elements. While it is no certainty, the Welsh Government has recently extended the dates for this grant because of low take-up so the probability of a successful grant may have improved substantially.

The Council has a ‘plus’ target to reduce Supply Chain emissions as well as its own direct emissions (by 35% of the 2019 baseline by 2030) and building work represents a carbon-intensive sector. Early engagement with Procurement Business Partners (including Roberta Bailey for supply chain decarbonisation) is encouraged to maximise low carbon / carbon sequestration opportunities throughout the design period as well as from the supply chain at tender stage. A key part of securing these reductions will be appropriate clauses in the specification and diligent contract management to enforce those actions.

It is noted from the WIA that opportunities to preserve or enhance natural habitats will be maximised to allow outside areas to be used to deliver the curriculum. We would advocate for the community benefits sought through the contract to be environmental actions to address climate and ecological change (thinking globally, acting locally), which could also be linked to education, such as the contractor funding some or all of the capital implementation of the Biodiversity Management Plan for the school (helping to take tree canopy cover to >20% for the net zero target too). Ellie Wainwright can advise on the current BMP status/future plans.

Supplied by: Keith Bennett **Date:** 13 March 2024

16. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT

For completion by Denbighshire's Biodiversity Lead Officer – Joel Walley
joel.walley@denbighshire.gov.uk

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure compliance and enforcement of the Habitats Regulations (as amended in 2017). Furthermore, the Environment (Wales) Act, 2016 requires the Council to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and promote the resilience of ecosystems. At this pre-feasibility stage, please determine the anticipated impact of the project on biodiversity, and proposed measures to ensure the project results in an overall biodiversity enhancement.

Please mark a cross in the appropriate box.

Will this project impact on a habitat that supports living organisms (plant or animal), or involve physical works to property or Land?	Yes	X	No	
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If you have answered yes to the above question, please complete all the following biodiversity sections. If answered no, please leave blank

IMPACTS ON BIODIVERSITY	Yes		No	X
Has an ecological appraisal or survey of the site or proposals taken place?				
Cofnod eMapper Link:				
Please provide brief summary of survey findings, or provide a copy of the ecological report for review:				
An ecological survey has not yet been carried out for this proposal. This is expected to take place during the detailed design and feasibility stages prior to the submission of a planning application. The business case, and therefore funding, has not yet been agreed by the Welsh Government. Once approval has been granted funding can be drawn down to undertake any required ecological assessments at the site.				

Please provide brief details of how the project will avoid harm to biodiversity.

The current planned location for the classroom extension and axillary areas are on existing hard standing and as such we are hopeful that any impact to biodiversity will be minimal. However, an ecological survey for the land earmarked for development will be undertaken prior to planning. The survey scope will include an evaluation of the site as well as any recommendations and mitigations that would be required as a result.

Please provide brief details of how the project will mitigate and compensate for any harm to biodiversity.

Should there be any negative impact this would be mitigated appropriately. At this stage the detail of how this would be undertaken is an unknown until a full appraisal is undertaken.

Please provide brief details of how the project will enhance biodiversity and restore ecosystem resilience.

Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity at the site will be explored, this will likely form part of the community benefits package once a contractor is appointed. For the time being we have concluded that the scheme would 'hinder' but opportunities to offset this will arise.

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council's goal to become ecologically positive by 2030 (increasing the species richness of land).

Ecologically Positive Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Ecology Officer summary:

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

17. COUNTY LANDLORD STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the County Landlord and where applicable the recommendation of the Asset Management Group..

Supplied by: _____ **Date:** _____

18. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the Chief Finance Officer.

The project which is 100% grant funding from Welsh Language Capital Grant Programme will assist the council to manage demand for school places through the medium of Welsh in the Denbigh area and meet the goals of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which are positives. There are revenue cost implications of extending the school which need to be considered as part of any decision made at CSG

Supplied by: Liz Thomas **Date:** 18 March 2024

APPENDIX A – PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

		COMPLETED DATE
Draft Business case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk for distribution to relevant officers	N.B. A minimum of five working days must be allowed for these officers to respond	06/03/2024
TO BE COMPLETED BY CAPITAL TEAM:		
VAT accountant rhys.i.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk to check for vat implications	N.B. The Chief Finance Officer must be copied in to the email to these officers to demonstrate they have been advised/consulted	07/03/2024
Finance Capital Team contact as detailed on page 1		06/03/2024
Service accountant if revenue implications applicable		04/03/2024
Chief Finance Officer statement obtained		18/03/2024
County Landlord statement obtained		
Carbon management impact statement obtained		13/03/2024
Biodiversity impact statement obtained		
Final completed Business Case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk		14/03/2024

Ysgol Henllan Extension: 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: 1333

Brief description: This project will deliver a single classroom extension for Ysgol Henllan to increase the capacity from 65 to 80 full time pupils.

Date Completed: 22/02/2024 20:51:07 Version: 1

Completed by: Isobel Bourke-Richardson

Responsible Service: Education and Children's Services

Localities affected by the proposal: Denbigh,

Who will be affected by the proposal? Pupils and staff of Ysgol Henllan, Cylch staff and parents/carers of current/prospective pupils

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 : 29 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

There are currently minimal surplus places available in the wider Denbigh area particularly within Welsh Medium schools and as such the key driver for this project is to ensure long term sufficiency of Welsh medium primary provision and childcare in this area. The new build elements of the project will be designed to ensure long term sustainability, including the use of technologies to meet the Council's aspiration of Net Carbon Zero by 2030.

Prevention

A key benefit of the project will be the ongoing colocation of the school with a childcare setting. Additionally, there is a baby and toddler group 'ti a fi' which also uses the school on a weekly basis, the project would deliver enhanced facilities for both the childcare and 'ti a fi' group. The project aims to strengthen the community ties overall with improved facilities and more flexible shared areas.

Integration

The project will support Outcomes 1 & 2 of DCC's WESP, achievement of the WG's policy 'Cymraeg 2050' and links with the Future Well-being of Generations Act. The ongoing colocation of Welsh medium childcare and 'ti a fi' group on the school site provides continuity for children attending Cylch before moving to Foundation Phase. The scheme will be designed in line with the NCZ agenda and planned capacity is based on a review of local housing developments & LDP to ensure adequate

future capacity.

Collaboration

The proposal has been developed by the Education team in consultation with the school and the Cylch. Should the project be progressed and funding agreed further more intensive consultation will take place with key stakeholders regarding the design of the extension and ancillary areas.

Involvement

Robust engagement will take place once funding has been allocated for the project, this will be within the wider Education team, the school (including the Governing Body), the childcare provider and any relevant community groups. Engagement will be wider at various stages of the project, including linking with Active Travel, Climate Change and Design and Construction teams within the Council when needed.

Summary of impact

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 responsible Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

Although some potential negative impacts have been identified over the short term (in terms of disruption associated with the planned construction works), longer term the benefits of the ongoing colocation of the school and Welsh Language childcare facilities, along with increased flexibility in opportunities for the school and community to make use of the school site, mean the proposal is positive overall. The increased suitability of school facilities will support the ongoing health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff. The procurement of contractors and the subsequent construction periods should have a positive economic impact. The aims of achieving Net Carbon Zero for the project support Denbighshire's position around reducing climate change, however we acknowledge there may be challenges associated with improving the energy efficiency of an existing building. Consultation with Denbighshire's energy team will be ongoing to establish the best solutions for reducing energy usage on the site.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The project will support the ongoing co-location of childcare provision on the Ysgol Henllan site whilst providing purpose designed facilities and supporting an increased capacity for the school itself. The extension will be designed with consideration of NCZ principles and support continued economic development.

Further actions required

Ongoing consultation will be undertaken with the DCC energy team during the design process to maximise opportunities for use of the funding for energy saving technologies within the build.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Plans for the extension will be developed in line with Net Carbon Zero principles which will be applied to the design and construction of the facility in order to strive for accommodation with energy rating A.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

The building will be provided with infrastructure to support digital resources such as data points and whole building wifi coverage.

Economic development

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. Due to the value of the project this will fall within Lot 1. This ensures the baseline social value and economic benefits (economic, employment & environmental) are met as standard. The 'softer' community benefits are to be agreed with key stakeholders following a successful appointment of a contractor.

Quality skills for the long term

Suitable community benefits will be identified in connection with the construction works.

Quality jobs for the long term

The project will ensure that the pre-school provision is provided with a dedicated space within the school which will provide increased job security for Cylch staff. The provision of increase capacity for the school will also ensure the school has suitable capacity moving forwards.

Childcare

As a result of the project the childcare provision at the school will be provided with a dedicated space which will provide them with an improved facility and increase flexibility of use of the school hall.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Refurbishment and extension of existing buildings can pose significantly challenges in terms of the ability to achieve NCZ . As such it is a possibility that energy usage for the site could increase overall.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

No negative impacts identified.

Economic development

No negative impacts identified.

Quality skills for the long term

No negative impacts identified.

Quality jobs for the long term

No negative impacts identified.

Childcare

No negative impacts identified.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The new facility will be designed around Net Carbon Zero principles however the challenges of achieving NCZ when extending an existing site is acknowledged.

Further actions required

Consultation will be ongoing with the energy team to establish the best solutions for reducing energy usage on the site. Opportunities for improving biodiversity on the site as part of the construction works will be explored.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Within the external layout of the school opportunities to preserve or enhance natural habitats will be maximised to allow such areas to be used to deliver the curriculum.

Biodiversity in the built environment

No positive impact identified

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Procurement for the project will have a focus on reducing waste and recycling as part of the process.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The new facility will be designed around Net Carbon Zero principles.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Environmental benefits brought about by the project will be highlighted and publicised for key stakeholders. Scope for contractors supporting biodiversity projects will be actively pursued.

Flood risk management

The facility is not being proposed to be built on a flood risk area. However detailed surveys are to be carried out.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

No negative impacts identified

Biodiversity in the built environment

No negative impacts identified

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No negative impacts identified

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Refurbishment of buildings may present greater challenges to ensure that optimum energy management processes can be achieved.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

No negative impacts identified

Flood risk management

No negative impacts identified

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The project is aiming to improve a co-located facility for use by the school, childcare provider, baby and toddler group plus other community activities. The increased suitability of school facilities will also support the ongoing health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff.

Further actions required

Engagement will be undertaken with key stakeholders to develop agreed site constraints plans to minimise disruption during the construction phase.

Positive impacts identified:

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

The project is aiming to improve a co-located facility for use by the school, childcare provider, baby and toddler group plus other community activities. The increased suitability of school facilities will also support the ongoing health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff.

Access to good quality, healthy food

No positive impacts have been identified

People's emotional and mental well-being

The increased suitability of school facilities will also support the ongoing health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff.

Access to healthcare

No positive impacts have been identified

Participation in leisure opportunities

By providing a dedicated space for Cylch then the school hall could be used more flexibly to provide increased access to leisure opportunities for pupils.

Negative impacts identified:

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

Any change in provision can lead to resistance from staff, pupils, parents etc. Disruption may occur to local residents during the construction phase and we will work with contractors to minimise the impact of issues.

Access to good quality, healthy food

No negative impacts have been identified

People's emotional and mental well-being

Careful consideration will be needed to ensure that during any phasing of the project that access to the learning environment is not reduced. Construction would be undertaken on a live school site and as such any interim arrangements may have a short term impact on the wellbeing of pupils and staff and consideration will be given to how this may be mitigated.

Access to healthcare

No negative impacts have been identified

Participation in leisure opportunities

No negative impacts have been identified

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

This proposal if progressed will be designed according to 'inclusive by design' principles and would provide improved education facilities within a known area of deprivation.

Further actions required

Consultation will be undertaken with the school to develop agreed site constraint and interim mitigation plans in order to minimise the impacts on pupils and staff during the school build.

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

This proposal if progressed will be designed according to 'inclusive by design' principles.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

The proposals will equally positively impact on all groups.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

By improving the educational offer through new school facilities the performance of pupils could improve increasing scope for gaining employment.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

Henllan and upper Denbigh is within the 20-30% most deprived areas of Wales and this project would support improved education facilities and increase pupil places within the area.

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

Careful consideration will be needed to ensure that during any phasing of the project that access to the learning environment is not reduced. The interim arrangements may impact the wellbeing of pupils and consideration will be given to how this may be mitigated.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No negative impacts have been identified

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

No negative impacts have been identified

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

No negative impacts have been identified

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Although some potential negative impacts have been identified over the short term in terms of disruption associated with the planned construction works, longer term the benefits of the ongoing colocation of the school and childcare facilities and increased flexibility in opportunities for the school and community to make use of the school site mean the proposal is positive overall.

Further actions required

The construction stage is likely to have a negative impact on the local community on a short term basis. The project team will need to work with the contractor and the local community to minimise risks and to ensure clear communication at key times.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

New facility will be designed in line with the principles of Designing out Crime guidelines.

Community participation and resilience

The increased flexibility in use of the school hall will provide more opportunities for community use of the site.

The attractiveness of the area

The works at the site will be in keeping with the current building and also will reflect the rural nature of the surrounding area and village.

Connected communities

The school and childcare provision will ensure that there is a strong connection with the wider community. Likewise potential opportunities for the use of areas of the building by the local community will also ensure this going forward. Providing sufficient pupil places will also ensure that more pupils are able to be educated in their local area.

Rural resilience

The school is located in a small village setting within a rural area. The expansion and improvement at the school will ensure that the facility is viable in the longer term, protecting this rural asset.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The construction phase will have an impact on the community via increased traffic and access to the site for employees and the delivery of building supplies. This could have an impact on individuals during this phase.

Community participation and resilience

In considering community facilities there is a need to ensure that the overall provision is not saturated

leading to existing providers becoming unviable.

The attractiveness of the area

The construction phase may have a short term detrimental impact on the local community.

Connected communities

Increase community use may create additional management/administration pressures for the school.

Rural resilience

No negative impacts have been identified

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

This project will increase the capacity of a Welsh medium school and secure the future of a Welsh language preschool provision. As such there will be increased opportunities for young people in Denbighshire to access their education through the medium of Welsh. Additionally an increase in the number of Welsh learners could increase the overall number of speakers within Denbighshire and Wales.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The project will expand the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in the Denbigh area. Therefore this will increase the numbers of people speaking and using Welsh in line with the Welsh

Governments 'Cymraeg 2050' plan.

Promoting the Welsh language

The delivery of the project is within an existing Welsh medium primary school site. During the procurement process use of bilingual signage for site management will be discussed with the contractor. The project itself will be publicised via DCC communications team to raise a general awareness of the project. Communication with residents and the local community will be bilingual.

Culture and heritage

The project will expand the availability of Welsh medium places, therefore providing opportunity for more pupils to learn and participate in cultural events via the medium of Welsh.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No negative impacts identified

Promoting the Welsh language

No negative impacts identified

Culture and heritage

No negative impacts identified

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The procurement of contractors and the subsequent construction periods should have a positive impact. Adherence to procurement regulations and statutory responsibilities around Health and

Safety will ensure that the projects address such areas. The aims of achieving Net Carbon Zero for the project support Denbighshire's position around reducing climate change however we are aware there may be challenges associated with improving the energy efficiency of an existing building .

Further actions required

Opportunities for improving the energy efficiency of the site in order to compensate for the increased floor area will be considered at an early stage of the design.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. This ensures that the baseline economic, employment and environmental benefits are met.

Human rights

All contractors will be expected to have first class health and safety procedures in place and these will be rigorously examined during the delivery of the project. Workers employed during the process will be expected to be treated equally.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

As the project would free up additional resource space for use by the school there may be more opportunities for intensive interventions with pupils which could be supported by external agencies.

Reducing climate change

Opportunities for improving the energy efficiency of the site in order to compensate for the increased floor area will be considered at an early stage of the design.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

No negative impacts identified

Human rights

No negative impacts identified

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No negative impacts identified

Reducing climate change

Due to the nature of extending and refurbishing older buildings there may be challenges in terms of achieving a carbon neutral build overall.

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BUSINESS CASE – CAPITAL INVESTMENT

*This Business Case provides justification for undertaking a project. The completed form will be reviewed by the Capital Scrutiny Group who will make a recommendation to Cabinet or CET whether the bid should be approved and included within the Capital Plan. All sections should be completed and evidence of costs will need to be supplied. **Please ensure the checklist at Appendix A has been completed.***

For details of Capital Scrutiny Group Meeting dates and deadlines for the submission of this form, please contact capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk

Project Name:	Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch Extension
Project Manager:	Lowri Roberts, Modernising Education
Work stream/Programme (if applicable):	Modernising Education (Welsh Capital Grant)

1. PROJECT TYPE

Head of Service i.e. Project Sponsor	Geraint Davies, Head of Education	Lead member:	Cllr Gill German,
Service:	Education	LM Portfolio:	Lead Member for Education, Children and Families
Form completed by:	Lowri Roberts (Modernising Education)	Date:	31/10/2023
Finance Capital Team contact:	Sian Jackson	Service Accountant (for revenue implications if applicable)	

*Please categorise your project type. Mark **one** box only.*

SMALL <£250k	<input type="checkbox"/>	MEDIUM >£251 - £999k	<input type="checkbox"/>	LARGE >£1m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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DECISION SOUGHT FROM CAPITAL SCRUTINY GROUP:	To recommend that this business case proceeds for submission to the Welsh Governments Welsh Language Capital Grant Programme.
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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights the key points in the Business Case to include: -

- what the project will achieve / important benefits
- estimated costs
- how the project will be funded

This project will deliver a two-classroom extension for Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch to increase the capacity from 85 pupils to 105 pupils. The estimated cost for the project is **£1,359,164**. Of the £1,359,164 required to fund this project the Council will seek to draw down 100% of the cost via the Welsh Government’s Welsh Medium Capital Grant funding stream.

Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch is a Welsh Medium primary school located within the village of Llanrhaedr. The school draws pupils from the communities of Llanrhaedr, Llandyrnog, Llanynys and Denbigh. The current full time school capacity is 85, there are currently 82 full time pupils on roll. Pupil projections indicate that the school will reach and exceeded its capacity in the next few years, this is detailed below:

Pupil Projections 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Jan 2027	Jan 2028
Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch	87	86	90	90	93

There are minimal Welsh medium surplus places available in the wider Denbigh area, in addition to Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch there are two further Welsh Medium primary schools – Ysgol Pant Pastynog (Prion) and Ysgol Twm o’r Nant (Denbigh). For the 3 schools there are currently only 16 surplus full-time places (January 2023 PLASC). There are also two new home developments within the village, plus an outstanding permission for a further development.

Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch currently has a lack of ancillary facilities and classroom space to accommodate any future growth. It is proposed to construct a two-class extension to increase the overall capacity by 20 places creating a 105 full time pupil capacity school. There would also be works to extend the school hall and enable an existing classroom to be used as a practical teaching area to ensure compliance with BB99 guidance for a school of 105 full time pupils. There are other issues within the school building that require addressing as part of the project to ensure the school and co-located Cylch Meithrin childcare provision have flexibility for the future.

The project would support the delivery of **Outcome 1** and **Outcome 2** of Denbighshire’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) by increasing the number of primary Welsh medium places available within the County but specifically building in capacity in an area with minimal Welsh primary surplus capacity.

The school also supports the principles of colocation, the school, Cylch Meithrin, Ti a Fi and community groups all make use of the school site. There is a community room within the school building which can be separated from the school when used by the community. The project will deliver a co-located pre-school provision and primary provision from the ages of 2 to 11. The co-location of the pre-school and primary school will provide both settings with flexibility especially between the pre-school provision and Foundation Phase providing pupils with continuity of provision.

At present the Cylch Meithrin are using ancillary spaces within the school for the delivery of the Cylch and Ti a Fi. The project is proposing to address this by ensuring the Cylch and Ti a Fi have a self-contained area within the school site, initial proposals will explore use of the community room which will need to meet the National Minimum Standards for childcare settings. The project itself will not fund any improvement works to the community room, funding for this element will be via the Community Focused School Fund.

3. BUSINESS OPTIONS

Analysis and reasoned recommendation for the base business options of: do nothing / do the minimal or do something.

You must include an environmentally enhanced (net carbon zero/ecologically positive compatible) option. If your project is a business development project, then this may not be relevant.

Option 1:		Do nothing – maintain the status quo			
Please provide brief details:					
Continue with existing provision at Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less	X		Is quicker to deliver	X
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality	X		Worsens benefits	X
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option does not meet the key business objectives of the project. This option would see the school become oversubscribed with minimal surplus places available in the wider Welsh medium primary provision within the Denbigh area. Although the Cylch and Ti a Fi would remain on the site, it would continue to operate as it does now which poses operational issues for both the childcare setting and the school. This option would not lead to any improvement in the overall school / learning environment, opportunities for carbon reduction and biodiversity could not be addressed.					

Option 2:		Do Minimum – Refurbish existing school (no extension)			
Please provide brief details:					
Undertake a minor refurbishment of the existing school to improve the overall learning environment.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less	X		Is quicker to deliver	X
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	

	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality	X		Worsens benefits	X
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option has not been selected as it would not deliver the sufficient space and flexibility required, it would not result in an increase in Welsh medium places. This option would deliver a minor improvement to address some building flow issues but overall it would not address issues such as the lack of space for the Welsh medium childcare provision.					

Option 3:	Do Intermediate – Extend and refurbish existing school (preferred option & environmentally enhanced)				
Please provide brief details:					
This option would result in a two-classroom extension, school hall extension and repurposing / remodel of existing areas as workable practical and ancillary areas. This would result in an increase of overall full-time capacity from 85 to 105.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same	X		Takes the same to deliver	X
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	X
	Is the same quality	X		No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	
What is the main reason this option has been selected?					
This option is the preferred option as it meets all of the key business objectives and drivers for the project. It is compliant with the WESP and supports the Welsh Governments aspirations for 'Cymraeg 2050'. It is also a strategic fit for colocation / cohesive communities principles and meets a number of the goals outlined in the Future Well-being of Generations Act. This option will deliver a learning environment that is flexible and fit for the future which meets parental local demand. This option will deliver energy efficient accommodation as Net Carbon Zero principles will be applied to the design and construction of the facility. This option is affordable within the requested funding envelope.					

Option 4:	Do Maximum – New School Build				
Please provide brief details:					
Deliver a new purpose built 105 Welsh medium primary school to replace the existing accommodation.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more	X	Time	Takes longer to deliver	X
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	

Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality	X		No impact on benefits	X
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
<p>The reason that this option has not been selected is that this would result in a major cost to deliver very similar benefits. Secondly is limited land available for a new build within the village. Although it would meet some of the key drivers for the project such as the increase in Welsh medium places, colocation etc. this can also be achieved via the preferred option which provides better value for money.</p>					

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

The benefits that the project will deliver expressed in measurable terms against the situation as it exists prior to the project. Remember to capture co-benefits (the added benefits we get from this action/project as well as the direct benefits it will realise).

This project would deliver a number of benefits, namely:

- Increase Welsh medium primary provision in the Denbigh area and therefore for the County
- The expansion of places would assist the local authority in meeting the goals of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan specifically Outcomes 1 & 2
- The project would support the 'Cymraeg 2050' aspirations of the Welsh Government to increase the number of Welsh speakers
- The project would deliver an overall improved learning environment with flexibility for the future
- The project would deliver a key benefit of colocation with the Cylch, Ti a Fi and Community Groups all able to utilise the site
- Pupils will benefit from the colocation through ease of transition from the childcare setting to the foundation phase

These are some high-level benefits that the project would deliver, as the project progress other more detailed benefits will emerge. Community benefits will also be delivered, these benefits have not been identified as a contractor would need to be appointed before engagement on community benefits can take place.

5. EXPECTED DIS-BENEFITS

Outcomes perceived as negative by one or more stakeholders

- The project would result in works being undertaken at the school whilst it is a live school site. Robust site management protocols will be in place during the construction elements. The Local Authority will work with the contractor on enabling works for the childcare setting.

6. TIMESCALE

Over which the project will run (summary of the Project Plan) and the period over which the benefits will be realised

Project	Start	Planning	Procurement	End of Construction
Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Autumn 2024	Winter 2025

7. CAPITAL COSTS – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed. Note that even some Business Development Projects may have a requirement for capital costs, for example to fund the acquisition of new ICT hardware or undertaking alterations to buildings.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				
Building alterations				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				
Furniture				
Other professional support (legal, etc.)				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (gateway review, etc.)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
TOTAL				

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
TOTAL					

NOTE: For funding status, please only use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

8. CAPITAL COSTS – CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION IF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SECTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS ONLY

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department.
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services.

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				25,000
Land/property acquisition				
Land preparation/remediation				
Demolition and/or site security				
Construction, refurbishment or maintenance				619,382
BREEAM rating of "Excellent"				
Security measures (CCTV, door entry, etc.)				
Fire prevention measures (sprinklers, etc.)				
External landscaping and other works				168,104
Highways work				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				11,100
Fixtures & fittings				
Furniture				24,420
Planning/Building Regulation Costs				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				176,594
Legal Costs and Fees				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (e.g. gateway review)				
Contingency				118,123
Client Contingency				216,441
TOTAL	67,958	883,457	407,749	1,359,164

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
Welsh Government Welsh Language Capital Programme	Approached		1,359,164		1,359,164
TOTAL			1,359,164		1,359,164

NOTE: For funding status, please *only* use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

9. REVENUE COST IMPACT

TO BE COMPLETED FOR ALL PROJECTS

In considering whether a project should be developed due regard should be made to the potential impact on revenue budgets.

If the activity will result in a requirement for additional revenue funding, please provide details below:			
What is the impact of this project in terms of the <u>annual</u> revenue requirement for:	Existing Revenue Budget £	Post-project Revenue Budget £	Increase/ (Decrease) £
staff costs (salaries and associated)			
energy costs (heating, lighting, ICT, etc.)			
property maintenance and servicing costs			
other property related costs (rental, insurance, etc.)			
ongoing ICT costs (licences, etc.)			
mileage of Denbighshire fleet vehicles			
mileage for business travel by Denbighshire employees using their personal vehicles			
OTHER (please enter)			
OTHER (please enter)			
OVERALL REVENUE REQUIREMENT			

Please provide brief details of the revenue impact of this project:

- Where revenue savings are forecast, you should detail what is proposed for the saving (e.g. reduction of an existing revenue budget, re-allocation of revenue to alternative services area, etc.)
- Where revenue increases are forecast, you should provide details of how the revenue shortfall will be addressed. In this instance you should also append a three-year surplus/deficit forecast.
- Details of any one-off revenue cost requirements that may be required post-project implementation (e.g. recruitment, redundancies, etc.). DO NOT include any costs detailed in the capital section of this Business Case

10. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Please provide details of proposed project management – Establishment of Project Board etc.

The project will be overseen by a Project Manager based in the Modernising Education Team which sits within the wider Education and Children’s Services department. The scheme will be included within a wider portfolio of projects for the Welsh Language Capital Grant for Denbighshire. All project progress will be reported quarterly to the Modernising Education Board, this is made up of the following members:

- Corporate Director- Communities
- Head of Education
- Head of Finance and Audit
- Lead member for Education, Children’s Services and Public Engagement
- Lead member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
- Lead officer Corporate Property and Housing
- Principal Manager – School Support

The project sponsor will be Geraint Davies, Head of Education. The project will be reported via Denbighshire’s internal Project Management software system VERTO. This is based on Prince2 methodology which ensures that the project is properly led, planned, resourced, monitored and controlled. All risks, issues and benefits are managed at an individual level by the project manager via Verto.

11. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS / HEALTH & SAFETY

This section should identify how the activity will help Denbighshire meet any of its statutory requirements. Please include any Health & Safety Issues that the activity will address in this section. Please leave blank if not applicable.

The project would result in works being undertaken at the school whilst it is a live school site. Robust site management protocols will be in place during the construction elements. The Local Authority will work with the contractor on enabling works for the childcare setting.

12. CARBON MANAGEMENT IMPACT

Please consult with Council's Principal Energy Manager (robert.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk) and the Council's Climate & Ecological Change Programme team (climatechange@denbighshire.gov.uk).

Denbighshire has committed to reducing its carbon emissions from buildings and fleet by 60% by 2030, for the Council to be net carbon zero by 2030 (buildings, fleet, waste, business travel, staff commuting, street lighting) and for the Council to reduce its supply chain emissions by 35% by 2030.

The Business Case requires you to make a forecast for the anticipated carbon emissions impact of the project.

Annual Forecasts:	Annual (current)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Annual (Post Project)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Carbon Variance	Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Energy consumption in buildings: (UNIT = kWh)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Energy consumption in Street Lighting: (UNIT = kWh)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Fuel consumption of Denbighshire Fleet vehicles: (UNIT = litres/ kWh)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Mileage of Business Travel (personal vehicles): (UNIT = miles travelled)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Mileage of Staff Commute: (UNIT = miles travelled)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Tonnes of waste produced: (UNIT = tonnes)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
One off Forecasts:			Project cost (£)	Carbon (kgCO2e)		Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)	£1,024,600		£1,359,164	235,515		Carbon calculated on costs of £1,024,600 to not include contingency costs of £334,564. The majority of the projects carbon impact is from construction.
TOTAL CARBON EMISSIONS		235,515				

Annual Forecasts:	Current	Carbon Absorptio	Post Project	Carbon Absorptio	Carbon Absorptio	Comments
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Annual Forecasts:	Annual (current)	Carbon (kgCO ₂ e)	Annual (Post Project)	Carbon (kgCO ₂ e)	Carbon Variance	Comments
		ⁿ (kgCO ₂ e)		ⁿ (kgCO ₂ e)	ⁿ Variance	
Hectare of Grassland (UNIT=ha)						
Hectares of Forestland (UNIT=ha)						
TOTAL CARBON ABSORPTION						

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council's goal to become net carbon zero by 2030 (reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption).

Net Carbon Zero Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Please provide brief details of the carbon impact of this project, and detail specific actions that will be taken to reduce carbon emissions. If carbon emissions are expected to increase as a result of this project, please provide details of proposed actions to compensate for this increase in other areas of the Service's activity and/or via tree planting/land management for the benefit of carbon sequestration.

The project will be delivered in line with the Net Carbon Zero principles. The new building will make use of energy efficient / carbon neutral technologies to meet both the Local Authorities Corporate Priority 'A Greener Denbighshire' to become a Net Zero Carbon organisation by 2030 and the Welsh Governments 'Net Zero Wales' plan. The design specification will request an A rated energy use building. However, it is accepted that not all carbon incurred during the construction phase can be offset and therefore this proposal will hinder.

Climate Change Lead Officer statement:

From the information provided this project will hinder the council achieving the targets of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy. However, the new building extension provides opportunity to produce a building which is adapted for the future climate and can be run in a low carbon way.

Overall, Carbon Impact – 235,515 kgCO²e

Client-side project management – 3,225 kgCO²e

Construction, refurbishment, or maintenance – 188,997 kgCO²e

ICT infrastructure and hardware – 1,820 kgCO²e

Furniture – 13,748 kgCO²e

Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.) – 27,725 kgCO²e

Energy Usage and Future Adaptability

It is positive to read that the new building will be A rated for energy use and there is an opportunity here to make sure that it uses sustainable energy production. This could ensure the energy use impacts of the building will be lower going forward.

Considerations could also be around future incidences of extreme heat when designing the building. Young children are more vulnerable during heat waves and extreme heat is more likely in the future. Incorporating passive external shading to the building will reduce the need for air conditioning use.

For more support with energy please speak to Principal Energy Manager Robert Jones

robert.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk

Supply Chain and Construction

It is likely that the carbon impact of the works will be from the supply chain and the £1,531,200 spend on construction. Construction projects often represent significant spend under carbon intensive categories. Therefore every effort should be taken within the procurement activity of this spend to specify the works for the benefit of low carbon (eg via the use of lower spend lots to open the field to local SME's), to assess the bids from a low carbon consideration (eg including quality criteria questions with a scoring weighting) and monitor carbon emission performance of the chosen contractor (eg through contract management, provision of data).

When procuring furniture and other internal items the project could seek recycled or pre-used refurbished items rather than buying brand new.

For more information on low carbon procurement please contact Procurement Business Partner – Decarbonisation Roberta Bailey Roberta.Bailey@denbighshire.gov.uk

Local Climate Impacts

Construction activities and loss of green space on the school site could have negative impacts. The way the works are carried out should be sensitive to the surrounding environment including not disrupting green verges and controlling heavily surface run off into surrounding ecosystems. The project should consider how the site can be enhanced to increase surface water absorption, provide shade for pupils and help it to be resilient to future climate impacts.

Any procurement over £25k should seek Community Benefits and I would encourage the project manager to focus their negotiations with the contractor around securing additional interventions for the benefit of low carbon, biodiversity improvements, carbon sequestration and/or climate and ecological change education/awareness

For more information and support on community benefits please contact Community Benefits Manager Karen Bellis Karen.Bellis@denbighshire.gov.uk

Supplied by: Aileen Charteris

Date: 09/11/23

13. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT

Please consult with Denbighshire's Biodiversity Lead Officer. Contact Joel Walley on joel.walley@denbighshire.gov.uk.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure compliance and enforcement of the Habitats Regulations (as amended in 2017). Furthermore, the Environment (Wales) Act, 2016 requires the Council to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and promote the resilience of ecosystems. At this pre-feasibility stage, please determine the anticipated impact of the project on biodiversity, and proposed measures to ensure the project results in an overall biodiversity enhancement.

Please mark a cross in the appropriate box.

Will this project impact on a habitat that supports living organisms (plant or animal), or involve physical works to property or Land?	Yes	X	No	
---	-----	---	----	--

If you have answered yes to the above question, please complete all the following biodiversity sections. If answered no, please leave blank

IMPACTS ON BIODIVERSITY	Yes		No	X
Has an ecological appraisal or survey of the site or proposals taken place?				
Cofnod eMapper Link:				
Please provide brief summary of survey findings, or provide a copy of the ecological report for review:				
An ecological survey has not yet been carried out for this proposal. This is expected to take place during the detailed design and feasibility stages prior to the submission of a planning application. The business case, and therefore funding, has not yet been agreed by the Welsh Government. Once approval has been granted funding can be drawn down to undertake any required ecological assessments at the site.				

Please provide brief details of how the project will avoid harm to biodiversity.

An ecological survey for the land earmarked for development will be undertaken prior to planning. The survey scope will include an evaluation of the site as well as any recommendations and mitigations that would be required as a result.
--

Please provide brief details of how the project will mitigate and compensate for any harm to biodiversity.

Should there be any negative impact this would be mitigated appropriately. At this stage the detail of how this would be undertaken is an unknown until a full appraisal is undertaken.

Please provide brief details of how the project will enhance biodiversity and restore ecosystem resilience.

Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity at the site will be explored, this will likely form part of the community benefits package once a contractor is appointed. For the time being we have concluded that the scheme would 'hinder' but opportunities to offset this will arise.

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council's goal to become ecologically positive by 2030 (increasing the species richness of land).

Ecologically Positive Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Ecology Officer summary:

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

14. MAJOR RISKS TO THE PROJECT

A summary of the key risks associated with the project together with the likely impact and plans should they occur is provided below:

Title	Inherent Risk	Mitigating Action	Residual Risk
Cost escalation / over budget		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust monitoring of costs throughout the project lifecycle, most crucially ensuring the design brief is reflective of the proposed scheme to ensure cost is within procurement period is within the funding envelope. 	
Project slippage / delivered late		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme of works will be closely monitored by the client. Any issues arising that may cause slippage will be escalated as appropriate. 	
Failure to gain planning permission		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement with the planning department will be undertaken to understand any issues that may arise at the site. Engagement with local residents and other impacted groups will also take place to minimise the likelihood of potential objections. 	
Disruption to live school site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live site management arrangements will be made to minimise the disruption during the construction period. Engagement will take place with the school and Cylch prior to works commencing on site to agree site management arrangements. 	

Likelihood	A - Almost Certain					
	B - Highly Likely					
	C - Probable					
	D - Possible					
	E - Rare					
		5 - Very Low	4 - Low	3 - Medium	2 - High	1 - Very High
		Impact				

15. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Please list any supporting documents that accompany this Business Case

Documents required to be presented with Business Cases:

For bids >£1m: Wellbeing Impact Assessment

For grant funded schemes: Grant application or offer letter

For external contributions: written confirmation from contributor

For CERA: confirmation from Management accounts

For Prudential Borrowing: quote from Capital Team

- Well-being Impact Assessment

16. COUNTY LANDLORD STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the County Landlord and where applicable the recommendation of the Asset Management Group..

The proposals are supported. Given the timescale of the development cost analysis will need to be undertaken at all preconstruction freeze points to ensure the works can be delivered within available budget, taking into account any inflationary/market cost increases. The proposals should include sufficient renewable/green energy provision to achieve net zero carbon in operation for the proposed extension and, if possible, enough to offset some of the energy requirement for the existing building.

Supplied by: David Lorey **Date:** 09/11/2023

17. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the Chief Finance Officer.

Should the bid to WG for 100% grant funding from Welsh Language Capital Grant Programme be successful this will assist the council to manage demand for school places through the medium of Welsh in the Denbigh area and meet the goals of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which are positives. There are revenue cost implications of extending the school which need to be considered as part of any decision made at CSG.

Supplied by: Liz Thomas **Date:** 13 November 2023

APPENDIX A – PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

		Completed - date
Draft Business case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk for distribution to relevant officers	N.B. A minimum of five working days must be allowed for these officers to respond	03/11/2023
VAT accountant rhys.i.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk to check for vat implications	N.B. The Chief Finance Officer must be copied in to the email to these officers to demonstrate they have been advised/consulted	09/11/2023
Finance Capital Team contact as detailed on page 1		06/11/2023
Service accountant if revenue implications applicable		
Chief Finance Officer statement obtained		13/11/2023
County Landlord statement obtained		09/11/2023
Carbon management impact statement obtained		13/11/2023
Biodiversity impact statement obtained		No response
Final completed Business Case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk		13/11/2023



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Geraint Davies
Corporate Director
Denbighshire County Council
Council Offices
Wynnstay Road
Ruthin
LL15 1YN

01 August 2023

Dear Geraint,

Sustainable Communities for Learning - Welsh-Medium Capital Grant (2nd phase) – Review of reserve list

Following our recent review of the Welsh Medium Capital Grant reserve list, I am pleased to confirm that the Minister for Education and Welsh Language has approved the following projects, in principle, subject to business case approval.

Project	Amount	Outcome
Ysgol Bro Elwern	£1,066,546	Your application has been supported in principle to progress to the next business case stage
Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch	£1,359,164	Your application has been supported in principle to progress to the next business case stage
Ysgol Brynhyfryd	£1,561,924	Your application has been supported in principle to progress to the next business case stage
Ysgol Tremeirchion	£1,255,021	Your application has been supported in principle to progress to the next business case stage
Ysgol Henllan	£558,341	Your application has been supported in principle to progress to the next business case stage

Please provide a timeframe for the submission of your business cases in line with the financial timeframe information required below.

Statutory Proposals

Any offer of funding for a project approved in principle is made without prejudice to any decisions that Welsh Ministers might be under a duty to make in connection with any statutory proposals for school organisation, or decisions on other approvals that might be necessary in order for the project(s) to proceed. Where statutory proposals for school organisation are necessary and have not been completed, the offer of funding is conditional on the successful completion of such statutory procedures as are required. If there is any doubt as to whether the changes you propose require statutory procedures, in the first instance, please contact:
sustainablecommunitiesforlearning@gov.wales

Financial Information

Delivery of the grant is dependent on the appropriate planning of financial resources. Understanding the anticipated timeline for project delivery is critical to this planning. To assist in wider programme planning, including the scheduling of draw down of funding, we would be very grateful if you could complete the attached proforma, for each project supported in principle, by 31 August 2023. I appreciate that the timings may be subject to change as your proposals develop, however this should reflect your delivery and drawdown timescale as accurately as possible based on your existing plans.

Your business cases will require developing so as not to exceed the above sum. Whilst it is acknowledged that local authorities may choose to deliver projects in excess of the proposed in principle grant sum, all additional costs in excess of those detailed above are to be met by your local authority.

Next steps

Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language will be announcing the additional investment following the summer recess. In the meantime, could I please ask you not to discuss the outcome of this grant funding before that announcement.

Yours sincerely



Neal O'Leary
Programme Director
Sustainable Communities for Learning



Bethan Webb
Deputy Director
Cymraeg 2050

Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch Extension : 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: 1292

Brief description: The proposal is for a two classroom extension, school hall extension and remodelling of existing areas for Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch (Llanrhaeadr). This would increase the school capacity from 85 to 105. It would also provide more suitable and flexible accommodation for the colocation of the Cylch Meithrin at the school site.

Date Completed: [TEXT HERE] Version: 0

Completed by: [TEXT HERE]

Responsible Service: Education and Children's Services

Localities affected by the proposal: Denbigh,

Who will be affected by the proposal? School staff, Cylch staff, pupils and parents

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 : 34 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

The key driver for this project is to ensure long term sufficiency of Welsh medium primary provision and childcare in the wider Denbigh area. The new build elements of the project will be designed to ensure long term sustainability, including the use of technologies to meet the Council's aspiration of Net Carbon Zero by 2030.

Prevention

A key benefit of the project will be the collocation of the school with a childcare setting. Additionally there is a baby and toddler group 'ti a fi' which also uses part of the school on a weekly basis, the project would deliver enhanced facilities for both the childcare and 'ti a fi' group. The current school site is also used by the wider community and the school playing field doubles as the village football ground. The project aims to strengthen the community ties with improved facilities and more flexible shared areas.

Integration

The project seeks to maximise a number of benefits for a number of national, regional and local policies. Crucially the project will help deliver Outcomes 1 and 2 of the authorities Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. In increasing Welsh medium primary places the project underpins the core aims of the Welsh Governments policy 'Cymraeg 2050' to increase the number of Welsh speakers.

Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch Extension

Furthermore the project will deliver the benefit of colocation, utilising space on the school site for the welsh medium childcare provision and 'ti a fi' group. This will provide continuity of provision for children attending the childcare before moving to the Foundation Phase. The project will encourage wider community engagement and ties. The project is linked with a number of Well-being goals including within the Future Well-being of Generations Act, specifically it supports 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language' and 'A Wales of Cohesive Communities'. The scheme will be designed in accordance with the Net Carbon Zero agenda for decarbonisation and biodiversity. These principles will form the baseline for the function of the extended and refurbished elements of the building and associated outdoor spaces. The LDP has been considered and the planned number of places has been based on an assessment of housing developments in the area to ensure adequate capacity over time.

Collaboration

The proposal has been developed by the Education team in consultation with the school and the Cylch. Should the project be progressed and funding agreed further more intensive consultation will take place with key stakeholders regarding the design of the extension and ancillary areas.

Involvement

Robust engagement will take place once funding has been allocated for the project, this will be within the wider Education team, the school (including the Governing Body), the childcare provider and the community group. Engagement will be wider at various stages of the project, including linking with Active Travel, Climate Change and Design and Construction teams within the Council.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	[TEXT HERE]

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

Main conclusions

Overall the project will bring about positive outcomes in relation to the well-being goals. As the project progress it is expected that this will only be strengthened as further benefits will be realised.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall the project will deliver positive outcomes relating to the 'prosperous Denbighshire' theme. The project will contribute to the local authorities aspiration of being a Net Carbon Zero Council by 2030. Other environmental and economic benefits will be identified once a contractor has been appointed to deliver the wider community benefits.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

The new building will be designed and constructed in line with Net Carbon Zero principles

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

The building will be provided with infrastructure to support digital such as data points and whole building wifi coverage. Opportunities for maximising active travel links to the development will also be explored.

Economic development

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. Due to the value of the project this will fall within Lot 2. This ensures the baseline social value and economic benefits (economic, employment & environmental) are met as standard. The 'softer' community benefits are to be agreed with key stakeholders following a successful appointment of a contractor.

Quality skills for the long term

No Known Impact

Quality jobs for the long term

No Known Impact

Childcare

This proposal will directly support the provision of welsh medium childcare. childcare. This project will lead to an improvement in the childcare setting.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

No Known Impact

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

No Known Impact

Economic development

No Known Impact

Quality skills for the long term

No Known Impact

Quality jobs for the long term

No Known Impact

Childcare

No Known Impact

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall the project would have a positive impact as the delivery of a new purpose built facility would support most of the principles outlined above.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

The project will see the current school extend and areas remodelled. Where possible opportunities to enhance the biodiversity and habitats within the boundary of the school site arise these will be included within the wider scheme of works and via engagement with pupils.

Biodiversity in the built environment

The facility will have dedicated outdoor areas for play. It will be explored as part of the detailed design for dedicated biodiversity areas.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

The procurement will have a focus on reducing waste and recycling as part of the process.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The new facility will be designed around Net Carbon Zero principles.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Environmental benefits brought about by the project will be highlighted and publicised for key

stakeholders.

Flood risk management

The facility is not being proposed to be built on a flood risk area. However detailed surveys are to be carried out.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

No Known Impact

Biodiversity in the built environment

No Known Impact

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No Known Impact

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

No Known Impact

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

No Known Impact

Flood risk management

No Known Impact

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

[TEXT HERE]

Justification for impact

Overall the proposal will have a positive impact, as the project progress other opportunities may arise around some of the key elements outlined above.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

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

The project is aiming to improve a co-located facility for use by the school, childcare provider, baby and toddler group plus other community activities.

Access to good quality, healthy food

The new facility will provide a purpose built building with the required ancillary areas such as food preparation and eating areas.

People's emotional and mental well-being

No Known Impact

Access to healthcare

No Known Impact

Participation in leisure opportunities

The project will enhance outdoor areas, specifically for the childcare setting and Foundation phase. The school playing field is also used by the local football team and wider community.

Negative impacts identified:

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

No Known Impact

Access to good quality, healthy food

No Known Impact

People's emotional and mental well-being

No Known Impact

Access to healthcare

No Known Impact

Participation in leisure opportunities

No Known Impact

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

At this stage of the project there would be a neutral impact. This well-being goal will be revisited approval of funding to identify any issues that can be addressed by the project relating to the above.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

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

This proposal is progressed will be designed according to 'inclusive by design' principles.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No Known Impact

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

No Known Impact

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

No Known Impact

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

No Known Impact

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No Known Impact

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

No Known Impact

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

No Known Impact

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall the project will bring about a positive outcome for the cohesive communities theme, this is a key criteria of the funding application from the Welsh Government. The project will maximise existing and identify new ways for the facility to be at the centre of the community.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The project will be designed with the required safe guarding measures.

Community participation and resilience

The facility, although primarily a primary education building, is a hub for the community. The project seeks to build on the foundations of the current cohesive nature of the site to strengthen for the future.

The attractiveness of the area

The works at the site will be in keeping with the current building and also will reflect the rural nature of the surrounding area and village.

Connected communities

The school and childcare provision will ensure that there is a strong connection with the wider community. Likewise the use of areas of the building by the local community will also ensure this going forward.

Rural resilience

The school is located in a small village setting within a rural area. The expansion and improvement at the school will ensure that the facility is viable in the longer term, protecting this rural asset.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

No Known Impact

Community participation and resilience

No Known Impact

The attractiveness of the area

No Known Impact

Connected communities

No Known Impact

Rural resilience

No Known Impact

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The project will expand and enhance the provision of Welsh medium education within the Denbigh area. The project will also enhance the Welsh medium childcare setting.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The project will expand the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in the Denbigh area. Therefore this will increase the numbers of people speaking and using Welsh in line with the Welsh Governments 'Cymraeg 2050' plan.

Promoting the Welsh language

The delivery of the project is within an existing Welsh medium primary school site. During the procurement process use of bilingual signage for site management will be discussed with the contractor. The project itself will be publicised via DCC communications team to raise a general awareness of the project.

Culture and heritage

The project will expand the availability of Welsh medium places, therefore providing opportunity for more pupils to learn and participate in cultural events via the medium of Welsh.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No Known Impact

Promoting the Welsh language

No Known Impact

Culture and heritage

No Known Impact

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch Extension

The project will ensure there are positive outcomes relating to issues around global responsibility in particular for supply chains and reducing climate change.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. This ensures that the baseline economic, employment and environmental benefits are met.

Human rights

No Known Impact

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No Known Impact

Reducing climate change

The project will ensure that Net Carbon Zero principles are applied to the design of the building to meet Denbighshire's commitment to being a net carbon zero council by 2030.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

No Known Impact

Human rights

No Known Impact

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No Known Impact

Reducing climate change

No Known Impact

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BUSINESS CASE – CAPITAL INVESTMENT

*This Business Case provides justification for undertaking a project. The completed form will be reviewed by the Capital Scrutiny Group who will make a recommendation to Cabinet or CET whether the bid should be approved and included within the Capital Plan. All sections should be completed and evidence of costs will need to be supplied. **Please ensure the checklist at Appendix A has been completed.***

For details of Capital Scrutiny Group Meeting dates and deadlines for the submission of this form, please contact capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk

Project Name:	Ysgol y Llys Childcare Facility
Project Manager:	Lowri Roberts (Modernising Education) / James Wood (Principal Manager)
Work stream/Programme (if applicable):	Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme (Welsh Government Scheme)

1. PROJECT TYPE

Head of Service i.e. Project Sponsor	Rhiain Morrle, Head of Children's Services	Lead member:	Cllr Gill German
Service:	Children's Services	LM Portfolio:	Lead Member for Education, Children and Families
Form completed by:	Lowri Roberts (Modernising Education)	Date:	31/10/2023
Finance Capital Team contact:	Sian Jackson	Service Accountant (for revenue implications if applicable)	

*Please categorise your project type. Mark **one** box only.*

SMALL <£250k	<input type="checkbox"/>	MEDIUM >£251 - £999k	<input type="checkbox"/>	LARGE >£1m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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DECISION SOUGHT FROM CAPITAL SCRUTINY GROUP:	To recommend that this business case proceeds for submission to the Welsh Governments Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme.
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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights the key points in the Business Case to include: -

- what the project will achieve / important benefits
- estimated costs
- how the project will be funded

This project would deliver a standalone new build childcare facility in the Prestatyn area with a total estimated cost of **£2,221,611**. The childcare provider that would utilise this facility would be the existing 'Cylch y Llys'. The current Cylch is operating from within a small space in the main school building of Ysgol y Llys. The current provision has capacity for 70 places, however the setting is full with a constant waiting list with limited scope to operate within the current space. The project will deliver an expansion of places, this will increase from 70 places to 90. The current provision is full and there is a constant waiting list, the current provision cannot increase places as they utilise a small space within the school and there is no further scope for expansion within the school building. It will also address the current gap of Welsh medium Flying Start provision within the area as this setting falls within the expansion area but currently cannot accept additional children due to being at capacity.

The new development is proposed to be adjacent to the main school building which will allow the pre-school provision to operate independently from the school whilst retaining the benefits of being co-located. This will be of benefit to parents and caregivers who may have children attending both settings and underpins a smooth transition from early years provision to the foundation phase. In turn this would support stable pupil numbers for Ysgol y Llys, it is more likely that a child attending childcare offered on a school site will then go on to attend that school due to ease of transition. Ysgol y Llys have seen a small decrease in numbers since the Covid pandemic. The school was extended as part of Tranche 3 Welsh Medium school funding in 2014.

It is proposed that the building will have 3 main rooms (to measure approx. 70m²), toilets, storage and ancillary space with a footprint of approximately 320m². The development will also have its own dedicated outdoor area for the pre-school to allow for outdoor activities which will be separate and as not impacting on the school. The building will meet the requirements of the '*National Minimum Standards for Providing Care for Children up to 12 years*'. A detailed design brief is being developed alongside this business case which will be submitted for further feasibility and design works to take place subject to the award of funding.

Overall, this project supports the delivery of all the main capital grant criteria, including:

Welsh Medium Provision

The project supports Outcome 1 of the WESP by increasing the number of places from 70 to 90. The existing pre-school provision is Welsh Medium (supported by Mudiad Meithrin). The project will improve the overall facilities whilst expanding the provision for a further 20 pre-school places. Ysgol y Llys is the only Welsh Medium primary school setting in the town of Prestatyn and Cylch Y Llys is the only Welsh medium preschool provision. The school was extended in 2014. The school has a full-time capacity of 420 pupils with 60 part time nursery places. As of January 2023, there are 312 full time pupils and 32 part time nursery pupils.

The historic pupil numbers since 2017 are displayed below. Since the pandemic there has been a small decrease in the schools' pupil numbers.

Ysgol Y Llys	PLASC 2017	PLASC 2018	PLASC 2019	PLASC 2020	PLASC 2021	PLASC 2022	PLASC 2023
FT No. On Roll	318	329	333	352	342	334	312
PT No. On Roll	56	49	56	52	43	43	32
Total	374	378	389	404	385	377	344

Pupil projections currently demonstrate a decrease in expected pupil numbers over the coming years.

Ysgol Y Llys	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Projected NOR FT Only	308	298	299	280	269

The delivery of a 90-place pre-school provision on site would assist in ensuring that pupil numbers remain stable with a view to increasing due to the co-location of the pre-school provision on the same site. Currently the pre-school provision is utilising a small space within the school, in the longer term with the school increasing pupil numbers and reaching capacity this would no longer be a viable option as the provision is already at capacity with a constant waiting list.

By the end of the ten-year plan DCC expect to see an increase in the percentage of 3-year-old children educated through the medium of Welsh to over 30%. There is also a target for more Welsh medium preschool capacity in the Rhyl and Prestatyn areas where there is current capacity in the primary schools for more pupils. There is also a commitment in the WESP for more children to access Flying Start through the Medium of Welsh.

The proposed building will be large enough to host support and engagement sessions for parents such as Clwb Cwtsh which introduces Welsh words and phrases for parents and carers to use at home with their young children, Ti a Fi Parent and toddler sessions and parenting classes arranged through Flying Start.

Co-Location / Cohesive Communities

The project will deliver a co-located pre-school provision and primary provision from the ages of 2 to 11. The co-location of the pre-school and primary school will provide both settings with flexibility especially between the pre-school provision and Foundation Phase providing pupils with continuity of provision.

Flying Start

This project is linked to Denbighshire's Flying Start expansion plan; the project would support the current provision as it is a registered Flying Start childcare setting. It is the only Welsh language Flying Start setting in the Prestatyn area. This project will strengthen this provision and the ability to provide 12 and a half hours free childcare per week via Welsh medium as there is currently a gap with the provision at capacity.

Childcare Offer

The last childcare sufficiency assessment for Denbighshire (2022) highlighted several gaps and areas for improvement which this project would help to address. This includes a perceived lack of Welsh Medium provision by providers and parents, especially outside of the Rhyl area. The parent survey found that 22.9% access childcare via the Medium of Welsh, 59.5% stated that they would like to access childcare via the medium of Welsh. Welsh Language data for the County shows a significant increase in the number of Welsh speakers over the last decade, this suggests that demand for Welsh medium childcare will not fall in the near future and will likely increase.

The pre-school will have more autonomy from the school as it will be located in a designated facility, this will allow for the pre-school provision to have more flexibility such as amending opening hours etc. There are two standalone childcare settings in Prestatyn and the other school settings all offer onsite childcare run by third parties. It is likely that if a child cannot get a place at the Welsh medium provision they will attend another setting. This does mean that is more than likely they will then attend the school with the childcare offer to minimise disruption of transition for the child.

3. BUSINESS OPTIONS

Analysis and reasoned recommendation for the base business options of: do nothing / do the minimal or do something.

You must include an environmentally enhanced (net carbon zero/ecologically positive compatible) option. If your project is a business development project, then this may not be relevant.

Option 1:		Do nothing – maintain the existing situation			
Please provide brief details:					
This option would see the continuation of the status quo at Ysgol y Llys regarding the pre-school provision. Cylch y Llys currently operate within a small area of the main school building and there is no scope for further expansion.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less	X		Is quicker to deliver	X
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality	X		Worsens benefits	X
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option would not meet any of the outcomes and targets contained with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), likewise it would not deliver any further capacity in Welsh medium childcare within the area or support the Flying Start expansion and actions from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. It is likely that as the pupil numbers at Ysgol Y Llys increase the current flexibility to host the Cylch within the main building will reduce causing issues for the provision of the pre-school in the short and medium term. This would not also deliver a purposely designed childcare environment which would be a significant benefit.					

Option 2:		Do Minimum – Increase capacity in the current setting			
Please provide brief details:					
Work with the school to increase the capacity within the school building to accommodate 20 more childcare places.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more		Time	Takes longer to deliver	
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less	X		Is quicker to deliver	X
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality	X		Worsens benefits	X
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option does not meet all of the objectives for the project, although it would provide more capacity for the pre-school it would be at the expense of any future growth within the school itself. The current provision is already restricted to a small space within the school, the provision is also full with a waiting list so there is no scope to secure a permanent expansion of space within Ysgol y Llys.					

Option 3:		Do Intermediate – Relocate to an alternative site or premises			
Please provide brief details:					
This option would explore taking the current provision 'off-site' to an alternative site or premises for either a refurbished setting or a new build.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more	X	Time	Takes longer to deliver	X
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	
Quality	Improves the quality		Benefits	Improves benefits	
	Is the same quality	X		No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	X
What is the main reason this option has not been selected?					
This option would likely be costly as it is unlikely an alternative site or premises would be owned by Denbighshire which would incur further costs. Additionally, this would not deliver a key benefit and strategic aim of co-location.					

Option 4:	Deliver a Purpose Built 90 Place Childcare Facility on the Existing Ysgol y Llys Site (Preferred Option)				
Please provide brief details:					
This option would see the delivery of a purpose built childcare facility with provision of 90 places. The facility would be located adjacent to the main school site as to continue and enhance the benefits of colocation.					
Please mark with an X how this option compares with the preferred option in terms of Cost, Time, Quality and Benefits:					
Costs	Costs more	X	Time	Takes longer to deliver	X
	Costs the same			Takes the same to deliver	
	Costs less			Is quicker to deliver	
Quality	Improves the quality	X	Benefits	Improves benefits	X
	Is the same quality			No impact on benefits	
	Is a lower quality			Worsens benefits	
What is the main reason this option has been selected?					
This option meets all of the project objectives including wider strategic aims of both the Council and the Welsh Government. It would increase the Welsh medium pre-school provision in the area addressing concerns raised via the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and support the delivery of Outcome 1 of the WESP as well as supporting the Welsh Governments Cymraeg 2050 aspiration. This option also delivers numerous benefits from the co-location on site alongside a Welsh medium primary school which would be convenient for parents and care givers with children of differing ages attending either the childcare or primary settings. Furthermore, it will strengthen the Flying Start provision in the area and will be a collocated primary and preschool site offering seamless transition from a childcare setting to Foundation Phase.					

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

The benefits that the project will deliver expressed in measurable terms against the situation as it exists prior to the project. Remember to capture co-benefits (the added benefits we get from this action/project as well as the direct benefits it will realise).

<p>This project would deliver a number of benefits, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in the availability of Welsh medium childcare places in the Prestatyn area Supports longer term sustainability of the Welsh medium setting which in turn will ensure the pupils numbers at Ysgol y Llys remain stable Colocation of the two setting (preschool and primary provision) will aid in transition of children to the Foundation Phase Expands the provision of Flying Start and specifically Flying Start childcare provision via the medium of Welsh A new purpose built childcare focused environment to inspire learning and play The design of the new build would meet Net Carbon Zero principles <p>These are some high level benefits that the project would deliver, as the project progress other more detailed benefits will emerge. Community benefits will also be delivered, these benefits have not been identified as a contractor would need to be appointed before engagement on community benefits can take place.</p>
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5. EXPECTED DIS-BENEFITS

Outcomes perceived as negative by one or more stakeholders

- Neighbouring residential area to the school which may mean residents are not supportive due to the need for a period of construction.

6. TIMESCALE

Over which the project will run (summary of the Project Plan) and the period over which the benefits will be realised

The project plan below is a high-level plotting of the key milestones, this has been based on the delivery of similar schemes with instruction from other internal teams such as Design and Construction. This baseline plan will be developed into a detailed scheme as the project progresses, the confirmation of a successful contractor will heavily influence the detailed scheme of works to be delivered and the below timescales are subject to contractor involvement at a later stage.

Date	Milestone
November 2023	Submit Business Case to SIG
December 2023	Submit Business Case to Welsh Government
March 2024	Develop Design Brief
June 2024	Pre-planning consultation
August 2024	Planning Submission
September 2024	Planning Approval
January 2025	Construction Start
July 2026	Construction Completion
August 2026	Handover
September 2026	Facility Opens

7. CAPITAL COSTS – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed. Note that even some Business Development Projects may have a requirement for capital costs, for example to fund the acquisition of new ICT hardware or undertaking alterations to buildings.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				
Building alterations				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				
Furniture				
Other professional support (legal, etc.)				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (gateway review, etc.)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
TOTAL				

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
TOTAL					

NOTE: For funding status, please only use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

8. CAPITAL COSTS – CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

LEAVE BLANK/DELETE SECTION IF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SECTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED

COMPLETE ALL THREE TABLES BELOW FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS ONLY

The capital cost of a project is an important consideration in terms of whether or not it should proceed.

- Any costs relating to ICT infrastructure and equipment should have been provided by ICT department.
- Any costs that relate to construction should have been provided by Design & Development or Building Services.

Please provide details of any expenditure incurred already on the project:	
Enter details of cost element below:	Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)	
Client side project management	
OTHER (please enter)	
OTHER (please enter)	
TOTAL	£0

Please provide details of the capital funding requirement (not including amount already spent):				
Enter details of cost element below:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	All Years Total £
Feasibility (surveys, market research, etc.)				
Client side project management				32,832
Land/property acquisition				
Land preparation/remediation				
Demolition and/or site security				
Construction, refurbishment or maintenance				1,535,985
BREEAM rating of "Excellent"				
Security measures (CCTV, door entry, etc.)				
Fire prevention measures (sprinklers, etc.)				
External landscaping and other works				
Highways work				
ICT infrastructure and hardware				
Fixtures & fittings				
Furniture				
Planning/Building Regulation Costs				
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.)				191,998
Legal Costs and Fees				
Marketing/Consultation				
External Project Support (e.g. gateway review)				
Contingency				307,197
Client Contingency				153,599
OTHER (please enter)				
OTHER (please enter)				
TOTAL	177,729	2,043,882		2,221,611

Please provide details of proposed capital funding sources					
Enter details of funding source	Status:	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Future Years £	TOTAL £
Welsh Government Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme	Approached				2,221,611
TOTAL					

NOTE: For funding status, please *only* use the following categories:

- **Approved** – written approval for the funding exists
- **Applied** – no written approval exists but an application has been made
- **Approached** – initial approach to or by funding body has been made but no application submitted
- **None** – no contact or approach has been made to or by the funding body

9. REVENUE COST IMPACT

TO BE COMPLETED FOR ALL PROJECTS

In considering whether a project should be developed due regard should be made to the potential impact on revenue budgets.

If the activity will result in a requirement for additional revenue funding, please provide details below:			
What is the impact of this project in terms of the <u>annual</u> revenue requirement for:	Existing Revenue Budget £	Post-project Revenue Budget £	Increase/ (Decrease) £
staff costs (salaries and associated)			
energy costs (heating, lighting, ICT, etc.)			
property maintenance and servicing costs			
other property related costs (rental, insurance, etc.)			
ongoing ICT costs (licences, etc.)			
mileage of Denbighshire fleet vehicles			
mileage for business travel by Denbighshire employees using their personal vehicles			
OTHER (please enter)			
OTHER (please enter)			

OVERALL REVENUE REQUIREMENT			
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Please provide brief details of the revenue impact of this project:

- *Where revenue savings are forecast, you should detail what is proposed for the saving (e.g. reduction of an existing revenue budget, re-allocation of revenue to alternative services area, etc.)*
- *Where revenue increases are forecast, you should provide details of how the revenue shortfall will be addressed. In this instance you should also append a three-year surplus/deficit forecast.*
- *Details of any one-off revenue cost requirements that may be required post-project implementation (e.g. recruitment, redundancies, etc.). DO NOT include any costs detailed in the capital section of this Business Case*

The childcare facility would be a DCC owned building, but the childcare provider (Cylch Meithrin) would be the tenants, they would pay a rental fee to DCC for use of the facility. This will have VAT implications, the Council can opt to tax the building which would mean that VAT would be charged on the rent to the childcare provider and that would resolve the VAT issue.

10. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Please provide details of proposed project management – Establishment of Project Board etc.

The project will be overseen by a Project Manager based in the Modernising Education Team which sits within the wider Education and Children’s Services department. The scheme will be included within a wider portfolio of projects for the Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme for Denbighshire. All project progress, including those within the Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme such as this scheme, will be reported quarterly to the Modernising Education Board, this is made up of the following members:

- Corporate Director- Communities
- Head of Education
- Head of Finance and Audit
- Lead member for Education, Children’s Services and Public Engagement
- Lead member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
- Lead officer Corporate Property and Housing
- Principal Manager – School Support

The project sponsor will be Rhian Morrelle. The project will be reported via Denbighshire’s internal Project Management software system VERTO. This is based on Prince2 methodology which ensures that the project is properly led, planned, resourced, monitored and controlled. All risks, issues and benefits are managed at an individual level by the project manager via Verto.

11. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS / HEALTH & SAFETY

This section should identify how the activity will help Denbighshire meet any of its statutory requirements. Please include any Health & Safety Issues that the activity will address in this section. Please leave blank if not applicable.

The new facility would need to meet all statutory requirements such as being H&S compliant. Safeguarding and age appropriate measures will also be embedded in the design principles which will follow the guidance set out by Care Inspectorate Wales.

12. CARBON MANAGEMENT IMPACT

Please consult with Council's Principal Energy Manager (robert.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk) and the Council's Climate & Ecological Change Programme team (climatechange@denbighshire.gov.uk).

Denbighshire has committed to reducing its carbon emissions from buildings and fleet by 60% by 2030, for the Council to be net carbon zero by 2030 (buildings, fleet, waste, business travel, staff commuting, street lighting) and for the Council to reduce its supply chain emissions by 35% by 2030.

The Business Case requires you to make a forecast for the anticipated carbon emissions impact of the project.

Annual Forecasts:	Annual (current)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Annual (Post Project)	Carbon (kgCO2e)	Carbon Variance	Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Energy consumption in buildings: (UNIT = kWh)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Energy consumption in Street Lighting: (UNIT = kWh)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Fuel consumption of Denbighshire Fleet vehicles: (UNIT = litres/ kWh)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Mileage of Business Travel (personal vehicles): (UNIT = miles travelled)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Mileage of Staff Commute: (UNIT = miles travelled)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Tonnes of waste produced: (UNIT = tonnes)	N/A	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
One off Forecasts:			Project cost (£)	Carbon (kgCO2e)		Comments
Money spent on external goods and services (UNIT= £)	£1,755,329		£2,214,689	401,760		Carbon calculated on costs of £1,755,329 to not include contingency costs of £459,360. The majority of the projects carbon impact is from construction.
TOTAL CARBON EMISSIONS		401,760				

Annual Forecasts:	Current	Carbon Absorptio	Post Project	Carbon Absorptio	Carbon Absorptio	Comments
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Annual Forecasts:	Annual (current)	Carbon (kgCO ₂ e)	Annual (Post Project)	Carbon (kgCO ₂ e)	Carbon Variance	Comments
		ⁿ (kgCO ₂ e)		ⁿ (kgCO ₂ e)	ⁿ Variance	
Hectare of Grassland (UNIT=ha)						
Hectares of Forestland (UNIT=ha)						
TOTAL CARBON ABSORPTION						

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council's goal to become net carbon zero by 2030 (reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption).

Net Carbon Zero Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Please provide brief details of the carbon impact of this project, and detail specific actions that will be taken to reduce carbon emissions. If carbon emissions are expected to increase as a result of this project, please provide details of proposed actions to compensate for this increase in other areas of the Service's activity and/or via tree planting/land management for the benefit of carbon sequestration.

The project will be delivered in line with the Net Carbon Zero principles. The new building will make use of energy efficient / carbon neutral technologies to meet both the Local Authorities Corporate Priority 'A Greener Denbighshire' to become a Net Zero Carbon organisation by 2030 and the Welsh Governments 'Net Zero Wales' plan. The design specification will request an A rated energy use building. However, it is accepted that not all carbon incurred during the construction phase can be offset and therefore this proposal will hinder.

Climate Change Lead Officer statement:

From the information provided this project will hinder the council achieving the targets of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy. However, the new building provides opportunity to produce a building which can adapt to future climate impacts.

Overall, Carbon Impact – 401,760 kgCO²e
Client-side project management – 4,222 kgCO²e
Construction, refurbishment, or maintenance – 367,488 kgCO²e
Design Team Fees (architects, QS, etc.) – 30,050 kgCO²e

Energy Usage and Future Adaptability

It is positive to read that the new building will be A rated for energy use and there is an opportunity here to make sure that it uses sustainable energy production. This could ensure the energy use impacts of the building will be lower going forward.

Considerations could also be around future incidences of extreme heat when designing the building. Young children are more vulnerable during heat waves and extreme heat is more likely in the future. Incorporating passive external shading to the building will reduce the need air conditioning use.

For more support with energy please speak to Principal Energy Manager Robert Jones
robert.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk

Supply Chain and Construction It is likely that the carbon impact of the works will be from the supply chain and the £1,531,200 spend on construction. Construction projects often represent significant spend under carbon intensive categories. Therefore every effort should be taken within the procurement activity of this spend to specify the works for the benefit of low carbon (eg via the use of lower spend lots to open the field to local SME's), to assess the bids from a low carbon consideration (eg including quality criteria questions with a scoring weighting) and monitor carbon emission performance of the chosen contractor (eg through contract management, provision of data).

When procuring furniture and other internal items the project could seek recycled or pre-used refurbished items rather than buying brand new.

For more information on low carbon procurement please contact Procurement Business Partner – Decarbonisation Roberta Bailey Roberta.Bailey@denbighshire.gov.uk

Local Climate Impacts

There is inland flood risk in areas to the west and north of the school site (<https://flood-risk-maps.naturalresources.wales/?locale=en>). Construction activities and loss of green space on the school site has the potential to contribute to that flood risk which could impact the local community. The project should consider how the site can be enhanced to increase surface water adsorption through environmental enhancements.

The way the works are carried out should be sensitive to the surrounding environment including not disrupting green verges and controlling heavily surface run off into surrounding ecosystems. Any procurement over £25k should seek Community Benefits and I would encourage the project manager to focus their negotiations with the contractor around securing additional interventions for the benefit of low carbon, biodiversity improvements, carbon sequestration and/or climate and ecological change education/awareness

For more information and support on community benefits please contact Community Benefits Manager Karen Bellis Karen.Bellis@denbighshire.gov.uk

Supplied by: Aileen Charteris **Date:** 09/11/23

13. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT

Please consult with Denbighshire's Biodiversity Lead Officer. Contact Joel Walley on joel.walley@denbighshire.gov.uk.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure compliance and enforcement of the Habitats Regulations (as amended in 2017). Furthermore, the Environment (Wales) Act, 2016 requires the Council to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and promote the resilience of ecosystems. At this pre-feasibility stage, please determine the anticipated impact of the project on biodiversity, and proposed measures to ensure the project results in an overall biodiversity enhancement.

Please mark a cross in the appropriate box.

Will this project impact on a habitat that supports living organisms (plant or animal), or involve physical works to property or Land?	Yes	X	No	
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If you have answered yes to the above question, please complete all the following biodiversity sections. If answered no, please leave blank

IMPACTS ON BIODIVERSITY	Yes		No	X
Has an ecological appraisal or survey of the site or proposals taken place?				
Cofnod eMapper Link:				
Please provide brief summary of survey findings, or provide a copy of the ecological report for review:				
<p>An ecological survey has not yet been carried out for this proposal and the specific area of land that would be used to develop the childcare facility. This is expected to take place during the detailed design and feasibility stages prior to any planning permission submission. The business case has not yet been approved formally by the Welsh Government, once approval has been granted funding can be drawn down to undertake any required ecological assessments at the site. The main school building was extended in 2014, during this process a bat and bird survey was carried out but this focused on the main school building and some surrounding trees, it concluded that there was no evidence of recent activity at the site.</p> <p>An ecology and habitat assessment were also undertaken as part of the planning process in 2012. It concluded that 'none of the habitats are considered of importance in either a national, regional or local context'. It is important to note this was undertaken in 2012, as previously stated updated ecology assessments would be carried out.</p> <p><i>*This planning document can be produced upon request</i></p>				

Please provide brief details of how the project will avoid harm to biodiversity.

An ecological survey for the land earmarked for development will be undertaken prior to planning. The survey scope will include an evaluation of the site as well as any recommendations and mitigations that would be required as a result.

Please provide brief details of how the project will mitigate and compensate for any harm to biodiversity.

Should there be any negative impact this would be mitigated appropriately. At this stage the detail of how this would be undertaken is an unknown until a full appraisal is undertaken.

Please provide brief details of how the project will enhance biodiversity and restore ecosystem resilience.

As part of the development of the outdoor facility the childcare provider will be engaged around options for biodiversity areas for learning opportunities. For the purposes of this business case at early project stage and the fact the building will be developed on land that could be habitat we have stated this project 'hinders', however we would take mitigating actions such as the introduction of habitat areas, planting of trees / hedgerows and inclusion of bat and bird boxes as part of the development.

Please highlight the appropriate cell depending on whether on balance this project helps, hinders or is neutral to the Council's goal to become ecologically positive by 2030 (increasing the species richness of land).

Ecologically Positive Council Summary	HELPS	HINDERS	NEUTRAL
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Ecology Officer summary:

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

14. MAJOR RISKS TO THE PROJECT

A summary of the key risks associated with the project together with the likely impact and plans should they occur is provided below:

Title	Inherent Risk	Mitigating Action	Residual Risk
Increase in costs / Insufficient Funding		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs are scrutinised at every stage of the project to ensure any cost increases are identified at the earliest possible opportunity to ensure costs do not escalate. Regular communication between the project team, finance and the Welsh Government will take place to ensure all parties are made aware of emerging financial issues. 	
Planning Permission is refused / delayed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement to take place with Local Authority planners to ensure all statutory requirements are fully addressed within the planning application. Consultation will be required with other key stakeholders such as the school, local residents and any other local community groups who may be impacted by the proposal. A pre-planning consultation event will take place so that should there be any issues they can be addressed at the earliest opportunity. 	
Project Slippage		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed programme of works will be developed by the Project Team. This programme will be robustly monitored for any potential slippage issues and contingency / mitigation of pressure points will be built into the overall programme. 	
Future Childcare Sustainability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current setting is financially stable, the proposal would extend availability of places strengthening this position. The Local Authority will work with the provider to maximise opportunity for grant funding applications wherever possible. The project address a gap in current provision therefore any current sufficiency risk will be mitigated by the delivery of this project. 	

Likelihood	A - Almost Certain					
	B - Highly Likely					
	C - Probable					
	D - Possible					
	E - Rare					
		5 - Very Low	4 - Low	3 - Medium	2 - High	1 - Very High
		Impact				

15. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Please list any supporting documents that accompany this Business Case

Documents required to be presented with Business Cases:

For bids >£1m: Wellbeing Impact Assessment

For grant funded schemes: Grant application or offer letter

For external contributions: written confirmation from contributor

For CERA: confirmation from Management accounts

For Prudential Borrowing: quote from Capital Team

- Well-being Impact Assessment

16. COUNTY LANDLORD STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the County Landlord and where applicable the recommendation of the Asset Management Group..

The proposals are supported. Given the timescale of the development cost analysis will need to be undertaken at all preconstruction freeze points to ensure the works can be delivered within available budget, taking into account any inflationary/market cost increases. The proposals should comprise a highly thermally efficient external envelope and include sufficient renewable/green energy provision to achieve net zero carbon in operation for the proposed building and, if possible, to offset energy use on the site overall.

Net zero carbon (embodied and operational) would be the ideal scenario and should be explored, it is recognised that offsetting via sequestration etc. may not be achievable on an existing operational site.

Supplied by: David Lorey **Date:** 09/11/2023

17. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER STATEMENT

Please provide a statement from the Chief Finance Officer.

Should the bid to WG for 100% grant funding from Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme be successful this will assist the council to increase Welsh medium childcare provision in the Prestatyn Area, assist in sustaining demand for school places through the medium of Welsh in the area, and expands Welsh medium flying start provision in the area which are positives. Responsibility for day to day running of the service and revenue costs will fall to the provider. There are VAT implications associated with this capital project which need to be worked through and need to be considered as part of any decision made at CSG.

Supplied by: Liz Thomas **Date:** 13 November 2023

APPENDIX A – PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

		Completed - date
Draft Business case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk for distribution to relevant officers	N.B. A minimum of five working days must be allowed for these officers to respond	03/11/2023
VAT accountant rhys.i.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk to check for vat implications	N.B. The Chief Finance Officer must be copied in to the email to these officers to demonstrate they have been advised/consulted	09/11/2023
Finance Capital Team contact as detailed on page 1		06/11/2023
Service accountant if revenue implications applicable		
Chief Finance Officer statement obtained		13/11/2023
County Landlord statement obtained		09/11/2023
Carbon management impact statement obtained		13/11/2023
Biodiversity impact statement obtained		No response
Final completed Business Case sent to capitalbids@denbighshire.gov.uk		13/11/2023

Ysgol y Llys Childcare Facility :

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: 1283

Brief description: The project will deliver a purpose built childcare facility adjacent to the existing Ysgol y Llys Welsh medium school. The childcare facility will be for a maximum of 90 children, the childcare will be Welsh medium.

Date Completed: [TEXT HERE] Version: 0

Completed by: [TEXT HERE]

Responsible Service: Education and Children's Services

Localities affected by the proposal: Prestatyn,

Who will be affected by the proposal? Existing users of the childcare provision at Ysgol y Llys

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 : 32 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

Sustainable development is key to this project, it is being proposed to ensure that over the medium and long term there is sufficiency of Welsh medium childcare within the Prestatyn area. Currently the childcare provision is based within Ysgol y Llys, as the pupil numbers at the school increase there will be less flexibility for the childcare provision. The delivery of a purpose built 90 place standalone childcare building collocated on the school site will benefit both the childcare provision and school. The new build will be designed to ensure long term sustainability, including the use of technologies to meet the aspiration of the Council to be Net Zero by 2030.

Prevention

The childcare facility development is linked with the expansion of the Flying Start Plan for Denbighshire. Flying Start promotes independence and resilience for families, this project will widen access. The project will also ensure that the childcare provider remains a sustainable business within the area as the only Welsh medium childcare provider in Prestatyn.

Integration

The project seeks to maximise a number of benefits for a number of national, regional and local policies. Crucially the project will help deliver Outcomes 1 and 2 of the authorities Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The project also addresses issues raised as part of the most recent Childcare

Ysgol y Llys Childcare Facility

Sufficiency Survey, this proposal will deliver increased Welsh medium childcare for over 2s in the Prestatyn area. In increasing Welsh medium childcare the project underpins the core aims of the Welsh Governments policy 'Cymraeg 2050' to increase the number of Welsh speakers. Furthermore the project will deliver the benefit of colocation, utilising space on the school site the childcare facility will be standalone but will provide continuity of provision for children attending the childcare before moving to the Foundation Phase. The project will encourage wider community engagement and ties, predominantly through engagement with families. The project is linked with a number of Well-being goals including within the Future Well-being of Generations Act, specifically it supports 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language' and 'A Wales of Cohesive Communities'. The scheme will be designed in accordance with the Net Carbon Zero agenda for decarbonisation and biodiversity. These principles will form the baseline for the function of the new building and associated outdoor spaces. Additionally the project will widen access to the Flying Start programme which is being expanded across Denbighshire. The LDP has been considered and the planned number of places has been based on an assessment of housing developments in the area to ensure adequate capacity over time.

Collaboration

The proposal has been developed between Education and Children's Services teams, as well as via engagement with the childcare provider at Ysgol y Llys in addition to the school.

Involvement

Robust engagement will take place once funding has been allocated for the project, primarily this will be within the wider Education and Children's Service teams, the childcare provider at Ysgol y Llys and the school itself via the Headteacher and Governing Body. Engagement will be wider at various stages of the project, including linking with Active Travel, Climate Change and Design and Construction teams within the Council.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
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	Positive
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

Overall the impact of the project will be positive. The project is in the early initiation stage, this version of the WBA is a highlevel desktop exercise but will be revisited with a wider range of stake

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The impact on a prosperous Denbighshire will be positive as the project has many cross cutting themes to support this as outlined above.

Further actions required

Should any negative impacts arise actions to mitigate will be explored.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

The new building will be designed in line with Net Carbon Zero principles to ensure the building is energy efficient.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

The building will be provided with infrastructure to support digital such as data points and whole building wifi coverage. Opportunities for maximising active travel links to the development will also be explored.

Economic development

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. Due to the value of the project this will fall within Lot 2. This ensures the baseline social value and economic benefits (economic, employment & environmental) are met as standard. The 'softer' community benefits are to be agreed with key stakeholders following a successful appointment of a contractor.

Quality skills for the long term

The project will link with the expansion of flying start. This will see greater engagement with families. Flying start offers part time childcare for children 2 - 3 years old, enhanced health visiting service, access to parenting programmes and support for children to learn to talk and communicate.

Quality jobs for the long term

The expansion of the childcare provision will ensure that the current employment of child care staff remains sustainable. With an increase in the number of places there will likely be opportunity for an increase in staff.

Childcare

This proposal will directly support the provision of childcare. This project will expand the provision of Welsh medium childcare in the Prestatyn area by 20 places. The project will also deliver a new purpose built facility.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

No Known Impact

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

No Known Impact

Economic development

No Known Impact

Quality skills for the long term

No Known Impact

Quality jobs for the long term

No Known Impact

Childcare

No Known Impact

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall the impact will be positive as the project will ensure that opportunities to contribute positively to biodiversity are within scope.

Further actions required

As the new building will develop a piece of land any impact on biodiversity will be offset. This may include introduction of habitat areas, planting of trees or hedgerows, bat and bird boxes etc.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

The scheme is proposed to be developed on an area of undeveloped land adjacent to the main school site. The childcare facility will deliver an outdoor area, engagement will take place with the provider but it is expected that opportunities will arise for learning via the natural environment with a positive contribution to the habitat.

Biodiversity in the built environment

The facility will have dedicated outdoor areas for play. It will be explored as part of the detailed design for dedicated biodiversity areas.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

The procurement will have a focus on reducing waste and recycling as part of the process.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The new facility will be designed around Net Carbon Zero principles.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Environmental benefits brought about by the project will be highlighted and publicised for key stakeholders.

Flood risk management

The facility is not being proposed to be built on a flood risk area.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

The scheme will include works on an undeveloped piece of land. There may be an impact on the immediate area such as removal of small volumes of plants. This would be negated with replacement areas such as tree planting etc.

Biodiversity in the built environment

No Known Impact

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No Known Impact

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

No Known Impact

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

No Known Impact

Flood risk management

No Known Impact

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall the project would have a positive impact as the delivery of a new purpose built facility would support most of the principles outlined above.

Further actions required

If any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

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

The new facility is linked with the expansion of the Flying Start programme across Denbighshire. The project will deliver a purpose built facility to support the work of the Flying Start team in Prestatyn including parental engagement.

Access to good quality, healthy food

The new facility will provide a purpose built building with the required ancillary areas such as food preparation and eating areas.

People's emotional and mental well-being

The new facility is linked with the expansion of the Flying Start programme across Denbighshire. The project will deliver a purpose built facility to support the work of the Flying Start team in Prestatyn including parental engagement.

Access to healthcare

No Known Impact

Participation in leisure opportunities

Age appropriate outdoor areas will be delivered to encourage active play.

Negative impacts identified:

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

No Known Impact

Access to good quality, healthy food

No Known Impact

People's emotional and mental well-being

No Known Impact

Access to healthcare

No Known Impact

Participation in leisure opportunities

No Known Impact

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall the project will have a positive impact as it will expand access to Flying Start.

Further actions required

If any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

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

No Known Impact

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No Known Impact

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

The childcare provision is part of the Flying Start Scheme. Flying start provides part-time childcare for 2 to 3 year olds, an enhanced health visiting service, access to parenting programmes and support for children to learn to talk and communicate.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

The childcare provision is part of the Flying Start Scheme. Flying start provides part-time childcare for 2 to 3 year olds, an enhanced health visiting service, access to parenting programmes and support for children to learn to talk and communicate.

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

No Known Impact

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No Known Impact

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

No Known Impact

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

No Known Impact

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The project will have a neutral impact overall as it will deliver measures for safeguarding and secure by design.

Further actions required

If any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate these will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The project will be designed with the required safe guarding measures.

Community participation and resilience

No Known Impact

The attractiveness of the area

The new building will be in-keeping with the wider area which is currently a mix of educational facilities and residential.

Connected communities

The childcare facility will promoted links with the local community.

Rural resilience

No Known Impact

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

No Known Impact

Community participation and resilience

No Known Impact

The attractiveness of the area

No Known Impact

Connected communities

No Known Impact

Rural resilience

No Known Impact

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The overall impact will be positive, the project is expanding access to Welsh medium childcare by 20 places. The childcare provision will be co-located on the existing Welsh medium primary school site providing continuity of Welsh medium provision.

Further actions required

If any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The childcare provision is delivered via the medium of Welsh. The project will increase the overall number of childcare places available from 70 to 90 therefore supporting the WESP, Cymraeg 2050 and the well-being goal of 'A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language'.

Promoting the Welsh language

The delivery of the project is within an existing Welsh medium primary school site. During the procurement process use of bilingual signage for site management will be discussed with the contractor. The project itself will be publicised via DCC communications team to raise a general awareness of the project.

Culture and heritage

No Known Impact

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No Known Impact

Promoting the Welsh language

No Known Impact

Culture and heritage

No Known Impact

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The overall impact is positive, the project has identified routes to procurement that will ensure delivery of core economic, employment and environmental benefits.

Further actions required

If any negative impacts emerge actions to mitigate will be fully explored.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. This ensures that the baseline economic, employment and environmental benefits are met.

Human rights

The project will be procured via the North Wales Construction Partnership. This ensures that the baseline economic, employment and

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No Known Impact

Reducing climate change

The project will ensure that Net Carbon Zero principles are applied to the design of the building to meet Denbighshire's commitment to being a net carbon zero council by 2030.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

No Known Impact

Human rights

No Known Impact

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No Known Impact

Reducing climate change

No Known Impact

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Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
21 May	1	Denbighshire's draft Local Housing Market Assessment	To seek Cabinet approval of the assessment for submission to Welsh Government	Yes	Cllrs Rhys Thomas & Win Mullen James Lead Officer/Report Author – Angela Loftus/Sue Lewis	02.04.24 KEJ
	2	Asset Management Strategy 2024 - 2029	To seek Cabinet approval of the updated Asset Management Strategy for formal adoption	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Report Author – Bryn Williams	15.04.24 KEJ
	3	Long Term Plan for Towns: Rhyl	To delegate authority to submit the information required by UK Government so that DCC remain in the process to access £20m for Rhyl over the next 10 years	Yes	Cllr Jason McLellan Lead Officer/Report Author – Tony Ward	15.04.24 KEJ
	4	Finance Report (Financial Outturn 2023/24)	To present the final revenue outturn position for 2023/24	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	21.03.24 KEJ
	5	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	6	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
25 June	1	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.	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Iolo McGregor, Emma Horan	
	2	Reviewed and updated Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021-2030)	To consider the reviewed and updated Climate and Ecological Change Strategy prior to its submission to Council for approval	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer/Report Author – Gary Williams / Liz Wilcox-Jones / Helen Vaughan-Evans	
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
30 July	1	Panel Performance Assessment Arrangements	For Cabinet to approve the arrangements for the upcoming Panel Performance Assessment	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Report Author – Iolo McGregor	12.04.24 KEJ
	2	LUF Clwyd West: St Peter's Square & Cae Ddol projects	To share the concept designs for the St Peter's Square and Cae	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer – Mike	12.04.24 KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
			Ddol projects along with the public consultation report, and to seek Cabinet’s authorisation to proceed with the detailed design phase		Jones / Report Author – Sian Lloyd Price	
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
24 Sept	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
22 Oct	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
19 Nov	1	Council Performance Self-	To consider a report by the	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis	

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
		Assessment Update – July to September (QPR2)	Strategic Planning Team for Council to approve the Performance Self-Assessment July to September		Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans/lolo McGregor, Emma Horan	
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
17 Dec	1	Panel Performance Assessment Response	For Cabinet to approve the Council's management response to the Panel Performance Assessment Report	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Report Author – lolo McGregor	12.04.24 KEJ
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>21 May</i>	<i>7 May</i>	<i>25 June</i>	<i>11 June</i>	<i>30 July</i>	<i>16 July</i>

Updated 15/04/2024 – KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

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