

To: Members of the Cabinet

Date: 19 June 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, 25 JUNE 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 - 12)

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 May 2024 (copy enclosed).

5 DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CLIMATE AND NATURE STRATEGY (2021/22 - 2029/30) - YEAR 3 REVIEW AND REFRESH (Pages 13 - 158)

To consider a report by Councillor Barry Mellor, Lead Member for the Environment and Transport (copy enclosed) presenting the Council's Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22 – 2029/30) for consideration and recommending its adoption to Council.

6 LONG TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS: RHYL (Pages 159 - 176)

To consider a report by Councillor Jason McLellan, Leader and Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation (copy enclosed) updating Cabinet on the delegated decisions and actions taken following the Cabinet meeting held on 21 May 2024.

7 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2023 TO 2024 (Pages 177 - 316)

To consider a report by Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets (copy enclosed) presenting the Council's Performance Self-Assessment for 2023 to 2024 for Cabinet's consideration and confirmation prior to its submission to Council.

8 FINANCE REPORT (2023/24 FINANCIAL OUTTURN) (Pages 317 - 328)

To consider a report by Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets (copy enclosed) detailing the final revenue position for 2023/24 and proposed treatment of reserves and balances.

9 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 329 - 334)

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

MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis
Councillor Gill German
Councillor Elen Heaton
Councillor Alan James
Councillor Julie Matthews

Councillor Jason McLellan
Councillor Barry Mellor
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, 21 May 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 for the Environment and Transport, and Emrys Wynne, Lead Member for Welsh Language, Culture and Heritage

Observers: Councillors Pauline Edwards, Jon Harland, Hugh Irving, Alan James, Brian Jones, and Terry Mendies

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), Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services (EJ), Strategic Planning and Housing Manager (AL), Senior Officer – Strategic Planning and Housing (SL), and Committee Administrators (KEJ & NPH [Webcaster])

1 APOLOGIES

Councillor Rhys Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest had been made.

3 URGENT MATTERS

No urgent matters had been raised.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 23 April 2024 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2024 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

5 OUTCOME OF PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF CABINET'S DECISION RELATING TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING - ROLLING PROGRAMME

The Corporate Director: Governance and Business advised that the decision taken by Cabinet on 23 April 2024 relating to the Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme had been subject of a call in and considered by Partnerships Scrutiny Committee on 16 May 2024.

The outcome of the review of the Cabinet’s decision had been not to refer the matter back to Cabinet meaning the decision would stand and be implemented.

RESOLVED that the outcome of the review of Cabinet’s decision relating to the Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme be noted.

6 DRAFT LOCAL HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT (LHMA)

In the absence of Councillor Rhys Thomas, the Leader Councillor Jason McLellan presented the report and draft Local Housing Market Assessment for Denbighshire (LHMA) and sought Cabinet approval to submit the LHMA to Welsh Government.

The LHMA examined the current and future housing need/demand in Denbighshire and formed a key part of the evidence supporting policies including the Local Development Plan and Housing & Homelessness Strategy. It was a statutory requirement for the Council to periodically review housing needs and the LHMA had been developed based on Welsh Government guidance and toolkit methodology to ensure a consistent approach across all Welsh local authorities.

The Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services, Strategic Planning and Housing Manager and Senior Officer – Strategic Planning and Housing were in attendance. Cabinet was advised that the LHMA covered a period of 15 years with a full review every 5 years and a refresh between years 2 and 3. The LHMA provided key evidence for many areas of the Council’s work and was data based, providing evidence to support policy making going forward. It included 10 defined housing market areas and there had been wide ranging engagement with stakeholders in its development. Cabinet was advised of the findings, in brief –

- the majority of housing need was due to a backlog of existing need with only a small part from population growth
- the majority of need was for social rented housing and smaller 1 or 2 bed properties due to 1 or 2 person households making up about 70% of Denbighshire’s population
- there were affordability issues across most housing tenures and lack of housing availability was a key issue identified, particularly those available for rent
- there was a need for 400 affordable homes per year for the first 5 years of the LHMA, the premise being that existing need should be met within the first 5 years although there was a question over whether or not that was achievable
- there was a need for 153 affordable homes per year for the 15 year period covered by the LHMA and therefore much work was ongoing in terms of delivering affordable housing on development sites, bringing empty properties back into use, and various other ways of increasing the supply
- the LHMA did not set the affordable housing target for the Local Development Plan (LDP) but was part of the overall evidence based used for the LDP.

Cabinet considered the comprehensive report, noting the prescribed process, key findings, and outputs from the assessment. Questions were raised regarding the confidence in the figures produced, future market housing mix, meeting the need of 400 affordable homes, and bringing empty properties back into use.

Officers responded to the questions raised as follows –

- referred to the wealth of data and complexity of the model and reported on the four different household forecast scenarios used, with the Welsh Government principal projection having been used to inform the LHMA housing need figure. The principal projection figure of 3165 homes was comparable to the LDP requirement for 3275 homes so there was confidence in those figures given the consistency between the two and the robust process and detailed information upon which the LHMA had been based
- in terms of the suggested market mix there was a difference between need and aspiration, but the aim was to provide flexibility in the housing market given the aspiration for a spare room or study space and given the difficulties at present to move between different tenures and properties due to the lack of availability. Combining the 1 and 2 bed properties offered that flexibility and recognised the limited appetite for 1 bed market properties
- confirmed that delivering the 400 affordable homes identified would be carried out in a variety of ways, including new build, bringing empty properties back into use and the acquisition of existing properties. Denbighshire had a good track record of delivering affordable housing, the highest in North Wales over the last two years, and in 2023/24 £10m Welsh Government funding had been allocated for Denbighshire to provide affordable housing with a similar amount (£9m) for the next two years. Given that good track record Denbighshire had also been awarded funding towards year end (underspends from other local authorities) with an extra £800k awarded in 2023/24 for delivering affordable housing
- 70% of households were 1 or 2 persons which was one reason why there was such a demand for smaller 1 and 2 bed properties. The LHMA provided a breakdown of need by local housing market area and size so whilst needs were spread across the county, the highest need for 1 and 2 bed properties was the Rhuddlan/Dyserth housing market area with no immediate need in Rhyl, Ruthin, Denbigh, and Llangollen. However, that reflected the existing housing supply in those areas including smaller properties for social rent and the model assumed a level of turnover and therefore supply of those properties in those areas
- the 1 and 2 bed figures included properties in extra care housing schemes and there was a good level of demand for extra care housing which was very popular, another advantage was the potential that it freed up other housing
- mortgage rescue (to prevent the loss of properties wherever feasible to do so) had been listed as one of the thirteen key strategic priorities for affordable housing and whilst not many had come through the system there was scope through registered social landlords to help support people in difficulty with their mortgages funded by the Welsh Government
- there was some debate on the challenges in bringing empty homes back into use with an empty home delivery plan to capture the various different actions/activities to tackle the issue and a dedicated empty homes officer. Whilst the Council had performed reasonably well in bringing empty properties back into use there were issues with long standing empty properties and the

figures remained consistent over time, but proactive action and a holistic approach was being undertaken which was recognised by the Cabinet together with the hard work involved

- it was assumed the backlog of existing need would be met within 5 years which was unlikely given all housing build equated to around 250 homes per year.

In response to a question from Councillor Brian Jones, officers confirmed that work continued on the replacement LDP through the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) who were reviewing the evidence base and undertaking the research and revision of policies. Key flood guidance was still awaited from the Welsh Government which had an impact on the delivery timescale and caused some delay. Further details were provided of the SPG with an open invitation for all members to attend and significant involvement of the Member Area Groups in that process.

Cabinet recognised the hard work and complexities in developing the LHMA and thanked officers for the hard work carried out.

RESOLVED that Cabinet –

- approves Denbighshire’s draft Local Housing Market Assessment for submission to the Welsh Government, and*
- delegates authority to the Lead Member for Housing and Communities to agree any minor editorial changes required to the draft Local Housing Market Assessment, prior to submission to the Welsh Government.*

7 LONG TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS: RHYL

Councillor Jason McLellan presented the report regarding the recently announced c.£20m fund for Rhyl, provided some background to the report, and sought Cabinet support for the proposed response to the required actions.

The report set out the headline terms and conditions for the £20m funding announced for Rhyl as part of the UK Government’s Long Term Plan for Towns initiative and levelling up programme. Funding would be awarded to the Council who remained accountable for the funding and delivery of the plan. Certain actions were required by 3 June 2024 (revised deadline date from 1 June as referenced in the report) such as appointing a Chair of the Town Board together with submission of the Chair Biography, Board Structure, Terms of Reference, Conflict of Interest Policy, and Town Boundaries. Whilst the funding was welcomed the timescale for delivery was challenging and Cabinet approval was sought to delegate those tasks to the Lead Officer and Leader/Lead Member to meet the funding deadline. Details of subsequent actions the Board must do prior to 1 November were also provided.

The Corporate Director: Economy and Environment elaborated on progress and work undertaken to date in meeting the required actions by 3 June and secure the funding which related mainly to administrative arrangements and tasks, including interviews to appoint a Chair of the Board later that week, and representation and membership of the Board. Work to the second deadline of 1 November related to the long term (10 year) vision for the town and 3 year delivery plan based on the

priorities of local people and investment and regeneration aligned to three key themes. That task would involve much engagement work and additional monies had been made available by UK Government for that purpose (separate to the £20m fund). The Leader added that much work had been carried out in a short space of time and expressed his gratitude to all involved in that process.

Cabinet welcomed the additional funding for Rhyl and discussed various aspects of the report with the Corporate Director: Economy and Environment.

Main discussion points focused on the following –

- it was noted that the town's vision and priorities for investment and regeneration must be aligned to the themes of (1) safety and security, (2) high streets, heritage, and regeneration, and (3) transport and connectivity which were fairly board themes and fitting for Rhyl – there was already a vision for Rhyl which would be revised in tandem with the development of the new long term vision in order to link into one cohesive document
- there was some debate as to the perception that Rhyl was prioritised ahead of other areas in the county for investment, which was also mirrored in Rhyl with some perceiving that more funding was spent in Ruthin, and it was accepted the Council needed to be clear in its communications to the public that whilst this funding award was specifically for Rhyl, investment was being made across the county with levelling up funding awards for Clwyd South and Clwyd West in addition to Vale of Clwyd and shared prosperity funding across the county. Rhyl attracted extra investment due to its socio economic challenges and having two of the most deprived wards in Wales and that investment also created positive benefits for the rest of the county. Officers were attending individual Member Area Groups with town plans detailing projects that had been delivered and those planned for the future with proportionate investment across the county. However, given the public perception it was felt the Communications Teams could undertake further work to address any misconceptions in that regard
- the work carried out by the Corporate Director: Economy and Environment on progressing the required actions was questioned given other priorities/demands on time including work on transformational and savings plans. The Corporate Director confirmed he had many priorities and there was a need to ensure that the work done on each of those priorities was proportionate to the task in hand which had been the approach taken. Some additional funding had been made available by the UK Government for the initial step of establishing the Board and consultants had been commissioned to undertake some of that work. It was unlikely that a funding claim could be made for the Corporate Director's time on the project, but the potential would be further explored
- the current focus had been on the first set of actions required to meet the funding deadline and the long term vision for the town and engagement with local people would be progressed in the next stage. It was felt that community focused work needed to be directed by the Board once it was established and the composition of the Board would include community representation
- the huge amount of work to be carried out and completion of the necessary tasks to meet the 3 June deadline and secure the funding was highlighted together with the additional work to be carried out by 1 November deadline. Much work had been carried out in tandem in order to appoint a Chair of the

Board and to source appropriate representation on the Board to deliver for Rhyl and ensure the requirements of the funding deadline were met.

The Leader opened the debate to non-Cabinet members and there was broad support for the investment in Rhyl and positive impact of that funding on the wider area. Questions were raised regarding the governance and operational arrangements of the Board and assurances were sought regarding buy in of the business community and appropriate representation in order to deliver commercial success together with community involvement and engagement at the outset.

The Leader and officers responded to questions/comments as follows –

- the funding would be awarded to the Council who would be responsible for the funding and delivery of the plan
- work was still being carried out on the governance arrangements and issues such as the terms of reference, structure, and composition of the Board – the Board would also need to take a view and input into its future operation/governance
- there may be potential to use funding to lever in additional monies from other funding streams, but it would be dependent on criteria and eligibility
- given it was not possible to answer all questions regarding the governance arrangements at this time it was suggested that a report could be brought back to Cabinet once those arrangements had been confirmed after 3 June
- the preference would have been to constitute the Board and governance arrangements prior to appointing a Chair of the Board but the requirements did not support that order of events and it was an extremely challenging timescale
- the implication in the current guidance, which may change, was that the Board would not have its own legal entity given the Council was the accountable body
- acknowledged the business community had a vital role to play in the process and provided assurances that sector would be represented on the Board
- confirmed conversations were ongoing with others in a similar position with regard to Town Boards to ensure best practice was shared, and lessons learned
- there was confidence that following the interview process an appointment to Chair of the Board would be made.

The Leader referred to the report recommendations and amendment to the deadline date from 1 June to 3 June 2024 in paragraph 3.1.

RESOLVED that Cabinet delegates authority to the Corporate Director: Environment and Economy and the Leader/Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation for submitting the necessary information to UK Government in order to meet the requirements of the funding by the deadline of 3 June 2024.

8 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet forward work programme was presented for consideration and members noted the following additions –

- Update on Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28 – to be added to July, October, and January
- Revenue Budget Setting 2025/26 – to be added to January
- Capital Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28 – to be added to January
- Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting 2025/26 – to be added to February

The Leader would liaise with the Corporate Director: Economy and Environment on the potential to bring an update report to Cabinet on the Long Term Plan for Towns: Rhyl as discussed earlier on the agenda.

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

The meeting concluded at 11.30 pm.

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Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	25 th June 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Barry Mellor (Lead Member for Environment and Transport)/ Gary Williams (Corporate Director - Governance and Business & Climate and Ecological Change Programme Senior Responsible Owner)
Head of Service	Helen Vaughan-Evans (Head of Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital & Assets)
Report author	Liz Wilcox-Jones (Interim Climate Change Programme Manager)
Title	Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30) - Year 3 review and refresh

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report is about the Year 3 Review and Refresh of Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30) [previously known as DCC's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22-2029/30)].

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To present the final strategy document for Cabinet to decide on whether to recommend its adoption to Council.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 That Cabinet recommend adoption to Council of Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30). (Appendix 1)

3.2 That Cabinet confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment as part of its consideration. (Appendix 2)

4. Report details

4.1. The Council declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency in July 2019 which committed the Council to become Net Carbon Zero by 2030 at the latest and improve biodiversity across the County amongst other things. Subsequently the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22-2029/30) was adopted in February 2021 which commits the Council to become a Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council by 2030 in addition to reducing carbon emissions from the goods and services we buy (the Council's supply chain) by 35% by 2030. The Council also changed its constitution in October 2020, so all decisions made by the Council must now 'have regard to tackling Climate and Ecological Change'.

4.2. Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30) is scheduled to be reviewed and refreshed every 3 years. The first official review and refresh of the Strategy was 2023/24 and a thorough process has been completed as part of that review and refresh (see Appendix 3).

4.3. Revised and updated areas of the strategy of particular note include:

- A change of name to: Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30) [from Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 – 2029/30)].
- The addition of three new sections acknowledging the wider influence the Council can have in bringing about change in this agenda across the County of Denbighshire, the requirement to increase resilience to climate change already 'baked in' and to respond to the broadening of scope in local and national plans. This includes 'Reducing emissions and increasing absorption across Denbighshire', 'Increasing our resilience across the county' and 'Nature Recovery across Denbighshire'.
- Introduction of a technical appendix as a place to include history of completed process/policy changes and projects/activities included in previous iterations of the Strategy document and to provide additional more in-depth information about performance to date. This includes further information on areas where achieving the required target is experiencing challenge.

- The specific process/ policy changes and actions/ projects associated with the strategy delivery have been updated in the draft document. Items that have been completed are listed in the technical appendix.

- 4.4 In the strategy we have made it clear the areas of emissions that we know the targets we have set for ourselves by 2030 will be a challenge to meet, such as in buildings, land use and staff commuting, as we felt it was important to be transparent about our progress. The technical appendix explains what we expect to achieve (in terms of carbon reduction or absorption) in those areas and the reasons why our trajectory and target are not current aligned. These reasons include the availability of funding, the availability of capability and capacity within the supply chain to design and deliver carbon reduction schemes in buildings, the amount of available land within DCC ownership suitable for further tree planting, the price of electricity weakening financial case, data quality and speed of development of green technologies.
- 4.5 Whilst we acknowledge and are transparent about this challenge, importantly we are not altering our original Net Carbon Zero ambitions by 2030. To do so would cause a loss of momentum on a priority area that is too important to relax upon. We stand by our Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council by 2030 goals and will continue to work hard to get as close as we can to their achievement to 2030.
- 4.6 The strategies finance section has been updated to include the expected cost over the next 6 years. That cost has been estimated to be at least £48 million if we were to achieve our net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals by 2030, and that's been based on project costs so far and the carbon savings those projects have achieved. It is important to note that the funding for the schemes needing to be delivered are not expected to come from Denbighshire County Council budgets alone. Indeed, the projects completed so far under the strategy have been funded 36% from external grant funding- a percentage level which the Council seeks to increase in future years.
- 4.7 An online public consultation on the Year 3 Draft Strategy was ran for 8 weeks from March 25th until May 20th. The draft strategy was discussed at all Member Area Groups during April and May. 336 responses were received in total with 88% of respondents agreeing that the Council should adopt the revised strategy document. A number of pieces of feedback were received on how the Council could further improve the revised strategy document; as many as possible of which has been

incorporated into the final draft found in Appendix 1. The consultation feedback summary report can be found in Appendix 4 and will be uploaded onto the Council's consultation portal once translated.

- 4.8 To allow for easier consumption on what is a substantial document, an Executive Summary of the strategy will be produced along with a Youth Version.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 Ensuring the strategy remains relevant, up to date and bought into is integral to delivering upon the Council's Climate Change and Ecological Emergency declaration (2019) which committed the Council to become Net Carbon Zero by 2030 and improve biodiversity in Denbighshire. Refreshing the targets, achievement pathways and activities regularly helps to maintain the focus and ambition required to deliver on the Strategy so that the Council can achieve its 2030 goals of Net Carbon Zero, Ecologically Positive and 35% reduction in supply chain emissions. Delivering on the Strategy will directly contribute towards the Corporate Plan 2022-2027 theme of 'A Greener Denbighshire'.

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

- 6.1 Some of changes and actions set out in the Strategy will require capital investment, others revenue funding, and some delivered at no additional cost. Many of the changes and actions will save the Council money over the long time. Section 4.6 provides further detail. All interventions will be individually appraised- financially, via capital business cases and through revenue budget plans and processes, and for wellbeing and sustainability alignment, via the established wellbeing impact assessment process.
- 6.2 Operating our Council in a low carbon and ecologically positive way requires us to design and deliver our services in a different way and will involve policy change. Continued alignment of service business plans, performance management, regulatory mechanisms and decision making to the Climate and Ecological Change ambitions will support delivery.

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

7.1 Please see Appendix 5 for the WIA of the Year 3 revised strategy document. The strategy in its very nature of combating climate and ecological change has protecting and improving the well-being of generations now and in the future at its heart. Under the five delivery principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act the Strategy scored 3 out of 4 stars (actual score 32/36). Against the seven well-being goals of the Act, the potential impact of the Strategy is evaluated as 6 Positive and 1 Neutral.

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

8.1 Please see detail in section 4.2, appendix 3 and section 4.7 of this report.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy has involved significant financial investment over recent years and will continue to require investment going forward. However, the financial pressures that the Council is now facing may impact on the available funding in the next few years. Although the review itself can be contained within existing resources, it is important that the programme continue to work through the revenue and capital budget setting processes of the Council when additional resource requirements are identified.

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

10.1 Notable risks are included in Appendix 5.

11 Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 2, Local Government Act 2000 and Section 111, Local Government Act 1972. (for further detail see Appendix 6).

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Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy 2021/22 to 2029/30 (Year 3 Updated Version)

Description: This document is the Year 3 Updated Version of Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy adopted in 2021. It tells you about the Council's Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive goals and the tasks we are going to seek to deliver to achieve our 2030 goals. As well as the Council's work in climate action and nature recovery across Denbighshire and its goal to increase climate risk resilience.

Created by: Liz Wilcox-Jones (LWJ)

Date created: June 2024

Maintained by: Liz Wilcox-Jones (LWJ)

Version control

Version	Date modified	Modified by	Modifications made	Status
Final Year 3 Review, June 2024	June 2024	LWJ	Final version following consultation and feedback received, submitted for adoption by Cabinet and Council	Final

What is this document?

Denbighshire County Council declared a [Climate Change and Ecological Emergency](#) in July 2019.

In response and by the 31 March 2030 the Council aims to become a:

- Net Carbon Zero Council
- Ecologically Positive Council

This document tells you more about those two aims, the Council's plus target of 35% reduction in supply chain emissions by 2030 and the tasks we are going to seek to deliver to achieve these 2030 goals. This document was first published in 2021 and has undergone its first review and refresh 3 years on to create this version. The document explains the progress made towards achieving these goals since 2021 and includes new sections on County-wide climate action and nature recovery and Climate Adaptation (climate risk resilience). The name of the document has also changed from Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy to Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy. An executive summary and a youth version of this document is available.

This document is also available in Welsh and may be available in other formats on request.

For more information on anything in this booklet please contact the Climate Change Team:

Email: climatechange@denbighshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01824 706000 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm).

Write to us: Climate Change Team, Denbighshire County Council, PO Box 62, Ruthin, LL15 9AZ.

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Welcome to Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy

Climate and ecological change is the globally defining challenge of our time. It impacts all living things that call our planet home including you and me. This document outlines our net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals for the Council along with the changes and actions we have identified so far that we will endeavour to deliver between now and 2030. In this, our first of two strategy review and refreshes within the strategy period 2021-2030, we also acknowledge the need for, and the Council's role to support and influence, a wider approach to achieve carbon reduction, carbon sequestration (or absorption) and nature recovery across the county and includes for the first time ways to tackle climate risk through adaptation.

Since Denbighshire County Council declared its climate change and ecological emergency in 2019, and adopted this strategy in 2021, we have been working to achieve our 2030 goals and make our contribution to tackling the climate and ecological emergency we all face. We are proud to have been one of the first Council's in Wales to have tackling climate and ecological change as a guiding principle in its decision-making process, formally changing in October 2020 our Constitution- the set of rules and principles that the Council follows when delivering its work. We also look to build on our strong track record on reducing carbon and improving biodiversity delivered under our previous [Corporate Plan priority for the Environment](#) and most recently being delivered under our Corporate Plan (2022-2027) theme '[A Greener Denbighshire](#)'. By working to achieve the 2030 goals within this strategy we hope to make our contribution to see carbon emissions reduce to net zero in Wales by 2050 and deliver on our statutory duty as a local authority to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience of ecosystems as outlined in the [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#). By working to achieve these goals we hope to make our contribution to see the Public Sector in Wales become net carbon zero by 2030 as outlined in Welsh Government's [Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales](#) delivery plan.

Great progress has been made in many key areas such as waste, street lighting and business travel, along with the start of the public EV infrastructure roll out – including opening the largest charging hub in Wales at West Kinmel in Rhyl, funded by Welsh Government. There has also been success with regards nature recovery in the county through the Wildflower Meadow project, where council owned grassland is being managed

for biodiversity, and the Little Tern protection project at Gronant becoming one of the most important in Britain. We are going in the right direction, but we cannot stand still and our ability to deliver on our climate action and nature recovery ambitions is impacted by the serious financial limitations we, along with all local councils, are facing. It is becoming clear that whilst our progress is a positive one in this agenda, the pace of this change is not currently at that required to meet our 2030 targets with some areas, including buildings and land use, particularly struggling to meet targets. The financial pressures all local authorities are facing now and in the coming years will impact on that pace further. However, it is also recognised that much of the work being carried out for this agenda has additional benefits. Actions to reduce carbon, often also reduce costs for the council, and increasing biodiversity for nature also creates spaces for health and wellbeing, education and leisure for our communities. Our work to tackle and mitigate these emergencies has multiple reasons for us to continue to aim high and strive to achieve our ambitions.

For us to achieve our 2030 goals, it will not be easy, but we will maintain this ambition and not adjust targets, despite their challenge, as we go into the next 3 years of our strategy. We remain committed to go as far as we can and as fast as we can, with the resources we have available, so we can make our contribution to tackling climate change and delivering nature's recovery for the well-being and protection of our communities, staff and partners now and for generations to come.



Cllr Barry Mellor
(Lead Member for
Environment and
Transport)



Gary Williams
(Corporate Director -
Governance and
Business)

The changing climate and decline in nature

As the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂e¹) human society has emitted into the earth's atmosphere has increased so too have global temperatures. Without reducing CO₂e emissions the earth will get warmer and warmer. This rise in global temperature is causing our climate and planet to change.

The changes to our climate include: hotter drier summers, warmer wetter winters, more extreme weather events and sea level rise. This causes: more drought and wildfire, stronger storms, more heat waves, flooding, damaged corals, less snow and ice, thawing of permafrost, changes in plant life cycles and changes to animal migration and life cycles.

At the same time, nature is in decline with a reported 69% decline in the world's wildlife population since 1970². Human activity is reducing the quality and the amount of habitat available for wildlife, and habitats are becoming increasingly fragmented effecting the ability for species to migrate and stay in their required climate to sustain life, complete their lifecycles and ultimately impacting survival. As temperatures continue to rise, and habitat extent and connectivity continue to decline, climate change will become an increasing driver for species loss.

The climate is changing everywhere on our planet, including here in North Wales. The region has experienced in recent years wider and more frequent flooding, extreme heat and stronger and more frequent storms. The numbers of 380 Welsh species monitored have declined by 20% since 1994. 18% of species known to be present in Wales are at risk of extinction, that's one in six species, including the water vole and sand lizard³. Wales is also in the bottom 10% of countries for biodiversity, showing just how damaging biodiversity loss has been over the last decades for our nation. Dormouse populations across the UK, as an example, have declined 51% since 2000⁴ and in all former strongholds across Denbighshire. Since the 1970s, the distribution of 42% of flowering plant species in Wales have also decreased. These trends have led to many experts

¹ CO₂e is short for "carbon dioxide equivalent" which is used for describing different greenhouse gases in a common unit- carbon.

² According to the [World Wildlife Fund \(WWF\) Living Planet Report, 2022](#)

³ According to The [State of Nature \(Wales\) Report, 2023](#)

⁴ According to [The State of Britain's Dormice Report, 2019](#)

warning that there is a risk of the collapse of the ecosystems we rely on, if we do not act urgently.

In response to this nature emergency, Wales is now party to a new set of international biodiversity targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The State of Nature report³ addresses the need to respond to this crisis and outlines potential key areas to focus upon. For example, the need to help improve Wales's protected habitats, with only 35% recorded as being in a favourable condition. With temperature and rainfall records broken and many named storms seeing out 2023 in the UK, the latest data released by the Met Office illustrates just how fast our climate continues to change. It has been confirmed that 2023 was the warmest year on record and we now have a rise of around 1.2°C in global temperatures above pre-industrial levels. In October 2018, the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC) published a Special Report on the impacts of a 1.5 °C rise in global temperatures. The IPCC found that a 1.5°C increase would have significantly lower climate-related impacts for the natural world and human society than a 2°C rise. The IPCC estimated that global carbon emissions would need to reduce to net zero by 2050 at the latest to ensure global temperatures remained under 1.5 °C and that the majority of actions required to meet this target would need to be completed by 2030. However, greenhouse gas levels remain rising quickly and the IPCC has recently stated the world is "likely" to warm beyond 1.5C.

Efforts are underway to tackle climate change and nature's decline across the globe. One of the examples of successful species projects, included in the State of Nature report 2023, is the protection of Little Terns in our very own county of Denbighshire where the main Welsh breeding colony at Gronant has become one of the most important in Britain. Leaders from nearly 200 countries have agreed further action to transition away from fossil fuels at COP28 and increase renewable energy by 2030.

However, the realisation that time is fast running out is clear. Organisations including Denbighshire County Council, and over 300 other UK local authorities, continue to be committed to tackling the climate and nature emergency and understand the need to act is now. The Welsh Government and UK Government have also declared a climate emergency, with Welsh Government also declaring a nature emergency in 2021. The

[Welsh Government Public Sector Route Map](#) and [Nature Recovery Action Plan](#) have both been created to guide the public sector to achieving clear progress by 2030.

How this Strategy has been developed

Denbighshire County Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in July 2019 which committed the Council to become net carbon zero by 2030 and improve biodiversity.

Denbighshire County Council ran an engagement period in January and February 2020 asking for the public's feedback on the Council's proposed net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals and for any ideas on how the Council can achieve them by 2030. Building on the public's ideas Denbighshire County Council worked throughout 2020 with Councillors and Officers from across the Council to develop the Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 – 2029/30). This included calculating the Council's carbon footprint and the biodiversity of Council land, exploring our targeted pathway to 2030 via scenario planning and holding workshops with all the service areas that make up the Council to identify and develop further what changes we could make and what projects we could deliver to help the Council achieve its goals.

In November 2020 the Council asked its staff and the public for their feedback on the draft document. This feedback helped to shape the Council's final Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 – 2029/30) which was then presented to the Elected Members of Denbighshire in February 2021 for adoption. Since then, the Council has been working to deliver on the changes and projects identified in the strategy document to help the Council achieve its 2030 goals. The strategy document will be formally reviewed and refreshed every 3 years up until 2030 (2023/24 and 2026/27).

This Year 3 Updated Version of the strategy is the outcome of that first of two formal reviews and refreshes. The general approach taken in 2020 as described above has been repeated, with an online public survey in Spring 2023 and a public consultation event held in November 2023 providing information to feed into the review and refresh. Workshops were held with all the service areas that make up the Council to identify any further changes we could make and projects we could deliver to help the Council achieve its goals. When the Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019, our resulting strategy focussed on carbon reduction, sequestration and nature recovery created by the council. Since then, feedback we have received from the public and evidence regarding our influence as a council, has highlighted the need for us to broaden

the strategy scope and look wider. In this Year 3 Updated Version strategy we recognise the importance for us to look at tackling this emergency across the county and to recognise that the Council's response is required at strategic, organisational and operational levels, but also at community levels across Denbighshire.

This work was guided by the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Political Working Group which was set up as part of the emergency declaration. This group is made up of two representatives from each political party represented in the Council including the lead members on Cabinet covering climate and ecological change.

The calculations for the Net Carbon Zero baseline and ambitions have followed the methodology for calculating carbon emissions and carbon absorption in Welsh Government's new Greenhouse Gas Reporting Regime for the Welsh Public Sector.

The calculations for the Ecological Positive baseline and ambitions have been guided by established methodologies for measuring biodiversity value from NERC - the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. Biodiversity is vast, complex and interconnected and as such any measure for biodiversity value is a pointer only.

In March 2024 the Council asked its staff and the public for their feedback on the completed draft Year 3 Updated Version strategy document. This feedback helped to shape the final Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 to 2029/30) - Year 3 Updated Version which was then presented to the Elected Members of Denbighshire in July 2024 for adoption.

Other Council Strategies

There are a number of other strategies the Council has, and areas of work the Council is undertaking, that supports the Council in tackling climate and ecological change. These include:

- [Adult Social Care & Homelessness \(ASCH\) Service Carbon Reduction Strategy 2023](#)
- Air Quality Management Plan
- Ash Die Back Strategy (currently in development with Conwy County Borough Council)
- Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan
- [Corporate Plan](#)
- Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Management Plan
- County Allotment Strategy (currently in development)
- Denbighshire County Council's Social Housing Asset Management Plan
- [Denbighshire County Council's Active Travel Plan](#)
- Denbighshire Local Area Energy Plan (currently in development)
- Denbighshire County Council's non-domestic estate [Asset Management Plan](#)
- Development Control & Planning Policy
- Digital Strategy
- [Economic Strategy \(currently in development\)](#)
- EV first vehicle replacement policy
- Fleet Strategy
- Housing and Homelessness Strategy
- [Local Development Plan](#)
- [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy](#)
- Procurement & Commissioning Strategy 2023 - 2027
- Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme
- Woodland and Tree Strategy (currently in development)

Net Carbon Zero Council by 2030

What is our goal?

Net Carbon Zero

Our goal is for the total carbon emitted by the Council minus the total carbon absorbed from Council owned and operated land⁵ to equal zero by 31 March 2030. This is our net carbon zero ambition.

The following sources of emissions will count towards our net carbon zero goal and will be referred collectively as Denbighshire County Council's Net Carbon Zero Footprint:

Buildings	We will reduce emissions from the electricity, gas, LPG, oil, biomass and water we use at Council owned buildings ⁶ .
Waste	We will reduce emissions from the waste generated by the Council.
Fleet	We will reduce emissions from the petrol and diesel we use to power the vehicles owned by the Council
Staff commuting	We will reduce the emissions from the travel undertaken by staff and councillors coming into work and returning home.
Street lighting	We will reduce emissions from the electricity used by Council owned lamp posts, traffic signs and signals.
Business travel	We will reduce the emissions from the travel undertaken by staff and councillors whilst carrying out their job.

⁵ Land that the Council owns but rents out to others is not included.

⁶ Council owned building refer to buildings such as offices, depots, schools and leisure centres that the Council own. However, Council Housing is not included.

The following sources of carbon absorption will count towards our carbon zero goal:

Grassland We will maintain the amount of grassland the Council owns and operates.

Forest / woodland We will increase the amount of forestland and woodland the Council owns and operates.

Supply Chain

In addition to this, we aim to reduce the total carbon emitted from the Council's supply chain by 35%⁷ by 31 March 2030.

Supply chain We will reduce emissions from all the goods and services the Council buys from others.

What is our starting point?

Net Carbon Zero

The total carbon emitted from Denbighshire County Council's Net Carbon Zero footprint at our baseline in 2019/2020 was 16,448 tCO₂e⁸.

The total carbon absorbed from Denbighshire County Council owned and operated land at our baseline in 2019/2020 was 2,418 tCO₂e.

Therefore, the Council's Net Carbon Zero position in 2019/20 was +14,030⁹ tCO₂e.

⁷ Compared to 2019/2020 baseline

⁸ tCO₂e is short for "tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent" which is used for describing different greenhouse gases in a common unit- carbon.

⁹ This is calculated by subtracting carbon absorbed from carbon emitted, i.e., subtracting the 2,418 figure from the 16,448 figure.

The Net Carbon Zero Council goal is to get that 14,030 tCO₂e figure to zero by 31st March 2030.

At the point of this 3-year review that net figure currently stands at 12,062 tCO₂e. This figure is based on the council's latest reporting figures, in 2022/2023, having achieved a 1,358 tCO₂e reduction in carbon emissions and an increase of 610 tCO₂e carbon sequestered (or absorbed) through our actions so far, since the 2019/2020 baseline.

The tables and graphs below describe the Council's carbon emission and absorption sources in 2019/2020 compared to 2022/2023.

Table 1: Carbon emissions per source

Source of carbon emissions	Amount of carbon emitted in 2019/20 in tCO₂e	% of total in 2019/20	Amount of carbon emitted in 2022/23 in tCO₂e	% of total in 2022/23
Buildings	10,151	62	9,082	60
Fleet	2,693	16	2,302	15
Staff Commuting	1,848	11	2,860	19
Street Lighting	788	5	419	3
Business Travel	550	3	251	2
Waste	418	3	177	1
Total	16,448	100	15,091	100

Chart 1: Denbighshire County Council Net Carbon Zero Footprint in 2019/20

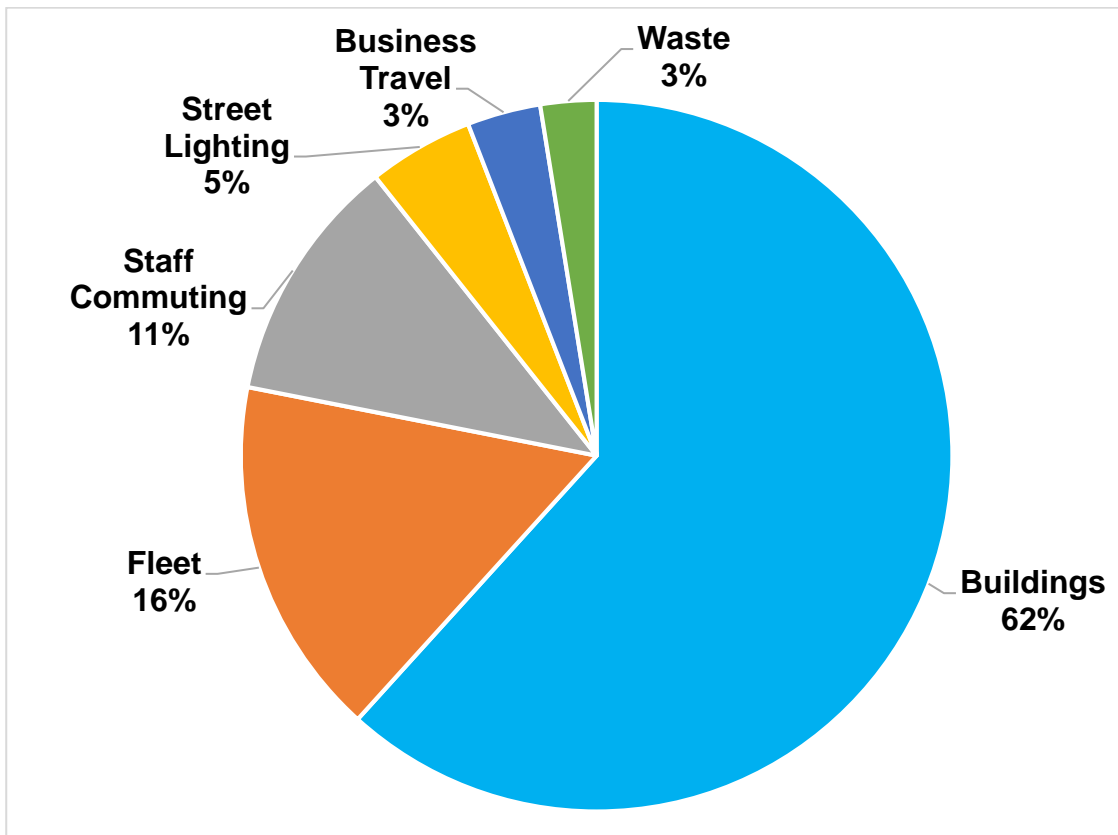


Chart 2: Denbighshire County Council Net Carbon Zero Footprint in 2022/23

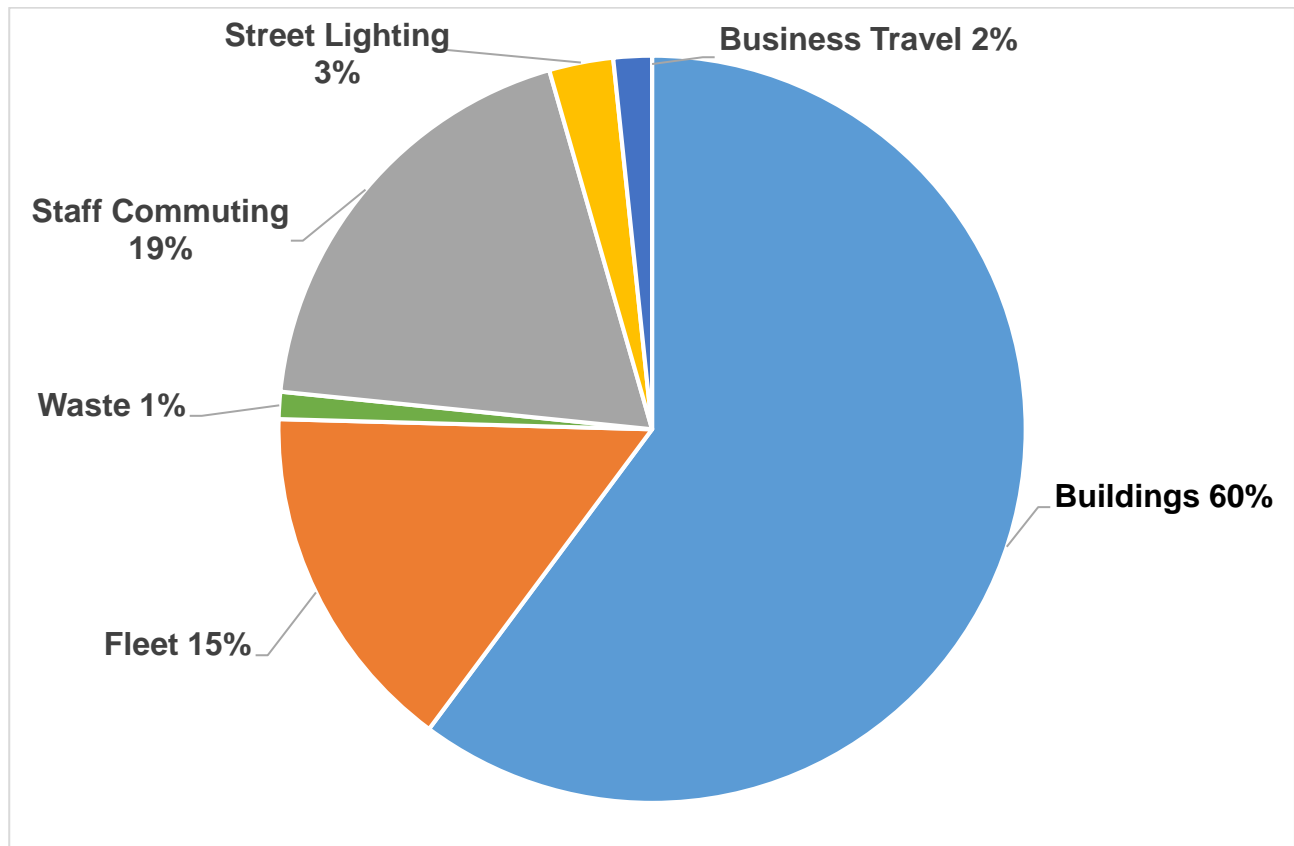


Table 2: Carbon absorption per source

Source of carbon absorption	Amount of carbon absorbed in 2019/20 in tCO ₂ e	% of total	Amount of carbon absorbed in 2022/23 in tCO ₂ e	% of total in 2022/23
Grassland	1,564	65	1,306	43
Forest / woodland	854	35	1,722	57
Total	2,418	100	3,028	100

Chart 3: Denbighshire County Council's Carbon Absorption in 2019/20

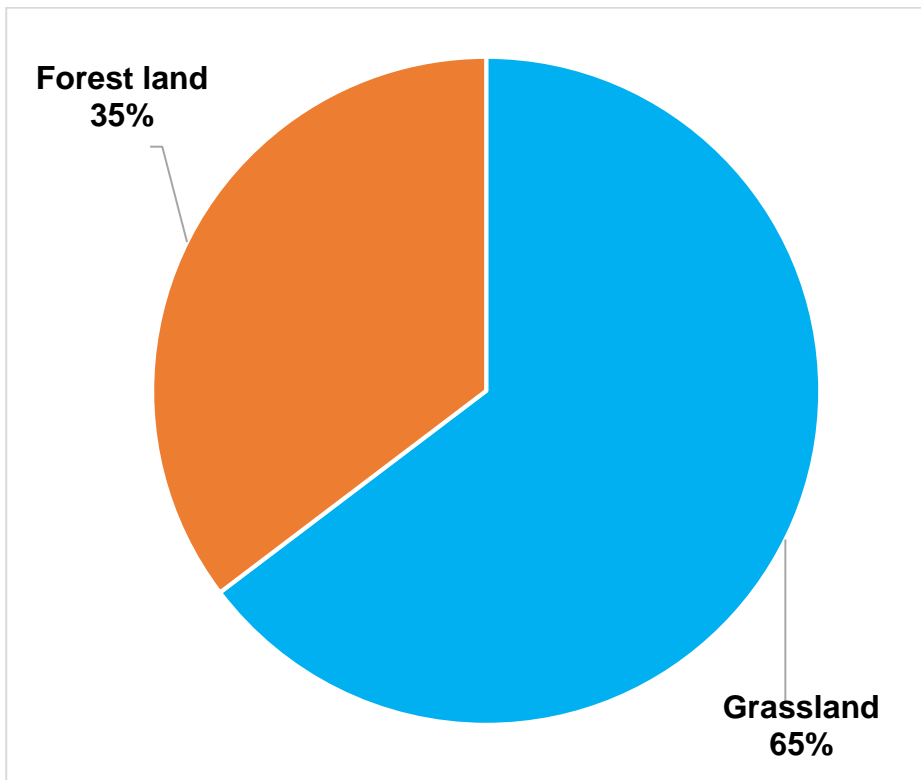
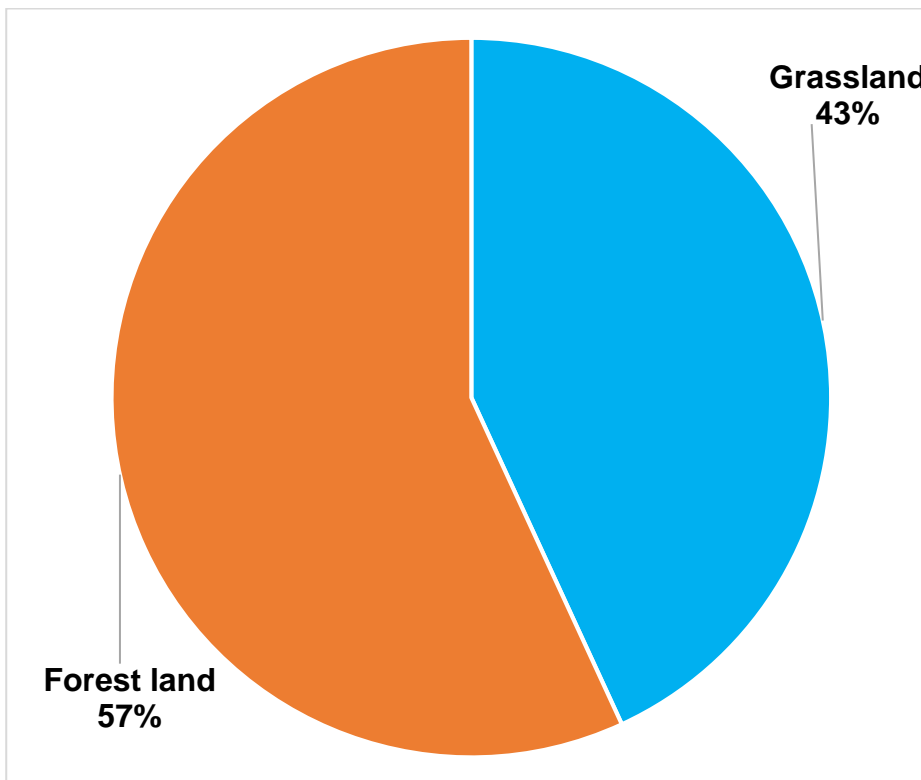


Chart 4: Denbighshire County Council's Carbon Absorption in 2022/23



Supply Chain

In addition, the Council is estimated to have emitted 25,125¹⁰ tonnes of CO2e from its supply chain in 2019/2020.

In 2022/2023 the Council is estimated to have emitted 36,912 tonnes of CO2e from its supply chain.

¹⁰ The methodology for calculating our supply chain emissions is more inclusive of our spend compared to approach used in 2020/2021 in the first publication of the strategy. However, accuracy of this methodology is still problematic.

Where do we want to get to?

Net Carbon Zero

To achieve our Net Carbon Zero goal, the Council needs to reduce the amount of carbon it emits and increase the amount of carbon it absorbs.

The table below shows the 2030 target for reduction in each carbon emission source compared to 2019/20 (our baseline year) and the progress to date since our latest reporting period in 2022/23. It also shows the remaining carbon emission reduction still required to achieve our target.

The graphs below show our net carbon reduction progress (which includes our annual carbon emissions minus our carbon absorption). They also show the change in each source of carbon emissions comparing the total amounts in 2019/20 to the total amounts in 2029/30, if the Council is successful in achieving its targets, along with the progress to date in 2022/23.

The Council's direct intervention continues to play a central role in order to deliver this carbon reduction. Our efforts have combined, and will continue to combine, with efforts nationally to decarbonise fuel and energy networks. We have been, and will continue to be, responsive to new opportunities that may arise between now and 2030 that enable us to go further on reducing our carbon emissions¹¹.

¹¹ For example, the introduction of a readily accessible new technology or a major development in ways to generate energy.

Table 3: Reduction target by 2030 per source of carbon emission, actual emissions in year 3 (2022/23), percentage change in 2022/23 compared to baseline and emissions still left to reduce to meet 2030 target (2023/24- 2029/30)

Source of carbon emissions	% reduction targets compared to 2019/20	Projected emissions in 2029/30 in tCO2e if target met	Actual emissions in Year 3 (2022/23) in tCO2e	Actual emissions in Year 3 (2019/20) in tCO2e	% change in 2022/23 compared to baseline	Emissions still to reduce in tCO2e to meet target
Buildings	-60%	4,060	9,082	10,151	-11%	5,022
Fleet	-60%	1,077	2,302	2,693	-15%	1,225
Commuting	-20%	1,478	2,860	1,848	+55%	1,382
Street Lighting	-50%	394	419	788	-47%	25
Business Travel	-80%	110	251	550	-54%	141
Waste	-50%	209	177	418	-58%	n/a
Total	N/A	7,329	15,091	16,448	N/A	7,795

Chart 5: Denbighshire Net Carbon Zero Annual Progress up to 2022/23

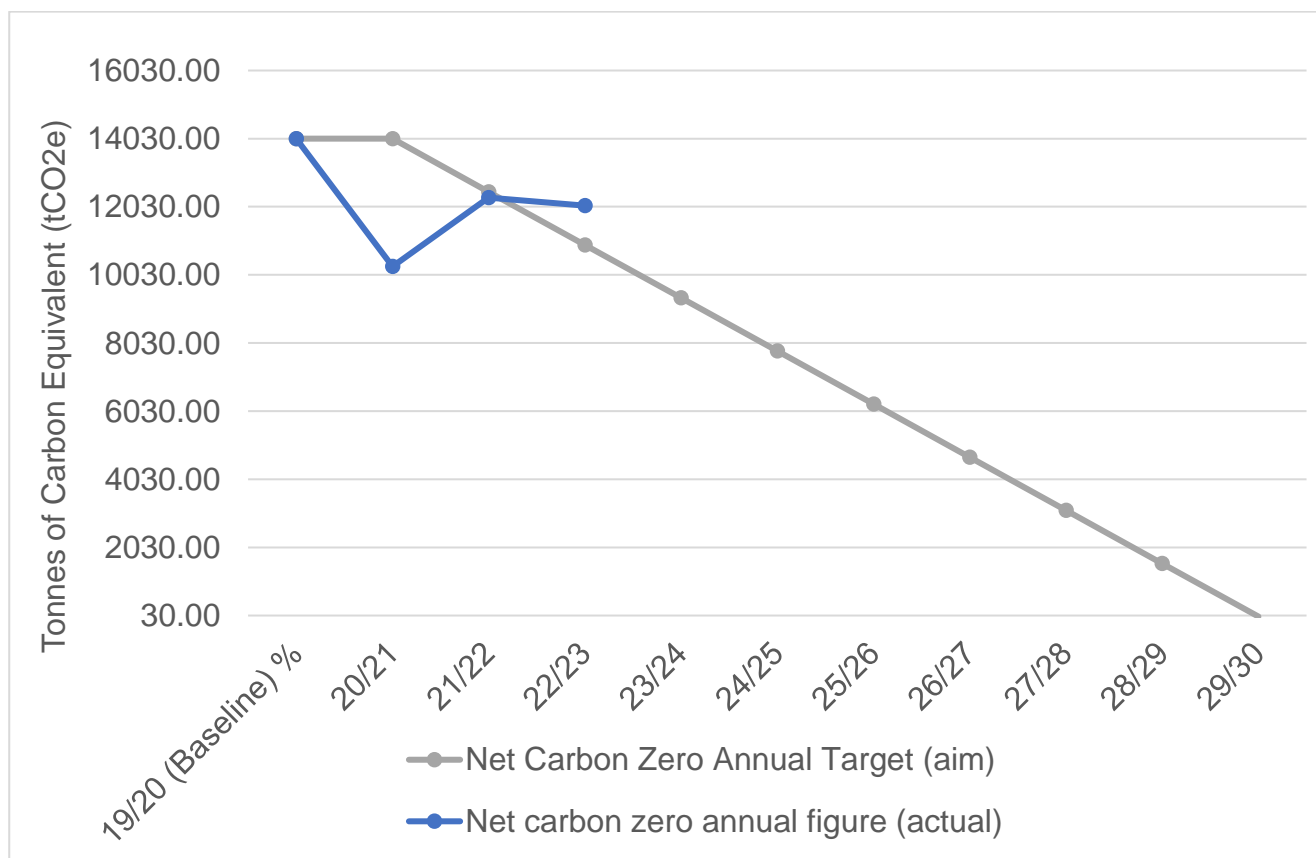
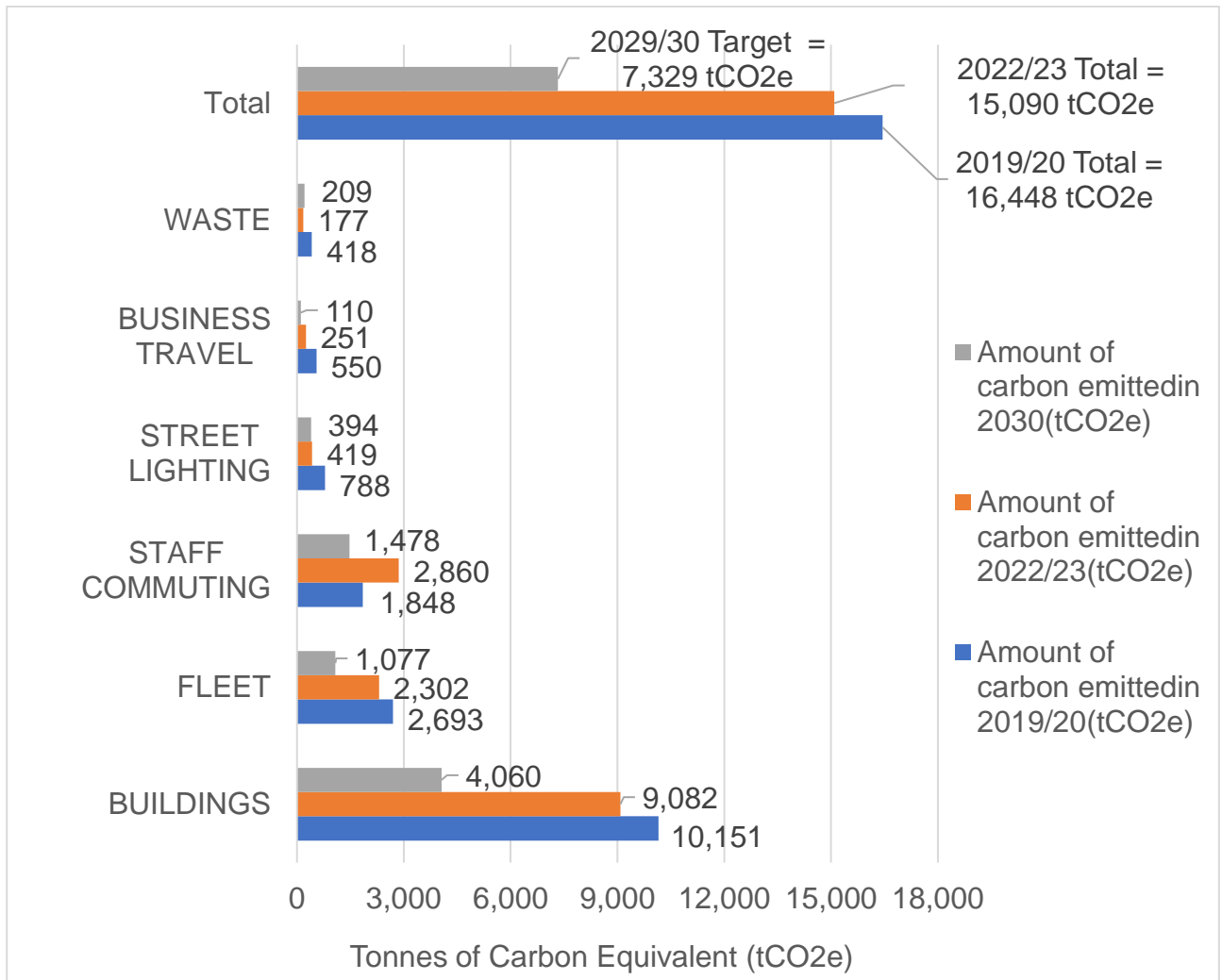


Chart 6: Amount of carbon emitted by the Council in 2019/20 compared to projected emissions in 2029/30 and progress to date in 2022/23



There are several areas where the Council is exceeding its annual target emission reduction for that source, for example in street lighting, waste and business commuting. However, there are other areas where reduction is not at the pace required and, for a number of reasons, the target is unlikely to be achieved by 2030. These areas include buildings and carbon sequestration. Other areas which require further analysis include staff commuting, which is currently based on estimated data.

For those areas where the required target has proven to be a challenge, further information is provided in Technical Appendix 1 to explain the predicted gap between the known and targeted pathways and the reasons for this expected gap.

A message from the future is included below as a way of bringing these figures to life through story telling- providing an example of how the Council might have gone about achieving its 2030 targets.

Message 1: Reducing carbon emissions

Climate change themed image by Postcard from the Future competition winner, Jaxon, from Ysgol Henllan.



A message from the future:

Dear 2020 Council, Year 2030 here! What a challenging but rewarding Net Carbon Zero Council journey you have been on. Not wanting to give you spoilers but here's some of the headlines on how you've reduced your carbon...

In Council buildings the use of energy for heating, anything that uses electricity, and the use of water has reduced through increasing the air tightness of the building and efficiency of the systems and equipment within them. All new Council buildings that are built are low carbon in operation. Onsite generation of renewable electricity has increased. More sites heating systems have been converted to low carbon and renewable options. Rainwater harvesting is utilised more widely for the water use in Council buildings.

Excess travel by Council Fleet vehicles has increasingly been avoided by service delivery being even more accessible and efficient. There has been a big increase in electric vehicles owned by the Council and electric vehicle charging points have been installed across the Council's buildings and car parks. Ultra-low emission options for our larger fleet vehicles such as bin lorries and gritters have been piloted.

Our recycling rates have gone from strength to strength with less contamination now waste is source segregated. A focus in waste prevention in the County has reduced the overall tonnage of waste produced and collected by the Council as more items are used and reused which would previously just have been thrown away.

Working from home is readily available now for staff who can, and the Council office estate has been made efficient. When staff do come into the office it's to an office closest to where they live which reduces mileage and increases the number of staff walking, cycling (active travel) or catching the bus to work. Business travel for meetings is very rare now as virtual meetings have become the norm. When officers do meet it is often closer to their respective homes and not necessarily in a Council main office. Officers who have to travel to carry out their work have access to an electric vehicle.

The table below describes how much we aim to increase the amount of carbon absorbed for each source of carbon absorption by 31 March 2030. It also shows the progress made per source of carbon absorption to date, in 2022/23, and in comparison, to the baseline data compiled in 2019/20. The amount still required in order to meet our target is also shown. Also, the graphs show the progress to date against our annual and 2030 targets.

The Council’s direct intervention will play a central role in order to deliver this increase in carbon absorption as well as getting a better understanding of the carbon absorption capacity of some of our more established landscapes, for example our woodland and biodiversity rich grassland.

Table 4: Increase target by 2030 per source of carbon absorption, progress to date and carbon still left to absorb (2023/34 – 2029/30)

Source of carbon absorption	% increase targets compared to 2019/20	Projected absorption in 2029/30 in tCO2e if target met	Actual absorption in Year 3 (2022/23) in tCO2e	Actual absorption in Year 3 (2019/20) in tCO2e	% change in 2022/23 compared to baseline	Carbon absorption in tCO2e still required to meet target
Grassland	0%	Retained or less	1,306	1,564	-17%	0
Forest / Woodland	+575%	5,765	1,722	854	+102%	4,301
Total	N/A	7,329	3,028	2,418		4,301

Chart 7: Amount of carbon absorbed by the Council in 2019/20 compared to forecasted absorption in 2029/30 and progress to date in 2022/23

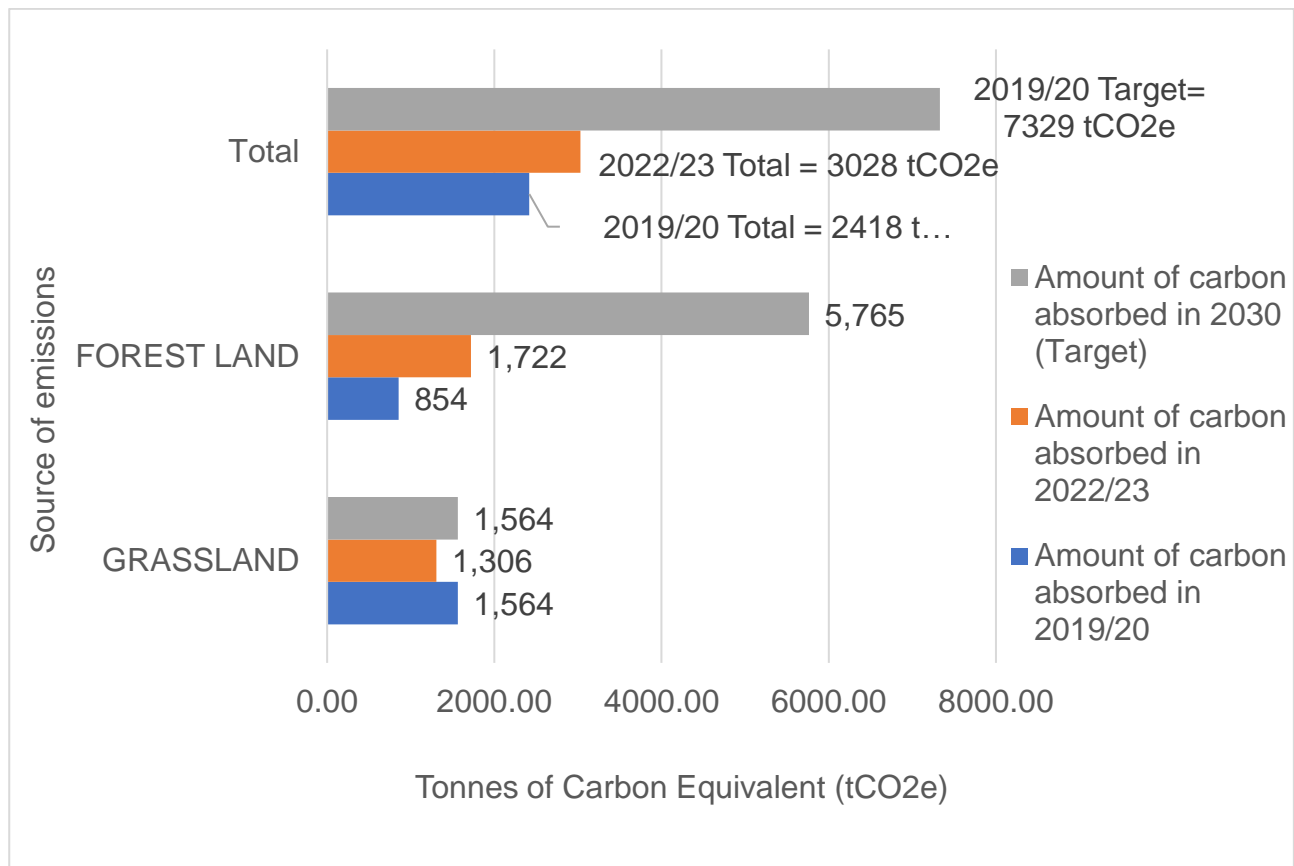
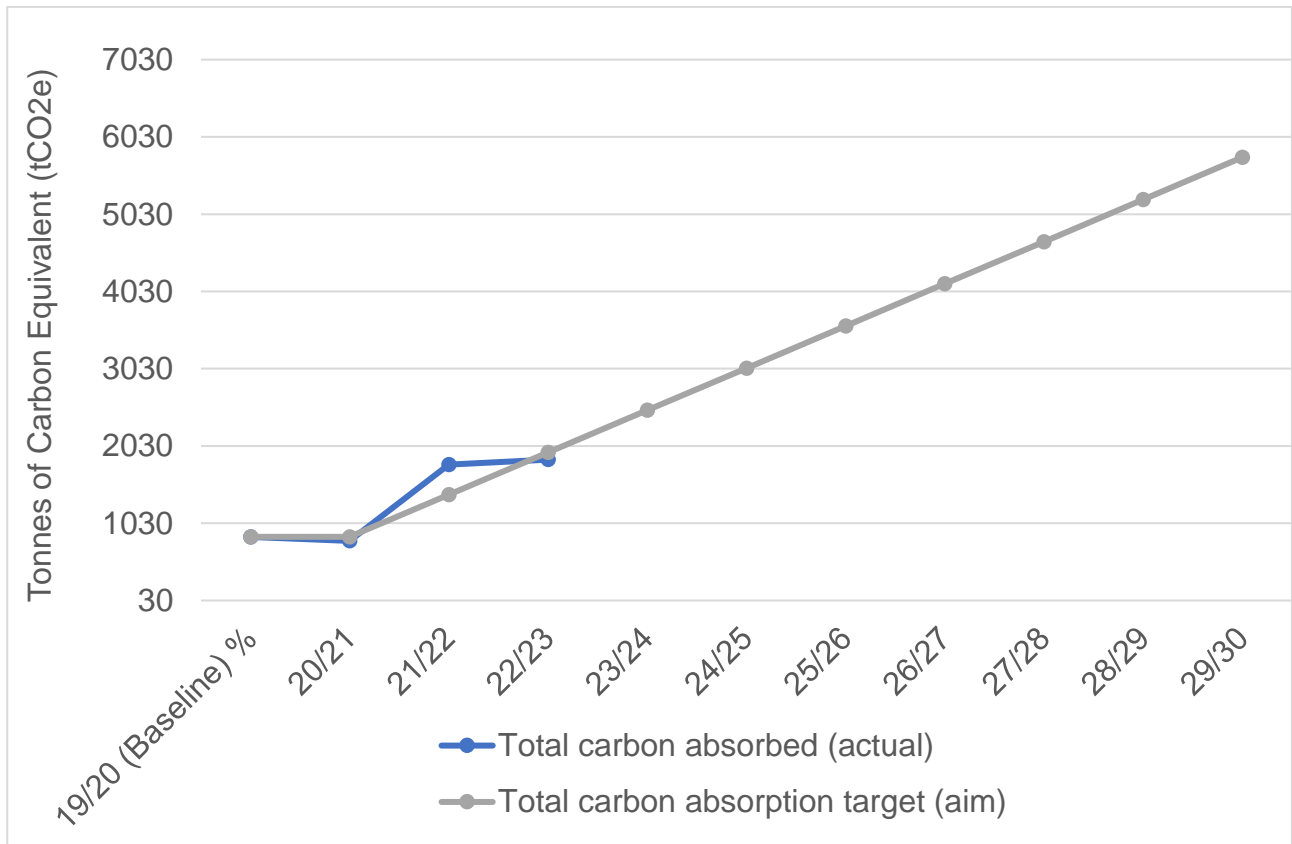


Chart 8: Denbighshire Carbon Absorption Annual Progress from forestland up to 2022/23 (majority adjusted) and annual targets



There are several areas where the Council is exceeding its annual target emission reduction for that source, for example in street lighting, waste and business commuting. Carbon sequestration is an area where increase is not currently at the pace required and, for a number of reasons, the target is unlikely to be achieved by 2030. Further information is provided in Technical Appendix 1 to explain the predicted gap between the known and targeted pathways and the reasons for this expected gap.

A message from the future is included as a way of bringing these figures to life through story telling- providing an example of how the Council might have gone about achieving its 2030 targets.

Message 2: Increasing carbon absorption

Climate change themed image by Postcard from the Future competition winner, Macey, age 14 from Tir Morfa Special School.



Dear 2020 Council, Year 2030 here! What a challenging but rewarding Net Carbon Zero Council journey you have been on. Not wanting to give you spoilers but here's some of the headlines on how you've increased your carbon absorption...

The Council has maintained the amount of grassland in its ownership *wherever possible*, safeguarding the carbon absorption benefit and delivered projects to improve the species richness of its grassland habitats for the benefit of biodiversity.

The Council has made big efforts in increasing the amount of forestland and woodland it owns and operates. The Council over the 9 years has converted existing, and bought new land, turning it into carbon sinks and wildlife havens via carefully selected tree planting including elements of species rich grassland.

This activity achieved additional benefits wherever possible for the Council and its communities including the planting of trees upland from river catchments to reduce the risk of flooding and maximising on the opportunities to open these spaces up to the public for leisure, tourism and improved wellbeing.

If the Council is successful in achieving its targets as outlined in the above tables, in 2029/30 the Council's total carbon emissions minus the Council's total carbon absorption will equal zero. The Council will have achieved its ambition to become net carbon zero.

Supply Chain

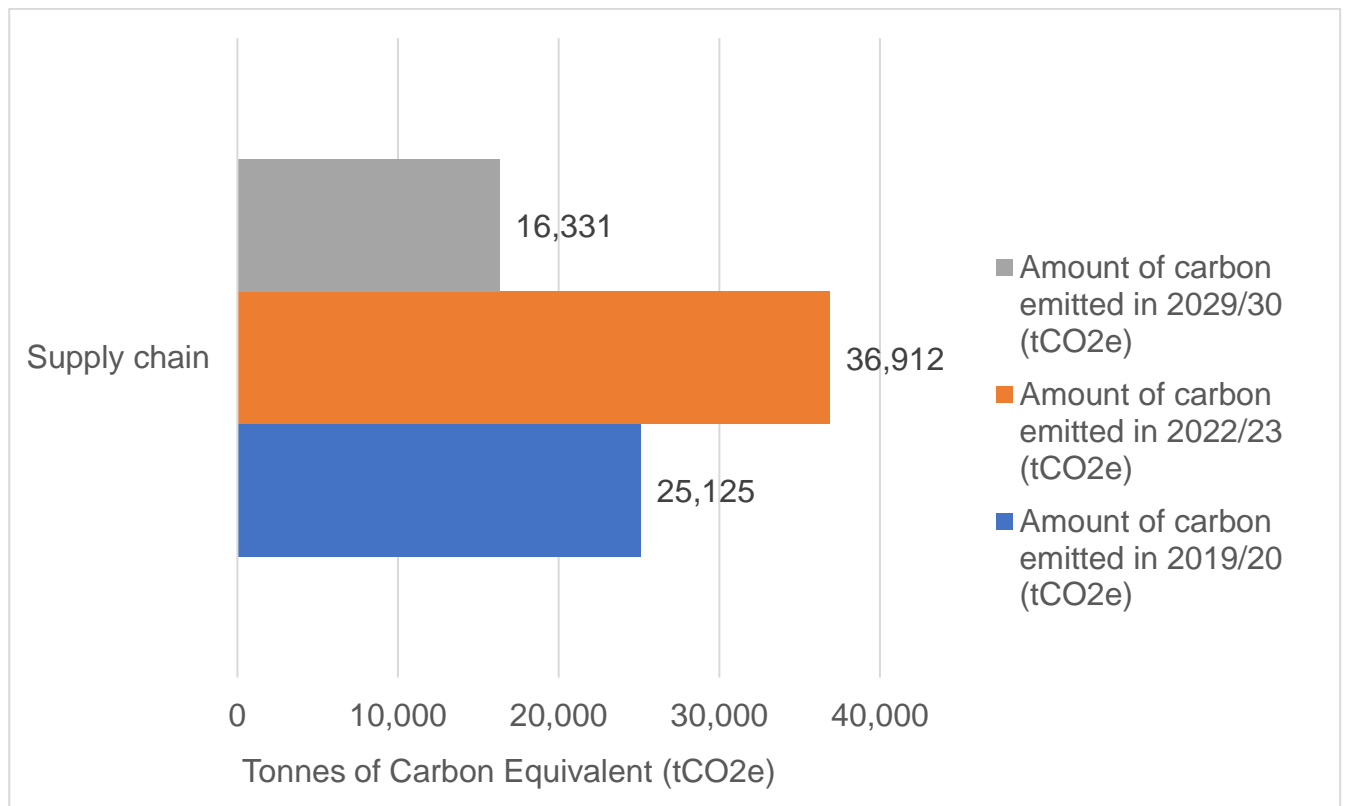
The Council also aims to reduce the carbon emitted from our supply chain by 35%. We will work with companies and businesses who we buy our goods and services from to reduce the carbon intensity of what we buy and how we deliver services and also to maximise on the local community benefit we can generate from those contracts.

The table below describes how much we aim to reduce the amount of carbon emitted from the Council's supply chain by 31st March 2030. It also shows the progress made to date, in 2022/23, and in comparison, to the baseline data compiled in 2019/20. The carbon reduction amount still required in order to meet our target is also shown.

Table 5: Reduction target for carbon emission from our supply chain, progress to date and carbon still left to absorb (2023/34 – 2029/30)

Source of carbon emissions	% reduction targets compared to 2019/20	Projected emissions in 2029/30 in tCO2e if target met	Actual emissions in Year 3 (2022/23) in tCO2e	Actual emissions in Year 3 (2019/20) in tCO2e	% change in 2022/23 compared to baseline	Carbon emissions in tCO2e still required to meet target
Supply Chain	-35%	16,331	36,912	25,125	+47%	20,581

Chart 9: Amount of supply chain carbon emissions 2019/20 compared to what is forecasted for 2029/30 and progress to date in 2022/23



The above graph also compares our progress to date against our 2030 target and indicates carbon emissions from supply chain have increased compared to our baseline. Further detail on the category of spend behind these totals is provided in Appendix 7.

The current methodology to determine emissions from our supply chain is based on multiplying a fixed emission factor¹², assigned to each activity or product type purchased, by the total spend on that type of purchase. As this is currently calculated based on spend, that means if the price of goods and services increase our carbon increases as well, even if that spend is on items which emit less carbon but may have a higher upfront cost, such as Electric Vehicles. This makes reductions of emissions from supply chain difficult to accurately quantify and monitor. Although our current pathway is showing an increase in

¹² The emission factor applies the rate of emission that a given activity or product releases carbon into the atmosphere.

carbon emissions it is difficult to be certain whether this is due to actual increased emissions rather than items purely costing more, for example due to inflation or the higher price of low carbon alternatives.

Further analysis is required to ensure we target action in areas where our supply chain spend is highest. We are also taking actions to reduce the emissions from our supply chain, for example through evaluating tenders on their carbon performance. However, significant change in performance in the data is likely only to come with improved emissions calculation.

Message 3: Reducing supply chain carbon emissions

Climate and nature recovery themed image by Post from the Future competition winner, Eleanor, age 6 from Ysgol Caer Drewyn.



A message from the future is included as a way of bringing these figures to life through story telling- providing an example of how the Council might have gone about achieving its 2030 target.

Dear 2020 Council, Year 2030 here! Not wanting to give you spoilers but here's some of the headlines on how you've reduced your supply chain carbon emissions...

The Council has reduced spend wherever possible most notably in paper as the Council in 2030 is now practicably paperless. Having introduced a whole life costing approach to procurement early in the programme, the Council has seen an uptake in buying higher quality items less often.

We have seen construction become much less carbon intensive leading up to 2030 helped by the Public Sector in Wales being clear to suppliers that low carbon delivery of new build project was very important.

It goes without saying now that additional value is sought from every Council contract over £25,000. Working with our communities, together we have identified the environmental benefit valued most with community benefit projects delivered by/ with suppliers for the benefit of carbon reduction, carbon absorption and biodiversity improvement.

What changes and actions will help us get there?

Changes to Council processes and policies

To achieve our net carbon zero goal by 2030 will require the Council to adjust how it goes about delivering the wide range of work and tasks required of us by Welsh Government, by our partners and by our communities.

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed the over 100 suggestions for processes and policies changes that were identified in 2020 and the 2024 review to contribute to reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption. Our aim is to implement as many of these as we can over the remaining 6 years of the strategy.

Appendix 2 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the process and policy changes listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 that have been completed.

The list below highlights some of the priority changes to Council processes and policies that we hope to make in Year 4 to 6 (2024/25 - 2026/27) of delivering this strategy to support the Council to successfully achieve its net carbon zero goal by 2030.

This is a dynamic and flexible list; other things may be implemented that do not feature in the graphic below responding to new opportunities.

- Continue to implement the EV first vehicle replacement policy
- Support the council to comply with legislation: to consolidate and increase recycling in all of our Council buildings and schools
- Ensure the carbon reduction is being appropriately considered in Council Procurement - Policy and Strategy documents, Commissioning templates, tender evaluations. To include the introduction of applying a weighting to carbon reduction quality questions
- Identify the Council officers who procure on a regular basis to target communication and training as to the Climate and Ecological Change agenda and the contribution that environmentally responsible procurement can make
- Engagement with local businesses to increase understanding in respect of Decarbonisation and work with them to ensure decarbonisation outcomes are achieved
- Update and build on climate and ecological change website and Linc pages (e.g. include performance data)
- Investigate Vector card ideas to provide low carbon and nature recovery opportunities for staff e.g. EV car hire discounts
- Align the HR policy with the climate and ecological change agenda when reviewing
- Build testimonials and case studies to increase understanding and confidence about low carbon practice and ecological improvement with contractors and suppliers
- Develop a learning pathway for suppliers and internal partners to gather experiences and feedback from large and small businesses, and gain best practice from across Wales (to also improve data collection)

- Carbon Specific KPI's to be included in contracts to monitor carbon reduction through the life of the contracts
- Pilot and adopt a Carbon Calculator to capture carbon emissions data from Tier 1 suppliers in delivering our contracts
- Request Carbon Reduction Plans as part of tender PQQ on all tenders above £XX (value to be agreed but is mandatory for all contracts above £5m)
- Ensure any External Frameworks used for procurements have robust requirements in terms of Carbon Reduction & Sustainability
- Ensuring good contract management is undertaken to monitor, capture and report on Carbon KPI's
- Research and adopt a central platform for capturing/recording of Carbon KPI's from all contracts across the Local Authority
- Heat Strategy for Wales - all public buildings on low carbon heat by 2030 within available funds and if energy costs allow
- Refresh and review the Digital Strategy to align with the climate and ecological change agenda
- Refresh the Asset Management Strategy to align with the climate and ecological change agenda
- Review internal process to investigate how best to communicate and capture carbon reduction and ecologically positive contributions in projects at start-up stage, including to review how contributions have been implemented by Projects through internal evaluation and through monitoring Project Closure Reports
- Using available governance mechanisms, continue to engage with DLL on climate change matters, exploring opportunities for performance measures
- Utilise portfolio plans to ensure we are using our whole estate to enable officer hot desking
- Review Sustainable Communities for Learning Redundant Site Policy to build in the option of Denbighshire County Council retaining the site for conversion to community woodland/orchards
- Supporting the implementation of the Council's change in constitution to have regard to tackling climate and ecological change by developing and introducing method and requirement for the presentation of a whole life cost

- Ensure an enhanced environmental option is always presented in business cases when deciding on major capital projects
- Explore funding models for investment in renewable energy products/schemes

Actions and projects

Achieving net carbon zero will require the Council to continue to build on existing programmes of activity started under the Climate and Ecological Change Programme and the Greener Denbighshire Theme of our Corporate Plan, in addition to delivering new projects and activity.

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed over 100 ideas for projects that were identified in 2020 to reduce carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption. Feedback received from our consultation in May 2024 has been incorporated into this revised version, along with information gathered from other sources, such as Climate Emergency UK's Climate Scorecards¹³. Our aim is to implement as many of these as we can within available resources over the remaining 6 years of the strategy. In addition to other actions, we might take responding to new opportunities.

Appendix 2 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the projects and actions listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 that have been completed.

The list below provides an overview of the priority actions and projects that have been identified so far that the Council hopes to deliver which will reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon absorption. The delivery of all projects and actions identified is subject to securing the necessary funding. The constraint on Local Government funding is significant and will continue to be in the coming years which will impact on when and how the projects and actions identified can be delivered.

¹³ <https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/>

Actions to reduce Council's carbon from buildings and street lighting

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Continue with programme of renewal of de-illuminating bollards and signage, where possible, and install reflective alternatives
- Continue to look for funding opportunities to enable ICT to switch from cabled to wireless networking to benefit flexible working and energy use
- Continue to work to reduce energy footprint through ICT and investigate to use of server generated heat to reduce energy demand
- Design new buildings and major refurbishments to be low carbon in operation to contribute to the target of reducing carbon emissions to 4060 tCO₂e by March 2030 (including consideration of LCTs and biodiversity enhancement e.g. rainwater harvesting, native living roofs etc) and implement in line with the adopted DCC policy for non-domestic new builds and major extensions/refurbishments (Dec 2021)
- Rationalise the number of non-domestic buildings in council's property estate through disposal or asset transfer to contribute to the target of reducing carbon emissions to 4060 tCO₂e by March 2030
- Review the existing zoning and minimum temperatures for the office estate to optimise heating for carbon reduction and minimise heating areas unnecessarily
- Utilise the available budget to undertake works to buildings to improve energy efficiency to contribute to the target of reducing carbon emissions to 7,329 tCO₂e by March 2030
- To consider long-term issues such as EV charging across sites as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning and the requirement for new-build / refurbishment of schools to be Net Carbon Zero

Actions to reduce the Council's carbon from fleet, staff commuting and business travel

Years 4 to 6 (2024/25 to 2026/27)

- Introduce an electric vehicle home charging solution for staff who start and end their day at home but utilise Denbighshire County Council owned fleet vehicle.
- Install EV charging infrastructure into Council buildings, including offices, depots, libraries, and tourist attractions
- Convert all of Denbighshire County Council owned light commercials (up to 3.5 tonnes) vehicles to Electric Vehicles

Years 7 to 9 (2027/28 to 2029/30)

- Trial large vehicles which are powered by low and ultra-low carbon technologies (e.g. Bin Lorries)

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Convert the majority of Denbighshire County Council owned larger sized vehicles to Ultra Low Emission options
- Look to trial/introduce low emission buses (EV, HVO, hydrogen or plug-in hybrid)
- Explore the opportunity of in-house provision of low carbon school transport vehicles (to approach Fleet first as opposed to tender), if budget allows
- Continue discussions with the climate team to understand issues the service are facing with regard to travel and commuting (and the resulting emissions)
- Investigate the possibility for staff to work from other Public Sector buildings and/or opening up other DCC assets for this purpose to reduce travel e.g. enabling hot desking at libraries etc

Actions to reduce the Council's carbon from waste

Years 4 to 6 (2024/25 to 2026/27)

- Ensure compliance with Workplace Recycling Laws 2024
- Reduce plastics in school and promote recycling in relation to the New Waste model

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Implement newly standardised Recycling and Waste approach across all council buildings, schools and Council owned sites include provision of wide range of recycling
- Comply with legislation to consolidate and increase recycling in all of our Council buildings and schools

Actions to reduce the Council's carbon from the goods and services we buy

Years 4 to 6 (2024/25 to 2026/27)

- Consider ways to improve decarbonisation within supply chains whilst carrying out the North Wales Domiciliary Care Framework review
- Roll out and use the WLGA Carbon Reduction Toolkit

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Explore with a view to possibly increase vegan (low carbon) food options in schools' catering service
- Utilise community benefits /Well-being impacts/SPPP Act in Council contracts to reduce carbon and increase carbon absorption
- Identify the Council officers who procure on a regular basis to target communication and training as to the Climate and Ecological Change agenda and the contribution that environmentally responsible procurement can make

- Engagement with local businesses to increase understanding in respect of Decarbonisation and work with them to ensure decarbonisation outcomes are achieved
- Build testimonials and case studies to increase understanding and confidence about low carbon practice and ecological improvement with contractors and suppliers
- Develop a learning pathway for suppliers and internal partners to gather experiences and feedback from large and small businesses, and gain best practice from across Wales (to also improve data collection)

Actions to increasing the Council's carbon absorption

Years 4 to 6 (2024/25 to 2026/27)

- Continue to grow and maximise the use of the County Tree Nursery
- Produce Tree and Woodland Strategy for DCC and implement actions accordingly

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Continue to work with schools to identify land to plant trees and introduce wildflowers for biodiversity improvement and carbon sequestration
- Work to create and monitor management plans for DCC climate change and Countryside sites to increase biodiversity and woodland cover where appropriate, through natural regeneration and tree planting
- Utilise the available budget to increase the amount of land in the council's property portfolio to contribute to the target of increasing carbon sequestration to 7,329 tCO₂e by March 2030 and increasing biodiversity
- Continue to work with schools to identify land to plant trees and introduce wildflowers for biodiversity improvement and carbon sequestration

Actions to promote behaviour change within the Council

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Implement a programme of initiatives and engagement with schools across the County to share learning and resources on this agenda and encourage positive behaviour change
- Implement a programme of initiatives to raise awareness of staff of the role they need to play in reducing our carbon emissions, and ensure measures are put in place to drive the necessary behaviour change
- Implement and expand on the internal Climate Champions Group to encourage representation from all services to help spread knowledge and awareness and feedback best practice and information regarding the climate and ecological change agenda

Reducing Carbon Emissions and Increasing Carbon Absorption Across Denbighshire- Using Our Influence

Why is this important?

Local authorities are responsible for 2 – 5% of local emissions but, according to research undertaken by the Committee on Climate Change¹⁴, we can influence around a third of an area's emissions through place-shaping and leadership. By working to achieve our Net Carbon Zero Council 2030 goal we hope to influence carbon reduction and carbon sequestration across the county by working with and supporting our residents and communities to act.

What is the starting point?

Data is collated every year by UK Government on Local Authority area and regional greenhouse gas emissions¹⁵.

The table below provides the total greenhouse gas emissions for Denbighshire since the Strategy baseline year 2019/20. This includes the 2020/21 Covid year, where emissions noticeably reduced.

¹⁴ According to [How Local Authorities Can reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Risk](#), Committee on Climate Change (May, 2012)

¹⁵ Data sourced from the [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics](#), June 2022

Table 6: Area-wide Greenhouse Gas emissions for Denbighshire since 2019/20¹⁶

Territorial emissions	Year	Total (kt CO2e)	% change from year previous
Denbighshire	2019	748.9	n/a baseline
Denbighshire	2020	690.2	-7.8%
Denbighshire	2021	746.8	+7.6 %

The emissions collated nationally are grouped into the following sources: waste, industrial, commercial, public sector, agriculture, domestic and transport.

The charts below show the carbon footprint of Denbighshire in 2019/20 and 2021/22 as a pie chart.

¹⁶ This is the total emissions from the following categories: Industry, Commercial, Public Sector, Domestic, Transport, Agriculture and Waste

Chart 10: Denbighshire Carbon Footprint in 2019/20 (kt CO2e)

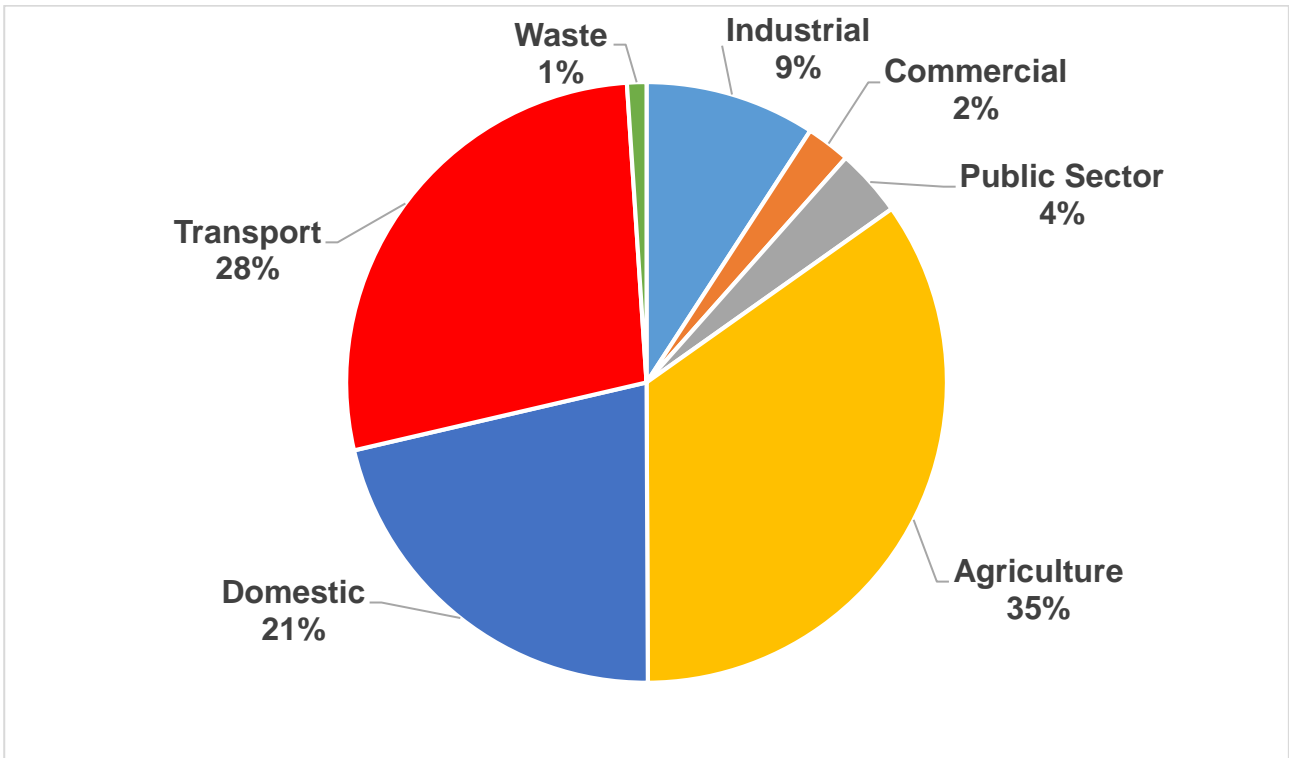
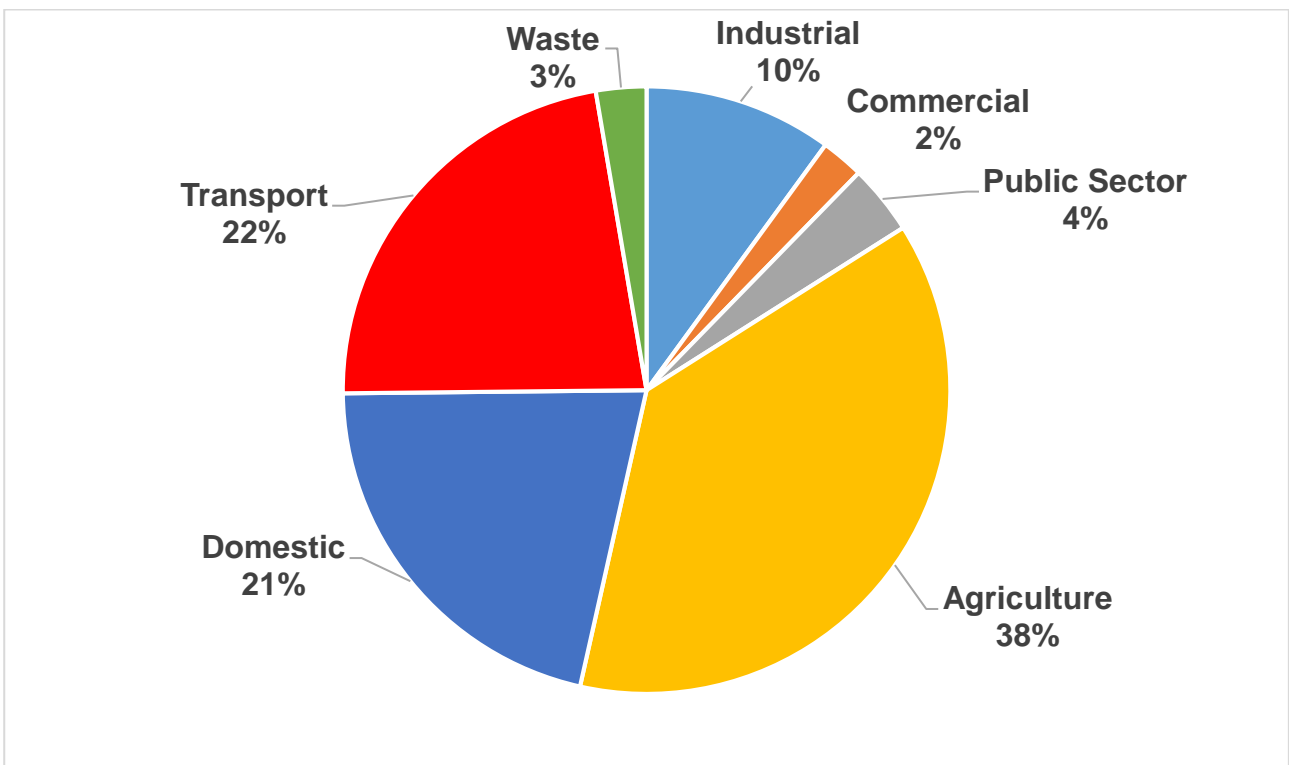


Chart 11: Denbighshire Carbon Footprint in 2021/22 (kt CO2e)



Land based net emissions from Denbighshire are also collated nationally. Table 7 below provides Denbighshire’s net carbon absorption since the Strategy baseline year 2019/20 from the LULUCF¹⁷ sector. This covers emissions and carbon absorption from direct human induced land use, land-use change and forestry activities such as forestry, grassland, cropland and wetlands. As this is about absorbing carbon emissions, having a higher tonnage number is good.

Table 7: Area-wide Land Based emissions (sequestration) for Denbighshire since 2019/20

Land based emissions (net carbon absorption)	Year	Total tonnes (CO2e)	% change from year previous
Denbighshire	2019	-27.1	n/a baseline
Denbighshire	2020	-30.9	-12.3
Denbighshire	2021	-32.1	-3.7

What changes and actions are the Council taking to use our influence to reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon absorption in Denbighshire?

Changes to Council processes and policies

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed the suggestions for processes and policies changes that were identified in 2020 and the 2024 review that contribute to reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption across the County of Denbighshire. Our aim is to implement as many of these as we can, within available resources, over the remaining 6 years of the strategy.

¹⁷ This is the total sequestration from the following categories: Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)

Appendix 3 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the process and policy changes which had broader County influence that were listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 and have now been completed.

The list below highlights some of the priority changes to Council processes and policies that we hope to make in Year 4 to 6 (2024/25 - 2026/27) of delivering this strategy to support the Council to successfully achieve its net carbon zero goal by 2030.

This is a dynamic and flexible list; other things may be implemented that do not feature in the graphic below responding to new opportunities.

- Complete a funding options analysis in anticipation of the cessation of Retrofit Grant funding post 2025
- Develop and implement a new Denbighshire Flood Risk Management Strategy for the county
- Application of planning policies within the Local Development Plan 1 and Council's existing Supplementary Planning Guidance which contribute to environmentally responsible development
- Progression of replacement LDP to ensure emerging local priorities around climate change and biodiversity are reflected in local planning policy and decision making
- Ensure colleagues and members are kept up to date with new planning policy, legislation and any guidance is updated e.g. supplementary planning guidance
- Ensure that Officers from School Transport and active travel are engaged in the Strategic Planning and Development Management process by consulting them on new policies, land allocations and development proposals
- Engagement with local businesses to increase understanding in respect of Decarbonisation and work with them to ensure decarbonisation outcomes are achieved
- Review the Agricultural Estate Strategy and explore options around environmental improvement, nature recovery and carbon zero emissions
- Support schools to increase compliance with climate objectives regarding procurement
- When reviewing the Learner Transport Policy, consider improving opportunities for learners to walk to school and reviewing routes to school to enable this

- Align the Placement Commissioning Strategy to the climate and ecological change strategy when updating e.g. to utilise more local foster care, where possible

Actions and projects

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed ideas for projects that were identified in 2020 that support the reduction of carbon emissions and increase of carbon absorption across the County of Denbighshire. Our aim is to implement as many of these as we can over the remaining 6 years of the strategy. Feedback received from our consultation in May 2024 has been incorporated into this revised version, along with information gathered from other sources, such as Climate Emergency UK's Climate Scorecards¹⁸. In addition to other actions, we might take responding to new opportunities.

Appendix 2 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the projects and actions listed under 'using our influence' in the strategy adopted in 2021 that have been completed.

The list below provides an overview of the priority actions and projects that have been identified so far that the Council hopes to deliver to maximise on the influence we can have in reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption across Denbighshire. The delivery of all projects and actions identified is subject to securing the necessary funding. The constraint on Local Government funding is significant and will continue to be in the coming years which will impact on when and how the projects and actions identified can be delivered.

Years 4 to 6 (2024/25 to 2026/27)

- Deliver the New Waste Transfer Station to enable greater source segregation of recyclates
- Work with partners to deliver circular economy activities around Repair, Recycle and Reuse to divert items from becoming waste.

¹⁸ <https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/>

- Implement Absorbent Hygiene Product (AHP) collection service across the county to reduce residual waste from nappies
- Ensure the new Active Travel Plan 2021 onwards, which maps current routes and plans for the future delivery of active travel routes in the county, aligns with the Council's ambitions to tackle climate and ecological change
- Contribute to and implement the Sustainable Transport Plan
- Deliver PPW training in relation to new Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales
- Continue work to digitise and channel shift council services, where possible, through implementation of the new CRM
- Look into Clwyd Pension Fund Divestment strategy to decarbonise this by 2030

Years 7 to 9 (2027/28 to 2029/30)

- Delivery of Supplementary Planning Guidance resulting from the new Local Development Plan will support the climate change and biodiversity agenda

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Explore options regarding EV charging for Council Housing
- Devise and implement a plan to achieve SAP 75 housing by 2030 (including revising current baseline assessment methods and producing a costs analysis) along with a Targeted Energy Pathway
- Ensure a minimum requirement for on-site renewable energy generation for new building development where possible
- Work collaboratively with partners across the housing sector, through initiatives such as the Low Carbon Hub and Net Zero Group, towards decarbonisation goals
- Enhance and maximise benefit through volunteering and training opportunities for communities and youth groups e.g. green jobs/skills
- Capitalise on link with Barod (and other external organisations), through Working Denbighshire, to include engagement and information on the climate and ecological change agenda

- Continue to expand the public EV charging network as opportunities arise and guidance is provided by WG
- LDP Annual Monitoring Report to be a source of information with regard to climate change and biodiversity
- Work with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and Planning Policy to ensure clear guidance is provided to prospective developers around carbon reduction and biodiversity within developments. Use the LPA validation process, where reasonable, to ensure compliance (following update to Planning & Policy Wales – Section 6)
- Promote and administer the ECO4 scheme via FCC – energy efficiency in private sector dwellings
- Continue to deliver school streets across the county i.e. a school street outside of a school that is closed to private vehicles for a time period before and after school times
- Work to collate Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) related data to record contributing low carbon technology (LCTs) installations across the county
- Continue to support households living in Denbighshire who are most likely to experience fuel poverty and those vulnerable to the effects of a cold home through promoting Welsh Government's fuel poverty scheme and administering Denbighshire's own criteria
- Work with the Council's agricultural tenants, to encourage the management and use of land for the benefit of carbon sequestration, ecological improvement and biodiversity. Look into opportunities to work with a tenant farm to pilot this approach
- Implement a programme of initiatives, working with Welsh Government and the Public Service Board, to raise awareness amongst residents and businesses in Denbighshire of the role they can play in reducing carbon emissions.
- Implement minimum energy standards for non-domestic rented out property (EPC by 2027 on new leases), when funding opportunities arise, and review opportunities for rationalisation where retrofitting is not a viable option
- Look to improve communication and engagement with schools regarding the climate and ecological change agenda e.g. including pertinent matters, issues or opportunities in school newsletters and eco schools programme

- Work with the new Youth Council Learner Voice Champion to explore ways in which the climate and ecological agenda can be embedded into their role
- Support landowners in Denbighshire to encourage the management and use of land for the benefit of carbon absorption (e.g. guidance for the protection and restoration of peat lands)
- Support the delivery of projects under the NWEAB Low Carbon Energy Programme
- Support the development of a Local Area Energy Plan for Denbighshire and subsequent delivery of that plan working with partners
- Work to create a page to signpost residents and businesses to agenda related information and grant opportunities (including commuted sums) in relation to the climate and ecological change agenda

Increasing Our Resilience to the Impacts of Climate Change

Why is this important?

By reducing our carbon emissions and increasing our carbon absorption we can address the root causes of climate change. However, even if emissions are dramatically decreased over the coming decade, further warming is now unavoidable, and adaptation is needed to deal with the climatic changes we are already experiencing and further changes that is now inevitable. Adaptation seeks to reduce the risks posed by climate changes, and to benefit from any associated opportunities where possible. This is important work to increase the Council's and our community's resilience to the impacts of climate change already 'baked in'.

What is the starting point?

UK Government's latest Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk (CCRA3) was published in 2021¹⁹ which includes a Summary for Wales²⁰. There are 61 risks and

¹⁹ The UK Government is required, under the 2008 Climate Change Act, to publish a Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) every five years and the latest document can be found on the [Climate Change Committee website](#)

²⁰ [Summary for Wales \(CCRA3-IA\)](#), June 2021

opportunities to Wales from climate change that are included in this assessment, including to business, infrastructure, housing, the natural environment, our health and risks from the impacts of climate change internationally. Of these 61 risks and opportunities, more action was found to be needed in Wales to address 32 of them, with sustaining current action only deemed appropriate in five cases. In total, 26 risks from climate change in Wales have increased in urgency score since the previous Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA2) in 2016 and only one risk has decreased in urgency score. There were also some new risks identified in CCRA3 that were not covered in CCRA2.

In summary, risks in Wales that have a high future magnitude score according to the assessment, and where more action is required now to address them, after considering any existing adaptation responses, included the following:

- The impacts of climate change on the natural environment, including terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine species, forests and agriculture.
- An increase in the range, quantities and consequences of pests, pathogens and invasive species, negatively affecting terrestrial, freshwater and marine priority habitats species, forestry and agriculture.
- The risk of climate change impacts, especially more frequent flooding and coastal erosion, causing damage to our infrastructure services, including energy, transport, water and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).
- The impact of extreme temperatures, high winds and lightning on the transport network.
- The impact of increasing high temperatures on people's health and wellbeing.
- Increased severity and frequency of flooding of homes, communities and businesses.
- The impact on coastal businesses due to sea level rise, coastal flooding and erosion.
- Disruption to the delivery of health and social care services due to a greater frequency of extreme weather.
- Damage to our cultural heritage assets as a result of temperature, precipitation, groundwater and landscape changes.

- Impacts internationally that may affect the UK, such as risks to food availability, safety and security, risks to international law and governance from climate change that will affect the UK, international trade routes, public health and the multiplication of risks across systems and geographies.

Work has commenced to analyse climate risk across the county of Denbighshire and for the delivery of the Council's services in particular. This analysis work will assist us to gain a wider understanding of the current climate risk and resilience across the county and Council services.

What changes and actions are the Council taking to increase climate risk resilience?

This is a new area of focus for the Council in this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy and over 20 suggestions for policy and process changes and actions and projects were put forward during the public and service workshops on how the Council can support climate risk resilience as a Council and across the County.

This also builds on approaches committed to under the Greener Denbighshire theme in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027 and [Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board Local Well-being Plan \(2023-2028\) for climate adaptation and risk resilience.](#)

Changes to Council processes and policies

- Develop and implement a new Denbighshire Flood Risk Management Strategy for the county
- Review signposting to support communities to identify potential climate risk resilience projects and funding

Actions and projects

Years 4 to 6 (2024/25 to 2026/27)

- Build on exploratory work conducted in 2023/24 around social care climate resilience to increase knowledge and implement improvements to resilience of services
- Continue to deliver the Moorland Management and Wildfire Prevention Project

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Engage with community groups to understand local risk and adaption need across the county
- Deliver improvement and expansion projects for Denbighshire County Council allotments

- To deliver coastal zone management on Denbighshire's natural coastline and work to include: sand dune restoration, the Little Tern Protection Scheme and habitat creation
- Capitalise on opportunities that arise to contribute to better land use across the county for multiple objectives e.g. natural flood risk management via tree planting, matrix habitat creation, nature and climate related education opportunities etc.
- Collaborate with partners on the Clwyd River Catchment Forum, (a pilot project under the NRW Area Statement) which is working to improve the water quality, biodiversity and flood resilience of the River Clwyd
- Look to provide signposting to information about climate anxiety support for residents, pupils, and staff (possibly to include climate anxiety training for key staff who work with vulnerable people)
- Support communities to identify potential climate risk resilience projects and source funding
- Work alongside partners to undertake a climate risk assessment for the county and support local communities to better understand local risk resilience and adaptation need

Ecologically Positive Council by 2030

What is our goal?

Our goal is to protect, manage and restore our land as well as create new spaces for nature so that the ecosystems²¹ in Denbighshire are diverse, big in extent or scale, in good condition, are connected and have aspects of ecosystem resilience, to align with the DECCA²² principles, and thus not only maintains biodiversity but enhances it. This is our Ecologically Positive Council goal.

Opportunities for Ecologically Positive work contributing to our carbon absorption requirements in our Net Carbon Zero Council goal and vice versa will be both taken and maximised upon.

What is our starting point?

Available data for species richness across Denbighshire has been mapped onto Council owned and operated land to give us an idea about our starting point for the Council's biodiversity value.




Biodiversity is vast, complex and interconnected and as such any measure for biodiversity value is a pointer only.

The table below provides you with information on the different habitat types that are included in this species richness measure. The most species rich habitat is listed first, and the least species rich habitat is listed last.




²¹ An ecosystem is a community of organisms (plants, animals and microbes) and their physical environment interacting together.





²² <https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/media/696279/ecosystem-resilience-in-a-nutshell-1-what-is-ecosystem-resilience.pdf>


Table 8: Different habitat types

Habitat name	Species richness score ²³	Photo example
Calcareous Grassland – unimproved and semi-improved	43.02	
Broadleaved and Yew Woodland - Mixed, Part and Part Montane habitats	20.91	
Neutral grassland – unimproved and semi-improved	20.44	

²³ This score is the average total number of plant species per 200m² plot normally present within that habitat type. Scientific analysis has shown that the diversity of animal species increases in areas of land with greater plant species diversity.

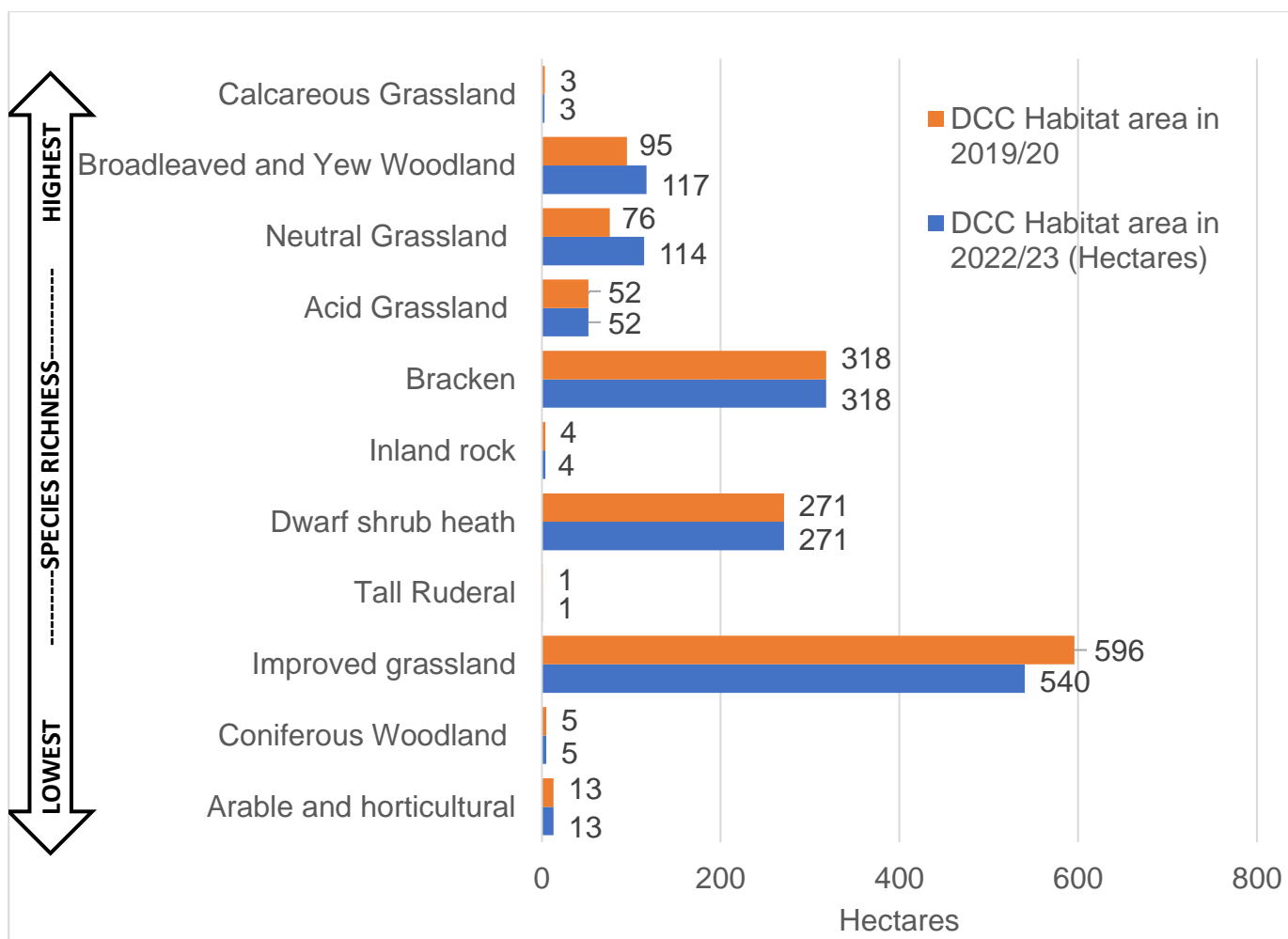
Habitat name	Species richness score ²³	Photo example
Acid Grassland – unimproved and semi-improved	19.58	
Bracken	19.29	
Inland rock	16.74	

Habitat name	Species richness score ²³	Photo example
Dwarf Shrub Heath	15.87	
Tall Ruderal	15.87	
Improved Grassland	14.28	
Coniferous Woodland	14.05	

Habitat name	Species richness score²³	Photo example
Arable and horticultural	10.25	

The graph below describes the amount of land the Council owns and operates in each habitat type of varying species richness in 2019/20 compared to 2022/23.

Chart 12: Amount of land Denbighshire County Council own and operate in each habitat type of varying species richness in 2019/20 compared to 2022/23



In 2019/20 62% of Council owned and operated land is in the lowest categories of species richness. In 2022/23 this is now 58%.

In 2019/20 38% of Council owned and operated land is in the highest categories of species richness. In 2022/23 this is now 42%.

In addition, there are a number of important habitats which support a wide range of species which the Council is fortunate to have in its ownership but are not included in our species richness baseline due to limitations in the habitat categories available in the measurement methodology. These include rivers, streams, and the important dune systems and shingle habitats on Denbighshire’s coastline which are home to a variety of rare and specialised plants and animals. These include the last colony of Little Tern

(species of bird) in Wales, along with Sand Lizard and Natterjack Toad which were reintroduced here after becoming extinct in Wales.

Where do we want to get to?

To achieve our Ecologically Positive goal, the Council needs to increase the percentage of our owned and operated land that has a higher species richness.

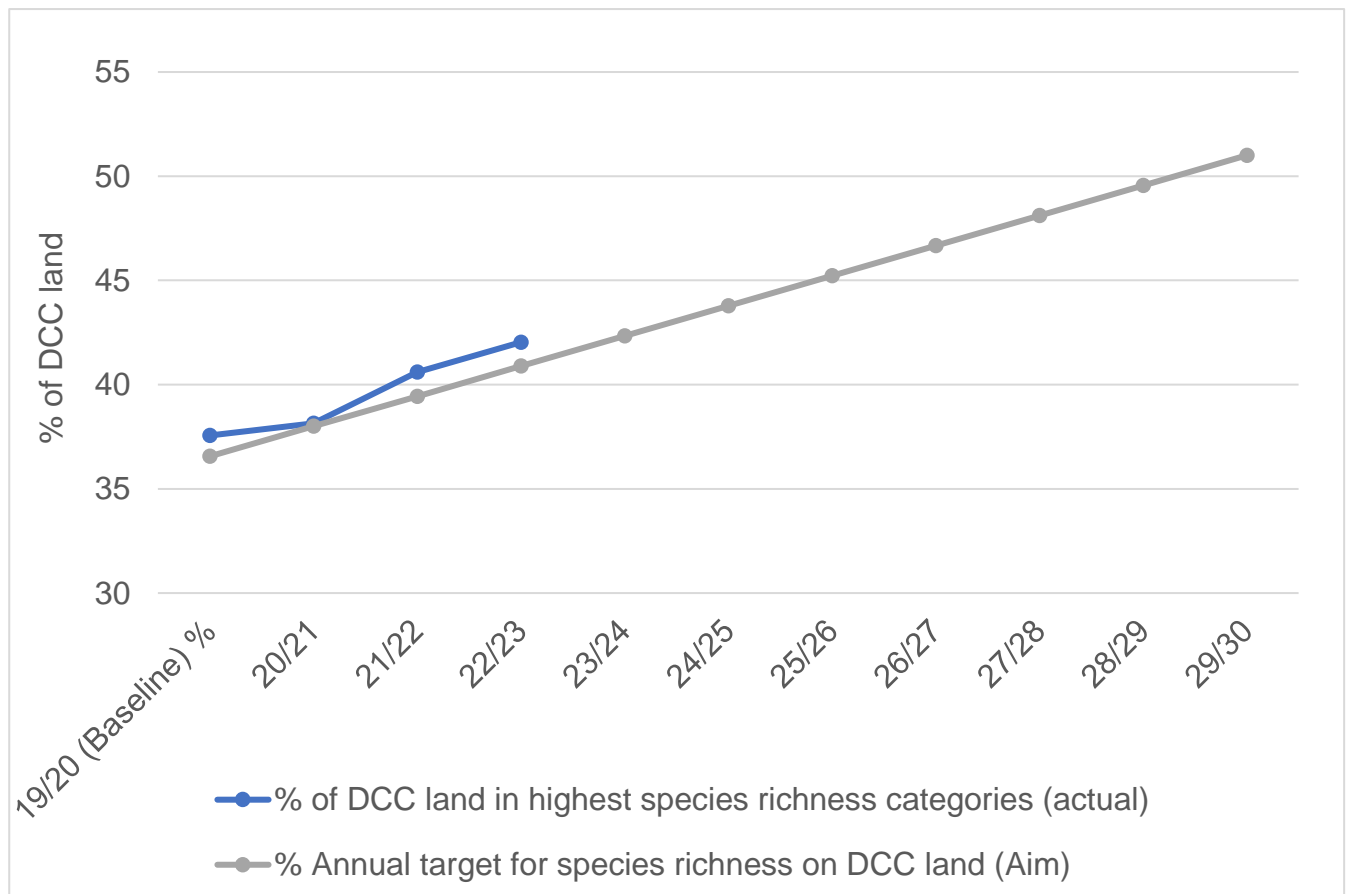
This can be achieved by restoring and changing how we manage land that we currently own and operate to increase species diversity, and by increasing the land ownership therefore creating new spaces (ecological niches) and connected habitat for nature.

The Council’s percentage of owned and operated land in the lowest categories of species richness should be lower than the percentage of Council owned and operated land in the highest categories of species richness for the Council to achieve its Ecologically Positive goal. The table below describes the percentage change expected by 2030 and our progress to date. It shows actual figures for our most recent reporting period, in 2022/23, as well as what we expect to achieve by Year 6 (2026/27) of the 9-year programme. The data shows the council is on track to achieve our target, should we continue with the positive changes and progress made so far to increase the biodiversity of council owned and operated land.

Table 9: Percentage change in habitats of lowest and highest species richness

Species richness categories	Starting Point	Actual % in Year 3 (2022/23)	Projected % in Year 6 (2026/27)	2030 end goal (Target)
Lowest categories of species richness	62%	Reduced to 58% or lower	Reduce to 53.3% or lower	Reduce to below 49% or lower
Highest categories of species richness	38%	Increased to 42.0% or higher	Increase to 46.7% or higher	Increase to above 51% or higher

Chart 13: Denbighshire Species Richness Annual Progress up to 2022/23 and annual target



Over the remaining 6 years of the strategy the council will continue to protect, restore and increase the extent of these habitats for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

A message from the future is included below as a way of bringing these figures to life through story telling- providing an example of how the Council might have gone about achieving its 2030 target.

Message 4: Ecological Positivity

Nature recovery themed image by Postcard from the Future competition winner, Lily, from Ysgol Caer Drewyn.



Dear 2020 Council, Year 2030 here! Not wanting to give you spoilers but here's some of the headlines on how you've achieved ecological positivity...

It's now second nature for officers to review the biodiversity value and impact of every project, intervention or activity the Council undertakes and to deliver the activity in a way that provides a positive impact for ecology. Every opportunity is taken to do no harm to biodiversity in Council operations but where harm is unavoidable plans are made and delivered which leaves biodiversity in a better state than when we started.

Through collaborative efforts across departments improved grassland habitats (which support a lower species richness) have been converted into neutral grassland (which support a higher species richness) increasing biodiversity in the county. This has been achieved by expansive changes in cutting regimes to allow for natural regeneration as well as deliberative sowing of meadow / wildflower seeds.

For the greatest combined benefit, the hectares of broadleaf and mixed woodland owned by the Council has increased. The Council over the 9 years has converted existing land of low species richness, and bought new land, turning it into carbon sinks and wildlife havens via carefully selected tree planting including elements of species rich grassland.

The Council has actively made space for nature, adopting a natural regeneration approach free from mechanical intervention developing sites into ecological exemplars. Core aims in this work to reconnect people with nature have been achieved through opportunities for recreational access and the work has inspired a new generation of naturalists who understand the importance of our natural environment, and how to protect it. University students visit to learn about the abundant biodiversity that surrounds.

What changes and actions will help us get there?

Changes to Council processes and policies

To achieve our ecologically positive goal by 2030 will require the Council to adjust how it goes about delivering the wide range of work and tasks required of us by Welsh Government, by our partners and by our communities.

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed the 25 suggestions for processes and policies changes were identified in 2020 and the 2024 review to contribute to protecting and improving biodiversity. Our aim is to implement as much as we can of these working over the remaining 6 years of the strategy.

Appendix 4 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the process and policy changes listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 that have been completed.

The list below highlights some of the priority changes to Council processes and policies that we hope to make, within available resources, in Year 4 to 6 (2024/25 - 2026/27) of delivering this strategy to support the Council to successfully achieve its ecologically goal by 2030.

This is a dynamic and flexible list; other things may be implemented that do not feature in the graphic below responding to new opportunities.

- Explore the possibility of a Council wide 'Asset Management' policy/programme of all our green open spaces (to include grassland management)
- Continue to embed standard operating procedures around spraying and strimming and explore reducing the use of herbicides
- Embed the ecological compliance audit for planning applications to ensure mitigation, compensation and enhancement is actually installed
- Review internal process to investigate how best to communicate and capture carbon reduction and ecologically positive contributions in projects at start-up stage, including to review how contributions have been implemented by Projects through internal evaluation and through monitoring Project Closure Reports

- Develop Housing tree and hedgerow policy (and work with Countryside and Highways colleagues to ensure aligned with corporate policy)

Actions and projects

Becoming ecologically positive will require the Council to continue to build on existing programmes of activity started under the Climate and Ecological Change Programme and the Greener Denbighshire Theme of our Corporate Plan, in addition to delivering new projects and activity.

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed the over 40 ideas for projects to protect and improve biodiversity were identified in 2020. Feedback received from our consultation in May 2024 has been incorporated into this revised version, along with information gathered from other sources, such as Climate Emergency UK's Climate Scorecards²⁴. Our aim is to implement as much as we can of those, within available resources, over the remaining 6 years of the strategy. In addition to other actions, we might take responding to new opportunities.

Appendix 4 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the projects and actions listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 that have been completed.

The list below provides an overview of the priority actions and projects that have been identified so far that the Council hopes to deliver which will protect and improve biodiversity. The delivery of all projects and actions identified is subject to securing the necessary funding. The constraint on Local Government funding is significant and will continue to be in the coming years which will impact on when and how the projects and actions identified can be delivered.

²⁴ <https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/>

Years 4 to 6 (2024/25 to 2026/27)

- Reconsider the grounds management at care homes with a view to save money, improve biodiversity and enhance citizen well-being (in short term and long-term when improvements are made to assets)

Years 4 to 9 (2024/25 to 2029/30)

- Work to include nature and/or allotment space on new social housing developments
- Review existing grounds maintenance and develop to align with methods for increasing biodiversity and carbon sequestration on Council Housing land
- Explore opportunities for biodiversity and carbon sequestration opportunities on council Housing buildings e.g. youth centres, green roofs and garages etc
- Continue the wildflower meadow (non-cut) project on council owned and managed areas
- Create a new 70-acre nature reserve in St Asaph, restoring habitats and supporting rare and important wildlife.
- Reintroduce species which have previously been lost, as habitat restoration works allow.
- Provide Biodiversity Improvement opportunities via Team Away days as requested by Services
- Implement a programme of initiatives and engagement with schools across the County to share learning and resources on this agenda and encourage positive behaviour change
- Continue to work with schools to identify land to plant trees and introduce wildflowers for biodiversity improvement and carbon sequestration
- Work to create a page to signpost residents and businesses to agenda related information and grant opportunities (including commuted sums) in relation to the climate and ecological change agenda

Supporting Natures Recovery across Denbighshire – Using Our Influence

Why is this important?

Since we declared a climate change and ecological emergency in 2019, we have taken onboard feedback and evidence highlighting the need for us to use our influence to support natures recovery across the county rather than just focusing on council owned and operated land alone. This is important as to bring about resilient ecosystems the Council, its partners and communities need to take a landscape view so that opportunities to create spaces for nature that are diverse, connected, big in scale and extent, in a healthy condition and adaptable are taken. By working to achieve our Ecologically Positive Council 2030 goal we hope to influence action to enhance biodiversity across the county by working with and supporting our residents and communities to act.

What's the starting point?

Detailed statistics for the state of nature and our habitats across the county of Denbighshire is difficult to quantify and detail statistically. However, information from reports such as Natural Resources Wales's latest [North East Wales Area Statement](#) and [Biodiversity in Denbighshire](#), indicate that Denbighshire is seen as an impoverished county with regards to connectivity and native grasslands, with many habitats and wildlife now in decline and in need of protection and help if they are to survive.

The Council has begun to spatially map the connected corridors for nature across the County to enable us to capture the visual change across the county. Image 1 below shows the extent of these connected corridors pre-2018. It shows the range of grasslands scattered across Northeast Wales and illustrates how fragmented many of Denbighshire's grasslands were at this time.

In contrast, Image 2 below illustrates how Denbighshire looks in 2023 in terms of its grassland distribution and connected corridors for nature. The impact of Denbighshire County Council's work across two main projects is clearly evident. The rural road verge

grassland policy²⁵ was implemented in 2019, which sees the rural road network undergo a 'biodiversity cut' once a year and connects the 11 established Roadside Nature Reserves together. This network covers 78% of the total road network in the county and means connected corridors for nature across Denbighshire have been increased to 1,820km. The addition of the Wildflower Meadow Project has seen over 120 urban grassland sites (approximately 70 acres) now also being cut less frequently for the benefit of biodiversity and resident wellbeing. These sites bridge the gap within urban areas, that the road verge network does not reach. They act as stepping stones across our urban environments and help facilitate the movement of wildlife across our urban areas, back onto the wider rural road verge network.

This larger more connected habitat now provides a connective spine down the centre of Northeast Wales. Our colleagues in Flintshire and Conwy have now also begun to convert their rural networks over to the same management and continued to build on their urban meadow projects. By working together with our neighbours, we will be able to increase connective corridors for nature across the whole Northeast area of Wales.

²⁵ <https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/documents/parking-roads-and-travel/highway-rural-grass-cutting-policy.pdf>

Image 1 – Denbighshire grassland distribution and connected corridors for nature pre-2018

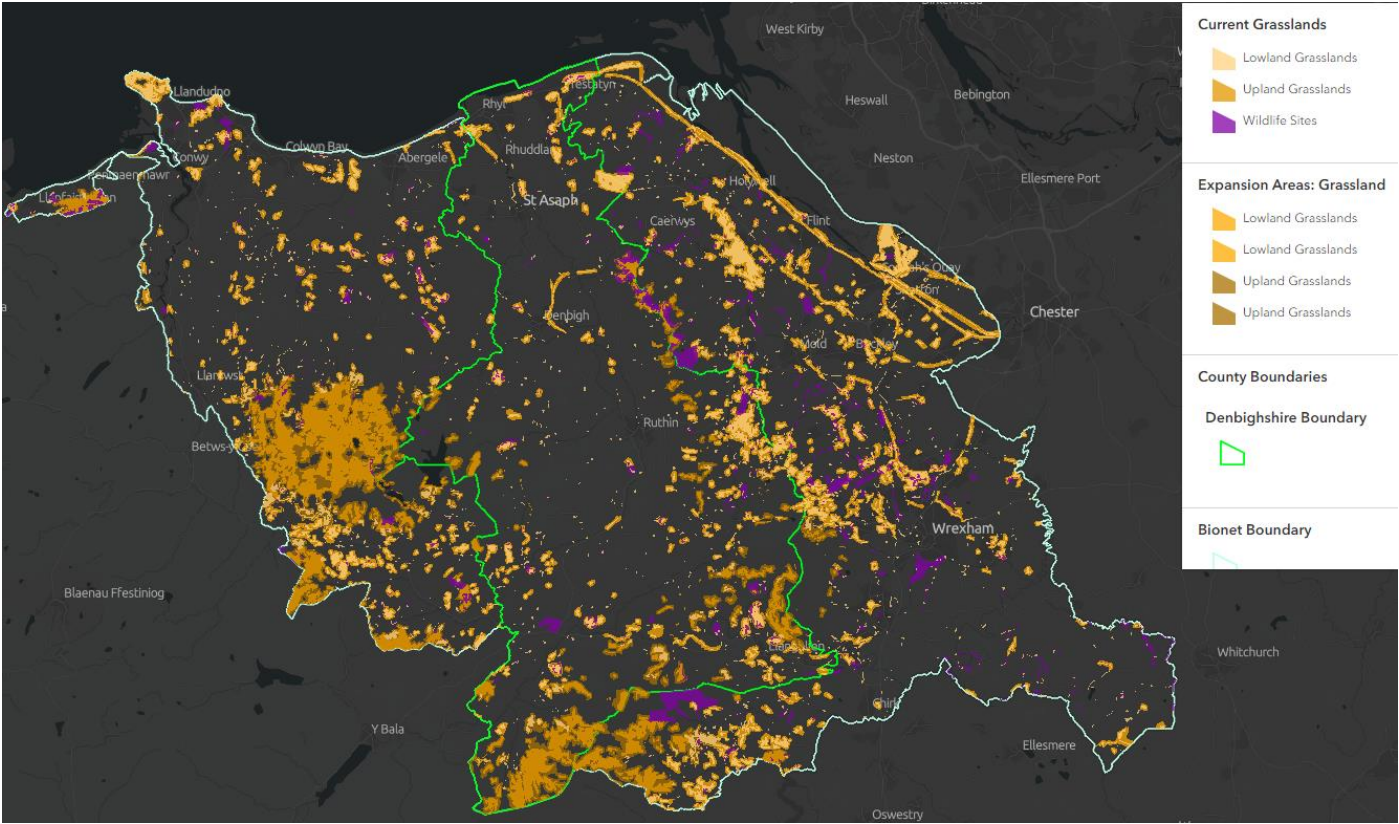
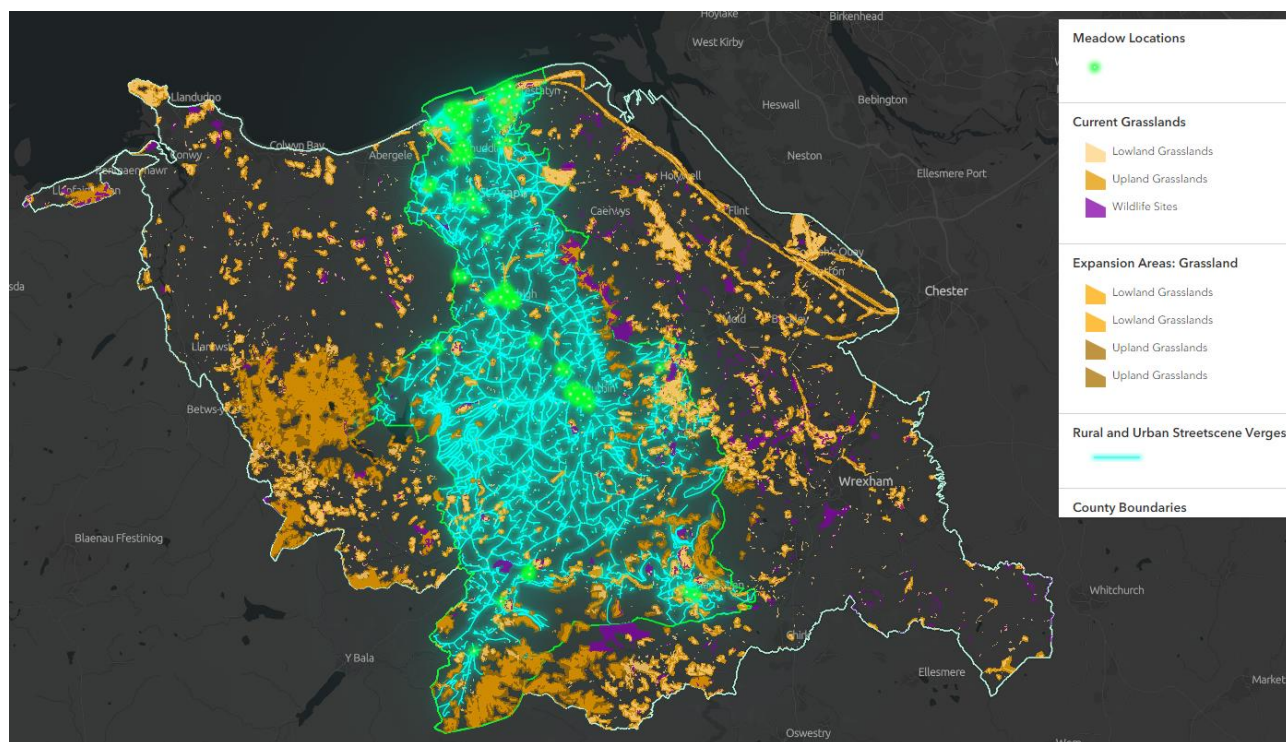


Image 2 – Denbighshire grassland distribution and connected corridors for nature in 2023



What changes and actions are the Council taking to use our influence to support natures recovery across Denbighshire?

Changes to Council processes and policies

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed the suggestions for processes and policies changes that were identified in 2020 and the 2024 review that contribute to supporting natures recovery across the County of Denbighshire. Our aim is to implement as many of these as we can, within available resources, over the remaining 6 years of the strategy.

Appendix 5 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the process and policy changes which had broader County influence that were listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 and have now been completed.

The list below highlights some of the priority changes to Council processes and policies that we hope to make in Year 4 to 6 (2024/25 – 2026/27) of delivering this strategy to support the Council to successfully achieve its net carbon zero goal by 2030.

This is a dynamic and flexible list; other things may be implemented that do not feature in the graphic below responding to new opportunities.

- Ensure Ash Die Back Policies around replacement are supportive of increasing tree stock of native provenance
- Progression of replacement LDP to ensure emerging local priorities around climate change and biodiversity are reflected in local planning policy and decision making
- Application of planning policies within the Local Development Plan 1 and Council's existing Supplementary Planning Guidance which contribute to environmentally responsible development
- Ensure colleagues and members are kept up to date with new planning policy, legislation and any guidance is updated e.g. supplementary planning guidance
- Utilise community benefits /Well-being impacts/SPPP Act in Council contracts to support nature recovery and biodiversity
- Identify the Council officers who procure on a regular basis to target communication and training as to the Climate and Ecological Change agenda and the contribution that environmentally responsible procurement can make
- Review the Agricultural Estate Strategy and explore options around environmental improvement, nature recovery and carbon zero emissions

Actions and projects

In this Year 3 Updated version of the strategy, we have built upon, reviewed and refreshed ideas for projects that were identified in 2020 that support nature's recovery across the County of Denbighshire. Feedback received from our consultation in May 2024 has been incorporated into this revised version, along with information gathered from other sources, such as Climate Emergency UK's Climate Scorecards²⁶. Our aim is to implement as many of these as we can, within available resources, over the remaining 6 years of the strategy. In addition to other actions, we might take responding to new opportunities.

²⁶ <https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/>

Appendix 5 in the Technical Appendices provides information on the projects and actions listed under 'using our influence' in the strategy adopted in 2021 that have been completed.

The list below provides an overview of the priority actions and projects that have been identified so far that the Council hopes to deliver to maximise on the influence we can have in bringing about nature's recovery across Denbighshire. The delivery of all projects and actions identified is subject to securing the necessary funding. The constraint on Local Government funding is significant and will continue to be in the coming years which will impact on when and how the projects and actions identified can be delivered.

Years 4 to 6 (2024/2025 to 2026/2027)

- Consider ways to increase biodiversity within supply chains whilst carrying out the North Wales Domiciliary Care Framework review
- Deliver PPW training in relation to new Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales
- Utilise community benefits /Well-being impacts/SPPP Act in Council contracts to support nature recovery and biodiversity

Years 4 to 9 (2024/2025 to 2029/2030)

- Deliver the annual programme of Ash Dieback work
- LDP Annual Monitoring Report to be a source of information with regard to climate change and biodiversity
- Capitalise on opportunities that arise to contribute to better land use across the county for multiple objectives e.g. natural flood risk management via tree planting, matrix habitat creation, nature and climate related education opportunities etc
- Work with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and Planning Policy to ensure clear guidance is provided to prospective developers around carbon reduction and biodiversity within developments. Use the LPA validation process, where reasonable, to ensure compliance (following update to Planning & Policy Wales – Section 6)
- Delivery of Supplementary Planning Guidance resulting from the new Local Development Plan will support the climate change and biodiversity agenda

- Create and promote volunteer opportunities within Countryside Services for the public to contribute to this agenda and link to green skills/jobs
- Continue to coordinate Bionet, the North East Wales Local Nature Partnership, supporting and promoting partner organisations in the planning and implementation of nature conservation work.
- Collaborate with partners on the Clwyd River Catchment Forum, (a pilot project under the NRW Area Statement) which is working to improve the water quality, biodiversity and flood resilience of the River Clwyd
- Identify the Council officers who procure on a regular basis to target communication and training as to the Climate and Ecological Change agenda and the contribution that environmentally responsible procurement can make
- Implement a programme of initiatives, working with Welsh Government and the Public Service Board, to raise awareness amongst residents and businesses in Denbighshire of the role they can play in improving biodiversity
- Support landowners in Denbighshire to encourage the management and use of land for the benefit of ecological improvement and biodiversity
- Work with the Council's agricultural tenants, to encourage the management and use of land for the benefit of carbon sequestration, ecological improvement and biodiversity. Look into opportunities to work with one tenant farm to pilot this approach
- Look to improve communication and engagement with schools regarding the climate and ecological change agenda e.g. including pertinent matters, issues or opportunities in school newsletters and eco schools programme
- Work with the new Youth Council Learner Voice Champion to explore ways in which the climate and ecological agenda can be embedded into their role

Financial strategy to support strategy and action plan

Like Local Authorities across Wales, the Council's financial position is currently incredibly challenging, and the need for significant budget savings is unprecedented.

Funding cuts over a sustained period mean that we have a lot less money to invest in services now than we have in the past. It is estimated that delivering day to day services in 2024/25 – including social services, waste collection and schools, will cost an extra £24.5m due to price increases, inflation, and pressure on demand. The Council must therefore find additional money through savings and efficiencies, charges for services, increases in Council Tax or by reducing or cutting services.

It is in this context that the Year 3 Updated strategy is being adopted. Despite the difficult situation we are faced with, this council has a clear ambition to make our contribution to tackle the climate change and ecological emergency. This document sets out the ambitions to become net carbon zero and ecologically positive and the range of changes and actions the Council could do to achieve those goals, along with work to improve climate resilience and using our influence to bring about climate action and nature recovery across the County.

Some of changes and actions will require capital investment, others revenue funding, and some may be delivered at no additional cost. All of them will require staff availability to develop and deliver the initiatives at a time when capacity will become increasingly constrained. The delivery of all projects and actions identified in this strategy is subject to securing the necessary funding. The constraint on Local Government funding is significant and will continue to be in the coming years which will impact on when and how the projects and actions identified can be delivered. For 2024/25 and 2025/26 initiatives that save money as well as save carbon or improve biodiversity will be prioritised. This may need performance plateaus for these years.

High level financial modelling has been undertaken on capital activity required to decarbonise fleet, buildings and increase carbon absorption to provide an estimated and indicative capital cost to deliver this strategy over the remaining 6 years (2023/24-2029/30). That work indicates a capital cost of at least £48 million pounds to deliver the projects needed to achieve all that we'd like.

The investment figure to achieve net carbon zero and ecologically positive is a large sum, and the council cannot provide all of this money itself. To deliver the projects needed to achieve all that we'd like to will be reliant on grants from the Welsh Government, National Government and supporting bodies along with maximising on opportunities for community and commercial based financing mechanisms. It is expected that opportunities for securing external grant funding over the remaining 6 years will be maximised upon, building on our success over the first 3 years of the strategy where 36% of total capital expenditure has been covered by external grant.

To pay for the capital investment identified, we will need to commit revenue budget and cash to this priority. It is likely that a proportion of the investment required would be generated through prudential borrowing.

We have measures in place to ensure all individual capital investment decisions we take are based on robust business cases and that the overall debt financing position is carefully monitored and remains affordable and sustainable. Our revenue budget plans and processes are well established and will enable us to manage affordability.

Affordability is the greatest risk in the Council being able to achieve its net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals and ambitions around climate risk resilience and area wide climate action and nature recovery. However, this Council remains committed to making our contribution to tackling climate and ecological change wherever and whenever we are able.

How progress will be monitored

This strategy will be delivered as a programme of activity, coordinated centrally with input and effort by officers from across the Council's service areas working with our partners where applicable.

The person accountable for achieving these goals is the Council's Corporate Director - Governance and Business as operational Sponsor for the Programme of work. Political steer is provided by the Lead Member for Environment and Transport and the cross-party Climate Change and Ecological Emergency political working group act as an advisory group for this agenda meeting quarterly.

The Council will calculate its carbon emissions, its carbon absorption and the species richness on its land in April- July each year to see how the Council performed on these Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive metrics in the previous financial year (April – March). The Council will submit its carbon emissions and carbon adsorption data to Welsh Government each year in September as part of the established Welsh Public Sector Greenhouse Gas Reporting Regime.

Progress in achieving the goals set out in this Climate and Ecological Change Strategy will be monitored by the Greener Denbighshire Board. The Greener Denbighshire Board is chaired by the Corporate Director - Governance and Business and made up of Lead Cabinet members for this agenda and key Heads of Service whose service areas contribute to the delivery of the strategy.

Key performance measures and programme highlights will be integrated into the Corporate Plan performance report, which is scrutinised quarterly through SLT, Cabinet and Scrutiny, and annually by Council.

A 12-month review paper will be taken to Full Council each year highlighting progress made and next steps referring back to the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration as well as to Performance Scrutiny each Autumn starting in 2025.

The Council's progress on achieving the Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive 2030 goals can also be scrutinised by Internal Audit and other Scrutiny Committees at

appropriate points over the remaining 6 years of the Strategy and at the discretion of the Chief Internal Auditor and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs.

The strategy document will be formally reviewed and refreshed every 3 years up until 2030 with the next review taking place in 2026/27.

How we will share our learning

Climate and ecological change is the globally defining challenge of our time. It will require everyone to contribute to its solution- pooling effort, knowledge and resources.

The Council's approach to achieving Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council and increasing climate risk resilience is open and collaborative. The Council looks forward to learning from others, maximising on opportunities together as well as sharing our experience over the remaining 6 years to 2030.

Denbighshire County Council will continue to work with our Public Sector Partners via the Public Service Board²⁷, including Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, on our collective 'Well-being' priority²⁸ – as listed in [Local Well-being Plan \(2023-2028\)](#), sharing learning from our efforts in achieving Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council goals, along with increasing our climate risk resilience, and seeking advice from others.

The Council will share its learning with City, Town and Community Council's within Denbighshire. Working with Local Government partners via the Local Government Climate Strategy Panel, and other opportunities, the Council will look to influence Welsh Government to simplify and make consistent the existing policy and legislative landscape, facilitate the increased impact by working at scale, support the increased engagement and behaviour change work with communities and provide resourcing which reflects the magnitude of the climate emergency we are all facing.

Latest news, advice and opportunities to get involved will be posted on the Council's [corporate website](#) and the Council Consultation portal. We will issue an e-newsletter once a year updating on the Council's work on this agenda and we aim to host a public engagement event once a year. We will share our learning with businesses across

²⁷ The Public Service Board (PSB) is a partnership of public service agencies who work together to improve local services. [A list of current Conwy and Denbighshire PSB partners can be found on the PSB website.](#)

²⁸ Communities are happier, healthier and more resilient in the face of challenges, such as the Climate Change and Nature Emergency, or the rising cost of living.

Denbighshire via our business communication channels managed by the Council's Economic and Business Development Team.

Technical Appendices

Appendix 1 – Further information on areas where achieving the required target is experiencing challenge

For those areas where the required target has proven to be a challenge, the below tables explain the predicted gap between the known and targeted pathways and the reasons for this expected gap. The known reduction pathway shows the expected achievable target for these emission sources, based on the current outlined challenges.

Carbon Emissions from Buildings (non-domestic)

The box below illustrates the expected target gap for carbon emission reduction from our non-domestic buildings. The required target of a 60% reduction in this source is going to be difficult to achieve due to the reasons outlined. These include the combined effects of timescales, budget, expertise restraints and limited decarbonisation of the electricity network meaning a reduction of around 330 tonnes CO₂e per annum is more likely to be achieved, instead of the 660 tonnes CO₂e target. This does not mean we are not aiming to achieve what we can, however it is sensible to highlight the expected shortfall now, based on the current trajectory.

2030 ambition: 60% (-660 tCO₂e pa) reduction target

Known reduction pathway: 30% (-330 tCO₂e) expected target

Constraints and dependencies (explaining gap between 2030 ambition and known reduction pathway):

- Availability of capability and capacity within the supply chain to design and deliver schemes.
- Price of electricity
- Development of green hydrogen technology
- Decarbonisation of national grid
- Local Government funding settlement

Carbon Emissions from Staff commuting

The box below highlights the expected challenges in achieving our emission reduction target from staff commuting. The required target of a 20% reduction in this source is currently looking difficult to achieve due to the reasons outlined. Recent feedback has highlighted that more staff than thought in initial analysis require to commute into the office. This data is also based on estimated service level commuting data and, not actual figures, with a +/- 25% margin for error. Further investigation to enable actual data to be gathered could show this target is more achievable, but further analysis is required before the expected target can be known. This does not mean we are not aiming to achieve what we can, however it is sensible to highlight the expected shortfall now, based on the current trajectory.

2030 ambition: 20% target (-1,478 tCO₂e)

Known reduction pathway: Unchanged subject to further analysis

Constraints & dependencies (explaining gap between 2030 ambition and known reduction pathway)

- Office based staff proportion higher than estimated.
- Estimated data
- Limited data regarding staff working patterns.
- Further analysis required to better understand service and team level office base needs

Carbon absorption from land-use (woodland and grassland)

The box below highlights the expected challenges in achieving our carbon sequestration (absorption) increase target. The required target of a 203% increase in this source is going to be difficult to achieve due to the reasons outlined. These include the availability of suitable land within the council portfolio, or on the open market, and the budget available to secure the amount of additional land this would require along with any relevant analysis

work to inform our carbon stock. The subsequent expected carbon absorption increase is therefore likely to be closer to a 54% increase, based on the maturity adjusted emission factor for any new woodland created. This is due to the fact there is currently no funding available to increase council owned land for this purpose, and there is limited council owned land remaining which is suitable. This does not mean we are not aiming to achieve what we can and continue to look for suitable opportunities, both internally and externally across the county for this purpose, however it is sensible to highlight the expected shortfall now, based on the current trajectory.

2030 ambition: +203% target (7,329 tCO₂e)

Known reduction pathway: +54% (3,719 tCO₂e) Note: Maturity adjusted figure

Constraints & dependencies (explaining gap between 2030 ambition and known reduction pathway)

- Land available for purchase
- Amount of available land within DCC ownership suitable for further tree planting
- Available budget/funding to purchase land.
- Available budget for analysis work e.g., to gather carbon absorption data for urban/individual tree assets

Appendix 2 – Completed Process/Policy Changes and Projects/Activities contributing to the achievement of the Net Carbon Zero Goal

The following process and policy changes and projects and activities that were identified in 2020 to contribute to reducing carbon or/and increasing carbon absorption and listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 have been completed:

- Convert 3 of our waste vehicles to Electric vehicles
- Re-launch recycling in civic buildings and replace bins at Council sites so it is a source segregated recycled waste collection
- Work to reduce plastics in Council offices
- Deliver improvement project for increasing tonnage of waste re-use or recycled that is generated from delivering the various Highways and Street Scene frontline service functions
- Complete our 7-year LED Street lighting project
- Move as far forward and as fast as possible in going paperless e.g. electronic case bundling, electronic signing and sealing of contracts, electronic paper packs for democratic meetings
- In consultation with staff and the unions, work to include in every member of staff Job Description their responsibility around climate and ecological change
- Investigate how through the Social Partnership & Public Procurement (Wales) Act, sustainability including biodiversity protection and improvement could be applied to tenders
- Develop and secure AMG adoption of new Asset Management Strategy
- Through engagement and communication ensure service-based objectives align with the corporate ambition to become Net Carbon Zero and reduce supply chain emissions
- Via our role on the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee, encourage the Fund to identify climate change as a financial risk, to measure and understand its carbon exposure within its investment portfolio and to set agreed Carbon reduction targets

- Implement the Council's change in constitution to have regard to tackling climate and ecological change, including changes to business case templates and introduction of whole life costing
- Work to standardise the Recycling and Waste approach across all schools and Council owned sites include provision of wide range of recycling

Appendix 3- Completed Process/Policy Changes and Projects/Activities contributing to reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon absorption across Denbighshire - Using Our Influence

The following process and policy changes and projects and activities that were identified in 2020 to contribute to reducing carbon or/and increasing carbon absorption which had broader County influence and listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 have been completed:

- Implement Community Benefits Hub
- Create an online portal to capture and report on the Community Benefit of contracts including measures around this agenda
- Delivery of the replacement LDP which takes forward local priorities for land use planning within the national policy framework. The replacement LDP will ensure emerging local priorities around climate change and biodiversity are reflected in local planning
- Develop and propose a standard for eco build in relation to new buildings and major refurbishments (minimising consumption of energy, waste and water and facilitating low carbon travel) for consideration and decision by Cabinet by September 2021
- Completion of Carbon Literacy training by all councillors and managers and creation of e-learn module on carbon literacy themes for all staff
- Engage with City, Town and Community Councils on reducing carbon and increasing carbon absorption via the review and update of the City, Town and Community Council Charter

Appendix 4- Completed Process/Policy Changes and Projects/Activities contributing to the achievement of the Ecologically Positive Goal

The following process and policy changes and projects and activities that were identified in 2020 to contribute to improving the resilience of ecosystems on Denbighshire County Council owned land and listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 have been completed:

- Tender grounds maintenance contract for Housing Estates using a specification which improves biodiversity e.g. leaving areas of long grass for species diversity.
- Introduce a new outdoor light replacement policy to protect bats and insects - a warm white spectrum (<2700Kelvin) and luminaires feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm
- PLANT Project: Urban Tree Planting
- To maintain, enhance, protect and preserve Denbighshire's 'living assets' for future generations
- ENRaW Well Connected Providing Opportunities for All
- Deliver the Picturesque Landscape project to fence off areas and promote the return of woodland
- Implement the Council's change in constitution to have regard to tackling climate and ecological change, including changes to business case templates and introduction of whole life costing
- Investigate how through the Social Partnership & Public Procurement (Wales) Act, sustainability including biodiversity protection and improvement could be applied to tenders
- Develop and secure AMG adoption of new Asset Management Strategy

Appendix 5- Completed Process/Policy Changes and Projects/Activities contributing to supporting natures recovery across Denbighshire – Using Our Influence

The following process and policy changes and projects and activities that were identified in 2020 to contribute to improving the resilience of ecosystems which had broader County influence and listed in the strategy adopted in 2021 have been completed:

- Delivery of the replacement LDP which takes forward local priorities for land use planning within the national policy framework. The replacement LDP will ensure emerging local priorities around climate change and biodiversity are reflected in local planning
- Engage with City, Town and Community Councils on improving biodiversity via the review and update of the City, Town and Community Council Charter

Appendix 6- Denbighshire Climate and Ecological Change Workstream Progress

Table 10: Reduction progress and 2030 targets per source of carbon emission

Source of carbon emissions	Projected emissions in 2029/30 in tCO2e if target met	Actual emissions in Year 3 (2022/23) in tCO2e	Actual emissions in Year 3 (2019/20) in tCO2e	Emissions still to reduce in tCO2e to meet target
Buildings	4,060	9,082	10,151	5,022
Fleet	1,077	2,302	2,693	1,225
Commuting	1,478	2,860	1,848	1,382
Street Lighting	394	419	788	25
Business Travel	110	251	550	141
Waste	209	177	418	n/a
Total	7,329	15,091	16,448	7,795

Chart 14: Annual carbon emissions from Buildings, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets

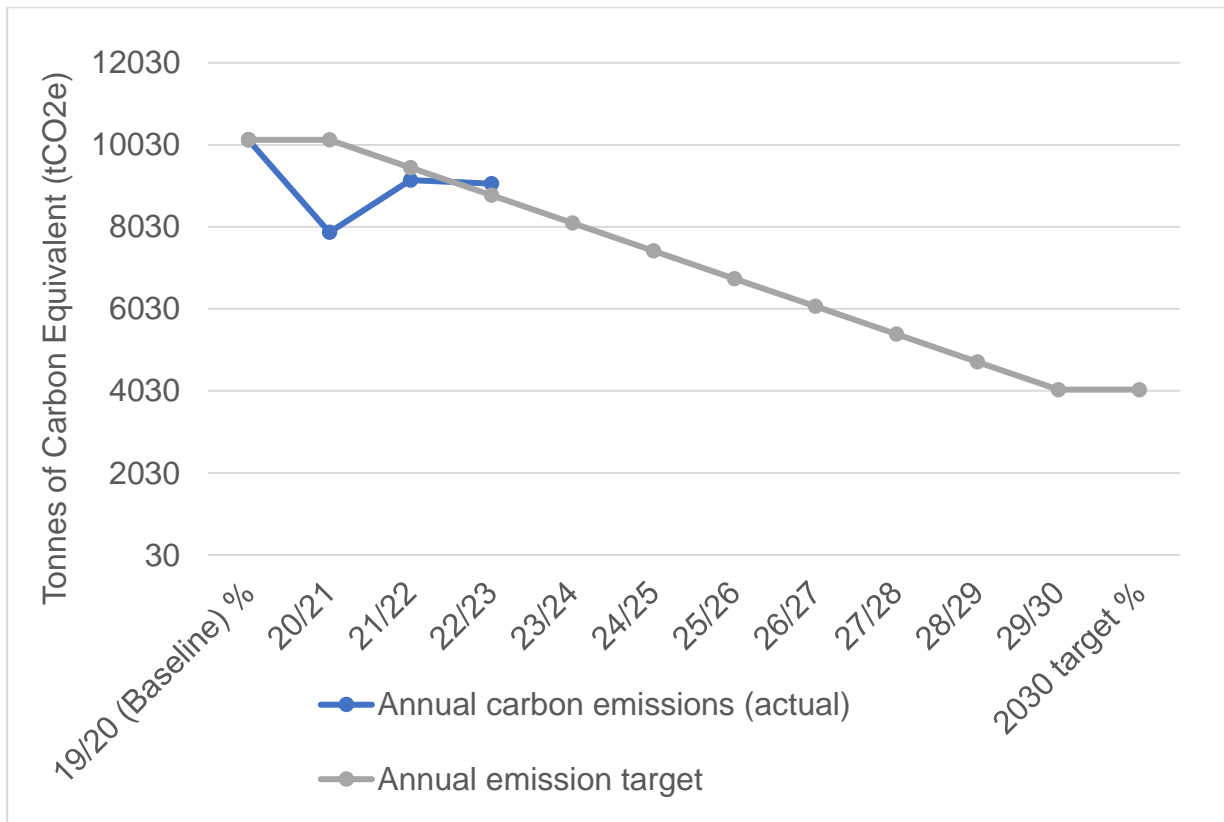


Chart 15: Annual carbon emissions from Fleet, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets

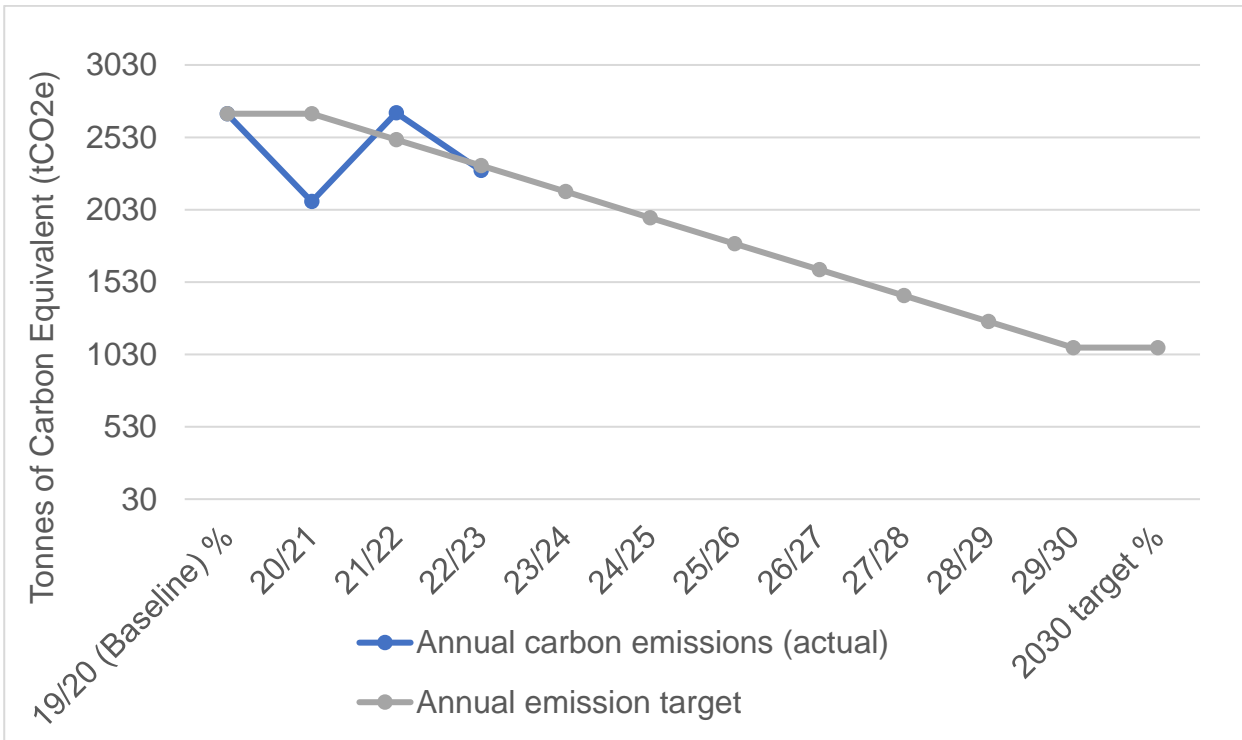


Chart 16: Annual carbon emissions from Waste, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets

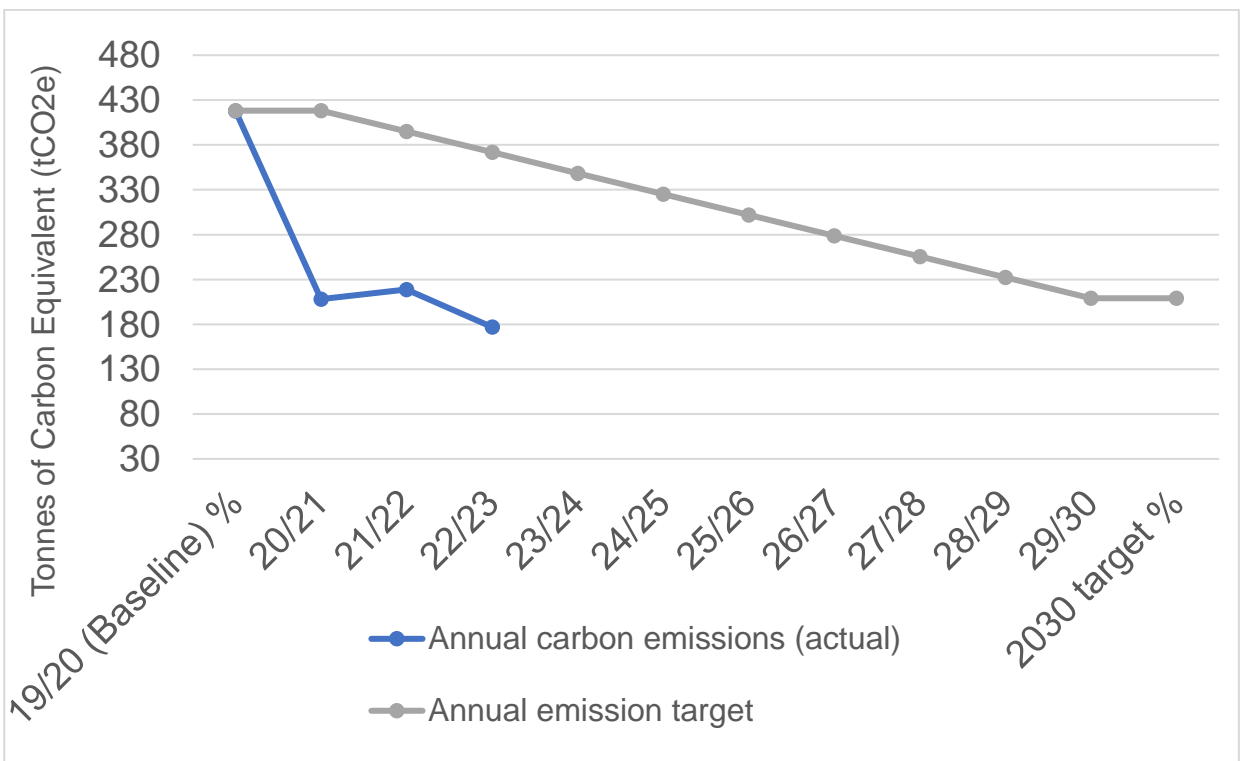


Chart 17: Annual carbon emissions from Staff Commuting, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets

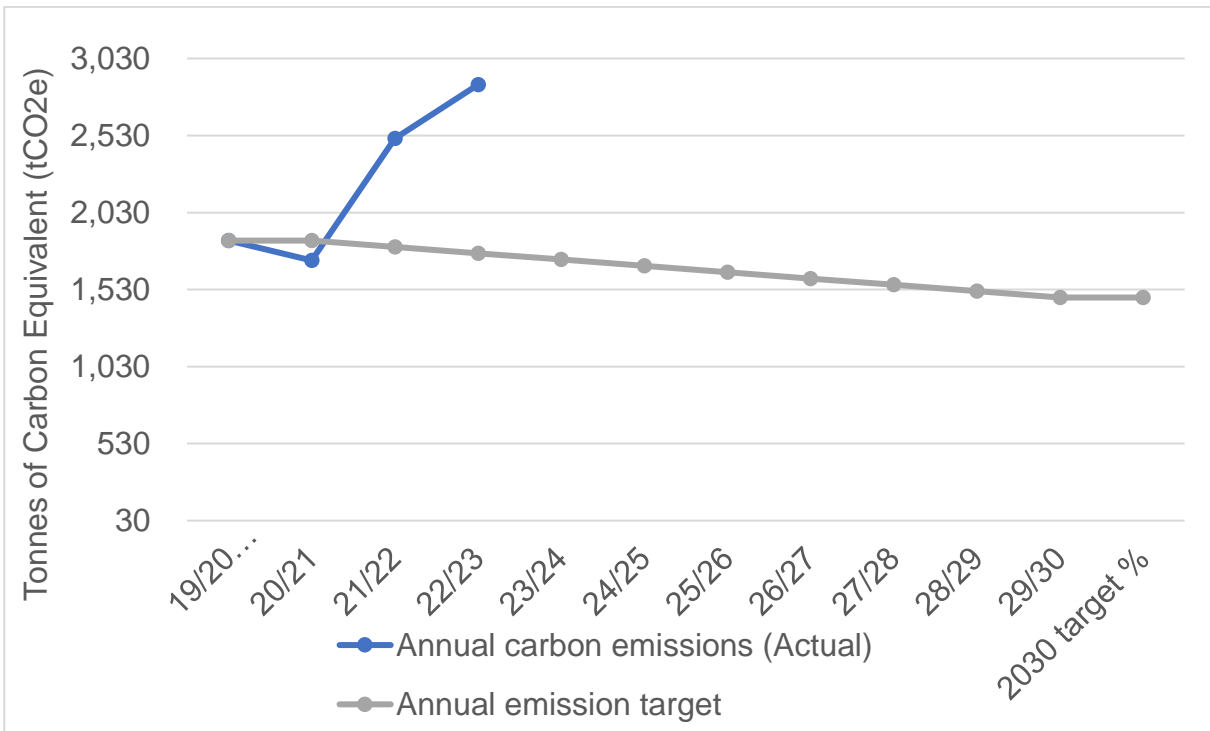


Chart 18: Annual carbon emissions from Street Lighting, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets

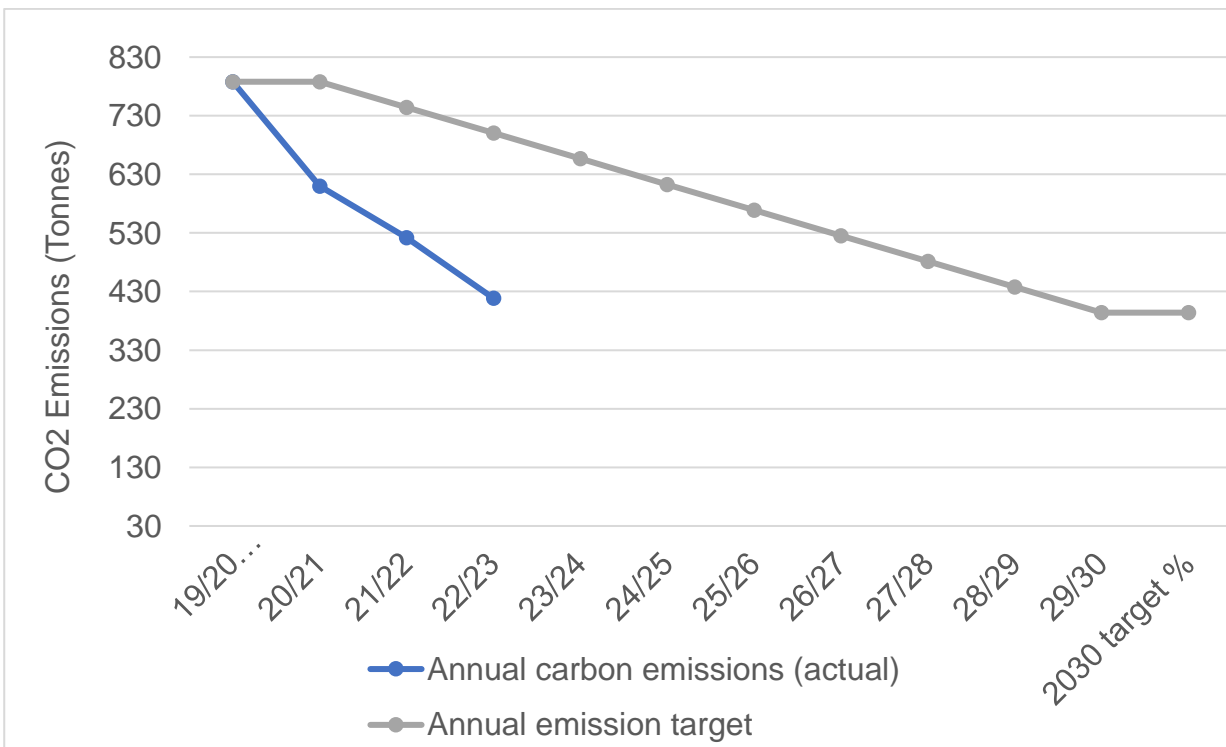


Chart 19: Annual carbon emissions from Business Travel, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets

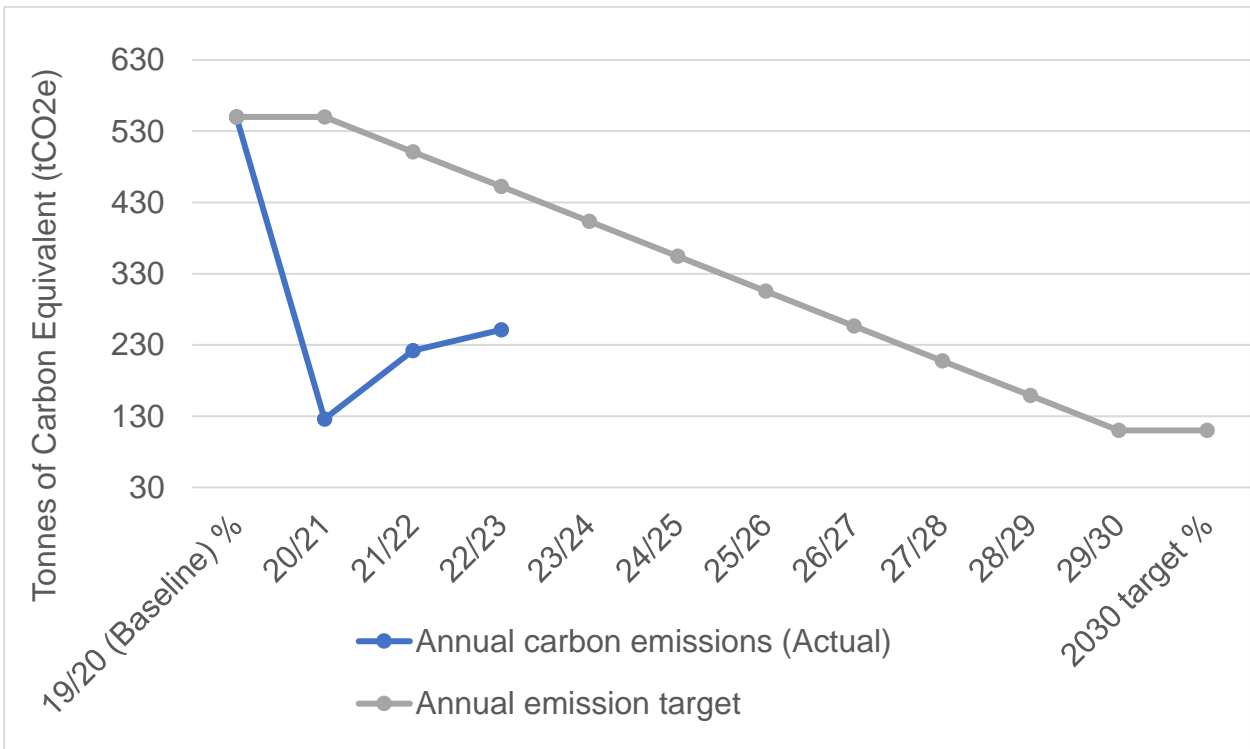


Chart 20: Annual carbon absorption from Grassland, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets

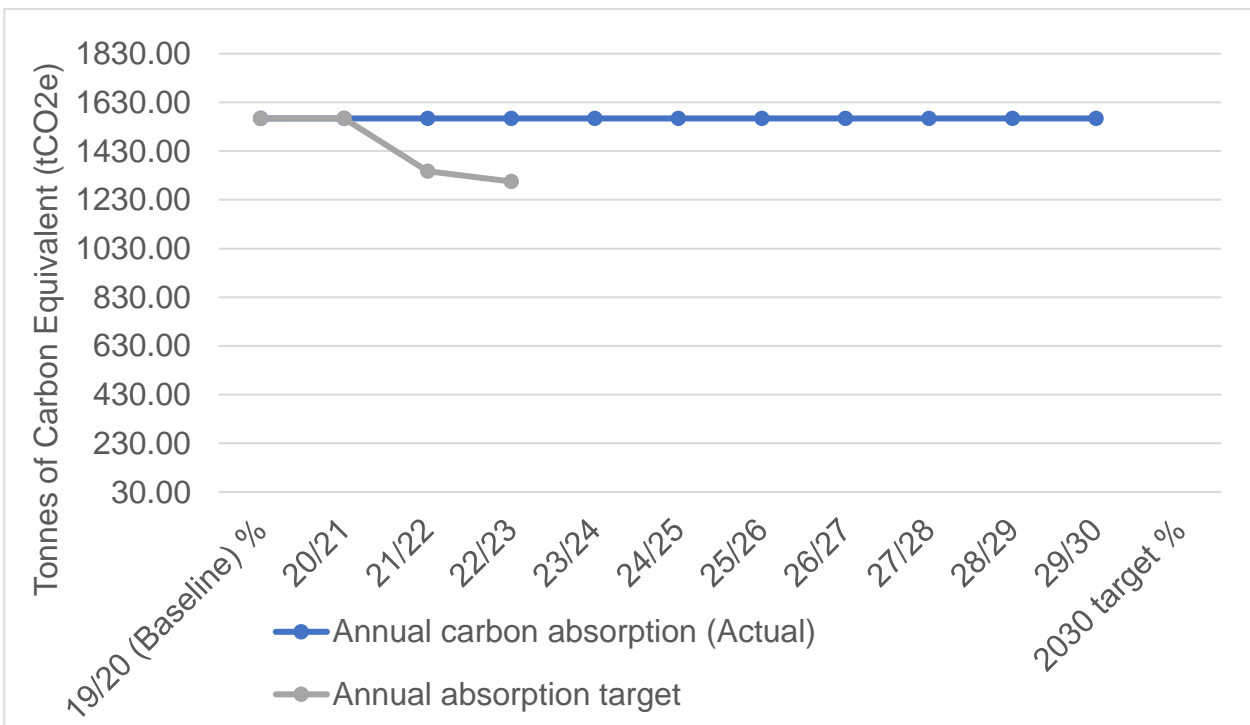
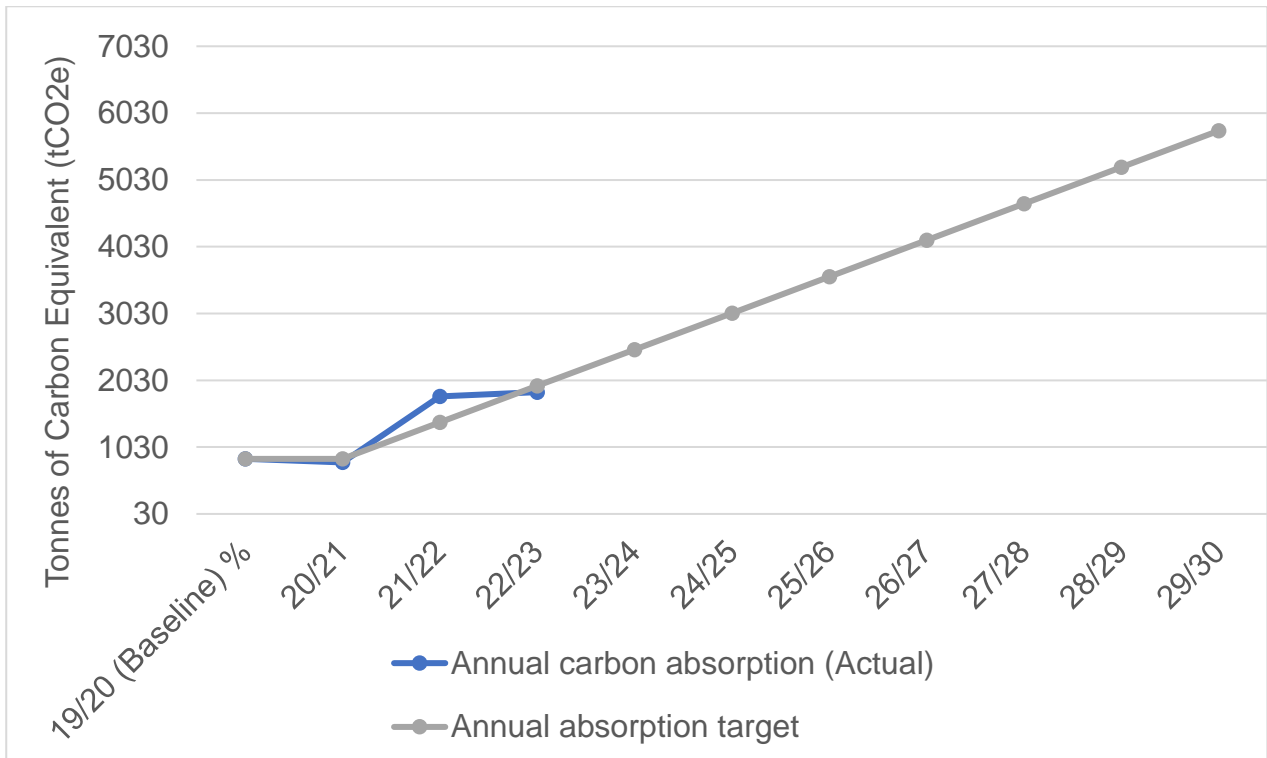


Chart 21: Annual carbon absorption from Forest Land, up to reporting year 2022/23 and annual targets



Appendix 7- Denbighshire Supply Chain Breakdown Comparison for 2019/20 (baseline) and 2022/23

Chart 22: Supply Chain Emissions per spend category in 2019/20 (tonnes CO2e)

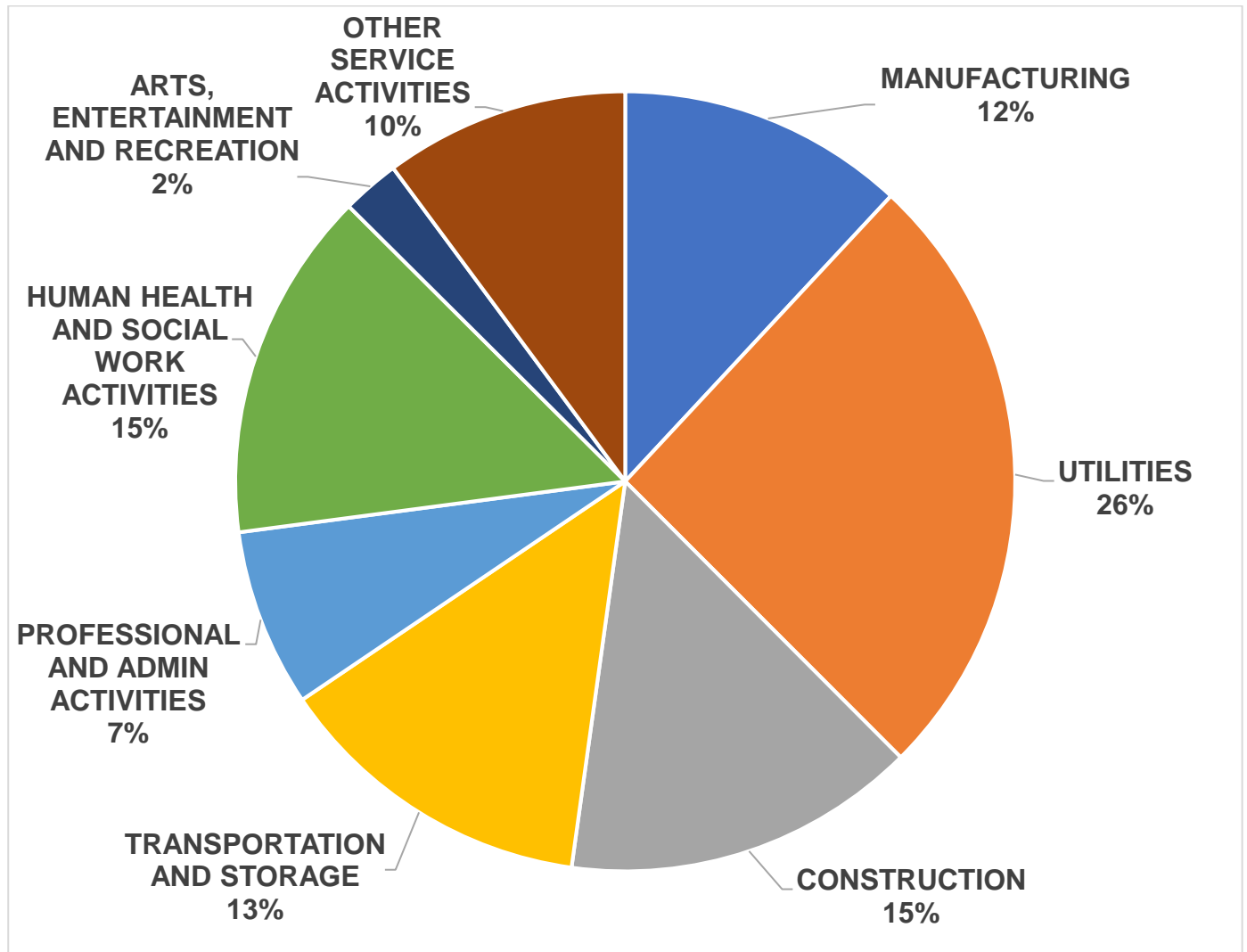
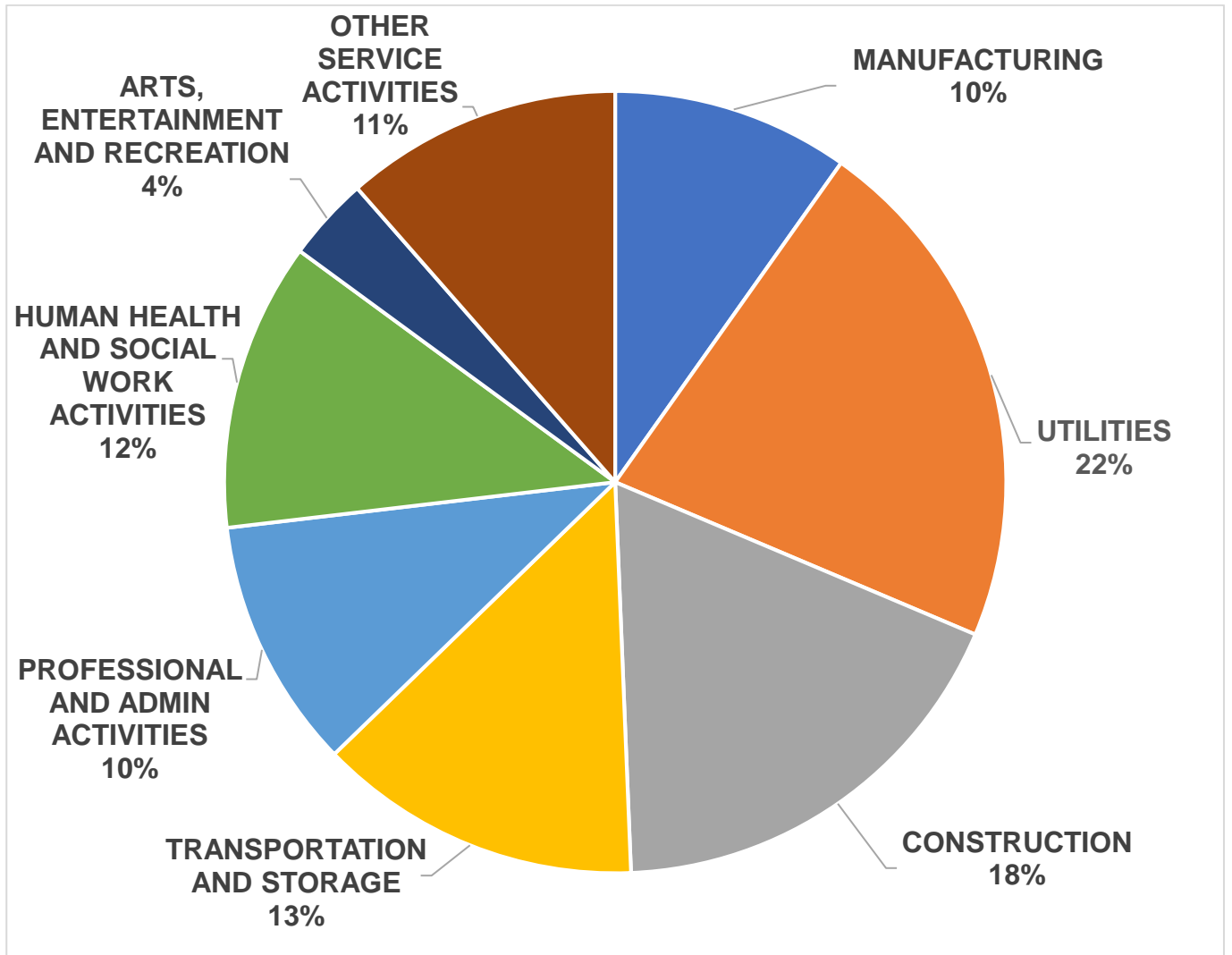


Chart 23: Supply Chain Emissions per spend category in 2022/23 (tonnes CO2e)



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Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021-2030): Well-being Impact Assessment Report

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

Assessment Number: 802

Brief description: The Strategy is all about the Council achieving Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030. The document explains what we mean by those two goals, how the Council is currently performing on both, what we hope 2030 will look like for the Council having achieved our goals and the changes and actions we hope to deliver over the next 9 years, subject to the securing of the necessary funds. The strategy contains a set of existing and new policies across the range of Council services and operations that are supportive of low carbon, increased carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement. The Strategy covers the years 2021/22 – 2029/30 and outline the projects/activities the Council intends to deliver, subject to the securing of the necessary funds, to work towards achieving our net carbon zero and ecologically positive Council goals. Note: The scope of the strategy is council owned emissions and council owned land- coverage isn't the whole of Denbighshire as a geographical county.

Date Completed: 21/05/2024 20:09:45 Version: 4

Completed by: Liz Wilcox-Jones

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

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? - DCC Staff - DCC Councillors - DLL Staff - Schools -

Those who use our buildings - Those who use our vehicles (fleet car, pool cars etc) - Our supply chain
- Shared Services - Those who use or would like to use our open green spaces - Wildlife - DCC
Volunteers - Residents, visitors, businesses, landlords who may use a more 'green' service from us
in the future.

Was this impact assessment completed as a group? 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

Long term thinking and securing legacy has been a central pillar in development and collation of the final strategy document. The postcards from the future provide clarity on a 2030 net carbon zero and ecologically positive council. Designing out carbon use and nature's decline is at the forefront of policy changes suggested to then maximise benefit for the long term. Legacy considered through rolling out carbon literacy and nature recovery training and embedding change in Council constitution.

Prevention

The strategy outlines where, what, how and when in terms of policy change, projects and activities needed for the Council to make its contribution to reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon sequestration to prevent the problem of climate change getting any worse and to improve biodiversity to combat and prevent nature's decline. The strategy review has now also expanded the scope to how the council can influence area-wide carbon reduction, sequestration and nature recovery.

Integration

Integration with other goals, priorities and objectives have been considered in the development and collation of this strategy. The supporting strategies section provides the links to other agendas. Maximising cobenefits has been a central pillar in the proposed policy changes and actions within

document. References to the local development plan and ambitions for the revised LDP to actively contribute to tackling climate and ecological change within the document, as well as the LAEP.

Collaboration

The document is for Council own emissions and council owned land and collaboration has been mainly internal but broad- involving every service area, SLT, Cabinet and MAG. Ideas within the strategy originate in part to public engagement exercise conducted in November 2023 and reviewed strategy document shaped by public consultation in May 2024.

Involvement

Ideas within the strategy originate in part to public engagement exercise conducted in November 2023 and the reviewed strategy document shaped by public consultation in May 2024. Online discussion forums on the Council's Consultation Portal are being used to continue involvement and dialogue with the public. Internally staff have been consulted via service workshops and will continue to be brought into task and finish groups to shape thinking and actions as we deliver the strategy.

Summary of impact

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

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

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

Under the five delivery principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act the Strategy scored 3 out of 4 stars (actual score 32/36). To maintain the score, it will be important to continue the collaborative and integrated approach in its delivery both internally across the Council and in consultation with the public.

Against the seven well-being goals of the Act, the potential impact of the Strategy is evaluated as 6 Positive and 1 Neutral. The strategy in its very nature of combating climate and ecological change has protecting and improving the well-being of generations now and in the future at its heart and the delivery of the programme will continue to maximise on the opportunities to do just that, with action being targeted towards inward and outward change, as well as looking to adapt and ensure resilience across communities to prepare for future impacts.

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

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Impact is a positive one due to the direct positive impact on generating a low carbon society, the improvement in infrastructure and transport and the knock on benefits around economic development, jobs and skills.

Further actions required

It will be important to minimise any negatives around any potential reduction in office accommodation. Also, to ensure the comms narrative is multifaceted and includes the multiple benefits of this agenda, as well as the climate and nature benefits.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

This strategy is all about reducing carbon and increasing carbon sequestration (carbon absorbed by Council owned and operated land).

We will aim to reduce our carbon from our supply chain, buildings, fleet, business travel, commuting, street lighting, waste.

Our learning will be shared with the public and partners.

Our staff and councillor behaviour will be encouraging for low carbon both professionally and personally.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Investment in our buildings to reduce carbon will increase the quality of them.

Investment in low carbon transport and travel to support staff and councillors to choose low carbon travel options.

Protection, restoration and creation of green spaces to provide infrastructure for well being, recreation and biodiversity.

Climate risk resilience goal aims to identify risk within local areas and put plans in place to ensure our county is resilient to future impacts of climate change.

Economic development

Leveraging environmental benefit in local communities via procurement and engagement with our supply chain.

Low carbon purchasing may increase spend in more local suppliers.

Quality skills for the long term

Investment in carbon and eco literacy training for staff and councillors which will improve their skill and knowledge.

Carbon sequestration and ecological improvement projects will provide volunteer opportunities for existing volunteers and new.

Quality jobs for the long term

The strategy will be delivered as a programme and is creating 4 permanent job roles and generate work for existing staff within project management.

The programme will target the securing of external funding which will create jobs to deliver those particular projects/initiatives.

Childcare

Encouragement and strengthening of flexible working for staff and councillors will enable positive choices for staff in making work work around other responsibilities.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

No negative impacts. This strategy is all about reducing carbon and increasing carbon sequestration.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

There may be a reduction in the number of buildings the Council own and operate in the County which potentially could impact on the footfall of people supporting rural towns.

Potential for perceived reduction in recreational space due to reduced grass cutting, tree planting and nature space creation.

Economic development

Reducing travel potentially impacting footfall in local town locations.

Quality skills for the long term

Potential automation or/and reduction of some tasks, loss of those skills.

Quality jobs for the long term

Additional new jobs could be temporary in nature if predominately externally funded.

Childcare

N/A

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of low carbon, increasing carbon sequestration, protecting and restoring biodiversity and creating resilient ecosystems.

It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions.

A biodiversity enhancing approach is often a more hands off approach with associated revenue savings, particularly if the change in management is adopted as part of bau work within teams. Similarly the reduction of energy and fuel consumption will reduce cost.

Further actions required

A holistic view around carbon reduction is required to ensure any unintended consequences are avoided in terms of deliberate action taken.

Read across from the strategy to work being undertaken in the sphere of climate change adaptation will be required (e.g. Flooding).

Taking a whole life cost approach to projects and procurement decisions, as a corporate responsibility, will be important and ensuring maintenance/management costs of any new green spaces is properly explored and reduced as much as possible via appropriate land management choices.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of protecting and restoring biodiversity and creation resilient ecosystems.

It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions.

A biodiversity enhancing approach is often a more hands off approach with associated revenue savings.

Biodiversity in the built environment

The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of protecting and restoring biodiversity

and creation resilient ecosystems.

It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

The Strategy will contain policies to support the reduction of waste and the increase in reuse and recycling.

It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions in these areas.

Reducing carbon in our supply chain should also support reducing waste as whole life costing will discover products/services which have a longer operating life.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The Strategy will contain policies to reset the default in favour of low carbon .

It will contain projects to deliver specific improvement actions to reduce energy use in our buildings and fuel consumption in our fleet. It will also target reduction of energy and fuel consumption in our business travel and staff commuting.

Energy/fuel reduction project not only reduce carbon but also reduce cost through reduced consumption.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

The strategy has been developed in consultation and engagement with the public.

The strategy includes council influence across the county and opportunities to support and guide communities, businesses and landowners about carbon reduction, sequestration and nature recovery.

Opportunities to continue the discussion and debate with the public will be taken via online discussion forums on our county conversation portal, a 6 monthly newsletter and an annual public engagement event.

Opportunities will be taken to include learning from our work into school eco committees, geography curriculum, youth forums.

Biodiversity and carbon sequestration projects could involve volunteers and will create spaces for nature and focus for awareness and education.

Flood risk management

Contributing to the reduction of carbon and mitigate the impacts of climate change will contribute to not making the flooding situation worse from rain and weather events.

Opportunities will be taken to link the carbon sequestration and ecological improvement agendas to reducing surface water, fluvial and coastal flooding e.g. upland management (tree planting), installation of urban rain gardens.

The strategy is about area wide climate risk resilience and climate adaptation.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Need to ensure if we create any new woodlands, for example, that management plan is deliverable in terms of capability and capacity.

Need to ensure we have the capacity and staff resource to manage and maintain trees planted and new nature spaces .

Biodiversity in the built environment

Need to ensure any Green Infrastructure installed is fit for purpose and properly maintained

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Products that have a longer life may cost more upfront but cost less over the lifetime of the product.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Ensure that reducing energy/fuel use in one area doesn't increase energy/fuel use in another e.g.

reducing business travel and staff commuting by more home working which increases carbon generated in the home over and above what is saved.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Use of the online Y Portal only could preclude those lacking in digital skills and connectivity the opportunity for further engagement on the development of future projects under this proposal.

Flood risk management

Collaborative working with Flood Risk Management to understand the environmental and broader climate change impacts of flood mitigation is required.

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The strategy aims to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones.

Access to local green space has been linked to better social outcomes around health and well-being.

Spaces will aim to be restored and created via the use of volunteers.

Further actions required

Need to ensure any green spaces created are designed with all users in mind including biodiversity.

Positive impacts identified:

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

The strategy will aim to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones.

Access to local green space has been linked to better social outcomes around health and well-being.

Reduced emissions and improved nature spaces will improve air quality and contribute to a health environment.

Access to good quality, healthy food

Action may fall out of this work to increase use of allotments in schools and the use of this food in school catering as well as creating community allotments and food growing spaces .

People's emotional and mental well-being

The strategy and action plan will aim to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones.

Access to local green space has been linked to better social outcomes around health and well-being.

Carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement work will involve volunteers. Volunteering and getting involved has been linked to increase sense of well being.

Access to healthcare

There may be a reduction in health related issues as people are outdoors (e.g. providing options for social prescribing)

Participation in leisure opportunities

Carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement work will involve volunteers- an active leisure option.

The strategy will aim to protect and restore existing nature spaces and create new ones. This will aim to improve and offer more options for local green spaces for leisure.

Negative impacts identified:

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

Need to ensure any spaces for nature that are created are inclusive spaces and any anti social behaviour concerns designed out from the outset.

Access to good quality, healthy food

N/A

People's emotional and mental well-being

Need to endeavour to ensure spaces and views are protected that mean a lot to people. e.g. trees aren't planted which then block a cherished view.

There could be a negative impact on those required to work from home as a result in reduction of office space/ location. Due to digitalisation of services there could be a negative impact on wellbeing due to less physical/ face to face contact, increasing social isolation.

Access to healthcare

N/A

Participation in leisure opportunities

Access for leisure needs to be balanced with requirements for land management of the space for biodiversity improvement.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

There will be a positive influence in bringing about better outcomes for all people, particularly the young and those in poverty. New actions included as part of the targeted work to influence carbon reduction, sequestration, nature recovery and risk resilience across the county, will provide support and guidance communities.

Further actions required

It will be important to ensure effective communication and staff resource is provided to maximise on the influence the council can have in influencing carbon reduction and risk resilience, in particular, within communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.

Community funding opportunities and grants will need to be capitalised upon to finance identified projects and encourage action.

Positive impacts identified:

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

Enshrined in the ethos of the strategy is for DCC to make its contribution to reduce further climate change which will be damaging to the wellbeing of all people but particularly those young people who will need to live with climate change impacts the longest.

Enshrined in the strategy and action plan is taking a long term view.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

N/A

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

The strategy includes supporting and influencing carbon reduction and area-wide risk resilience, which will particularly benefit those in fuel poverty in private rented/social housing/private owned homes.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

The protection, restoration and creation of new green spaces in urban as well as rural locations will provide access to spaces for exercise and recreation. People in deprived areas will benefit from a reduction of travel and the conversion of miles into low carbon options will improve air quality and reduce congestion.

Negative impacts identified:

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

If more services are digitalised, consideration would need to be given to accessibility to mitigate any possible negative impact for those with disabilities.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

N/A

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Ensuring the funding and capacity is available to carry out area-wide carbon reduction influence and risk resilience planning.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

N/A

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The development of the strategy has involved the public from the outset via the emergency declaration to the public engagement period in early 2020 and strategy consultation in November/December 2020. There is an active group of c.93 members of the public who are engaged on this agenda with regular 2 way dialogue with DCC. Increasing low carbon travel options and the quality and quantity of green spaces will have a positive impact on the attractiveness of local areas, connected communities and rural resilience.

Most recently the 3 year strategy review has included a public engagement evening in November 2023 and a public consultation in May 2024, where feedback has been directly incorporated into the

revised strategy.

Further actions required

Need to ensure no one is left behind in the shift to digitalised services.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

N/A

Community participation and resilience

Development of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy started in January with the public engagement period asking for the public's feedback on the Council's proposed net carbon zero and ecologically positive Council goals. Summary of the responses received can be accessed here:- <https://countyconversation.denbighshire.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Public%20Engagement-%20Summary%20Report.pdf>.

The DCC Staff Council have been asked for their ideas.

Workshops with each service area took place in June, July and August to gather ideas and information for policies and projects within each service function to support the Council in becoming net carbon zero and ecologically positive by 2030.

The final draft Climate and Ecological Change Strategy went out for public consultation during November/December. Summary of the responses received can be accessed here:- <https://countyconversation.denbighshire.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Public%20Consultation%20on%20Draft%20Summary%20Report.pdf>

Most recently, during the 3 year review, this process has been updated with staff service workshops taking place in September 2023, a public engagement event taking place in November 2023, a public consultation taking place in May 2024. The results of which are currently being reviewed and incorporated into the final revised strategy document.

The Council will continue to engage with the public proactively, constructively and sensitively on this

agenda being very clear on the scope and scale of the Council's targets. This will be via online discussion forums hosted by the Council on our County Conversation platform, email digests to the 'green mailing group' and an annual public event.

The attractiveness of the area

The strategy will target the protection, restoration and creation of 'green' spaces and the access to quality natural habitat across Denbighshire.

The strategy is about reducing carbon from business travel, staff commuting and fleet- reducing miles travelled and converting as many miles to low carbon which will reducing pollution, improve air quality and reduce congestion.

Connected communities

The strategy may lead to projects relating to low carbon travel, e.g. bus provision/cycle ways, car share schemes across the county to encourage people out of their cars.

Rural resilience

The strategy will target the protection, restoration and creation of 'green' spaces and the access to quality natural habitat across the whole of Denbighshire

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

N/A

Community participation and resilience

There is a risk of not meeting public expectation on this agenda, despite the scope of the strategy being amended in the 3 year review to include targeting reduction of the carbon emissions across the whole of Denbighshire as a county.

The attractiveness of the area

Need to ensure we have the capability and capacity to manage and maintain whatever we put

in/install/create to ensure attractiveness for the long term

Connected communities

Need to ensure the staff and councillors feel connected even if there is more home working.

Rural resilience

As the Council continues to channel shift delivery to more online and less physical, need to make sure that broadband infrastructure is sufficient in all areas of the county to support this. As well as addressing any other possible barriers e.g. access to services, digital skillset.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

Whilst Denbighshire's natural environment is a big contributor to the culture and heritage of the county, the strategy will not deliver direct deliberative action to generate a vibrant culture or a thriving Welsh language.

Further actions required

Ensure a good amount of time is provided to support welsh translation of any technical/specialist terminology documents.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

N/A

Promoting the Welsh language

All literature, signage, information boards will be provided in both Welsh and English.

Any public meetings will have bilingual slides and translator.

Consultation/ Online forums to be carried out bilingually.

Culture and heritage

Reducing the running cost of culture and heritage sites by reducing energy and fuel use will contribute to the financial viability of these sites/services.

Protecting and restoring nature's landmarks as part of this programme will support their availability for future generations.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

N/A

Promoting the Welsh language

Specialist terminology is sometimes difficult to translate.

Culture and heritage

Consideration needs to be given to what is and isn't permissible on buildings within conservation area.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Our carbon footprint includes our supply chain and the strategy will target reduction of carbon emissions from our supply chain. This has the potential to stimulate local supply chains and provide

local benefit. The programme will also look to leverage environmental benefit at the community level via Community Benefits process which will include the supported delivery of carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancing projects. The delivery of the climate and ecological change programme will be done in collaboration with neighbouring authorities and partners, where possible. It is vital it is approached corporately across the authority.

Further actions required

Need to ensure the climate and ecological change strategy is understood by our partners and neighbouring authorities so opportunities for collaboration are identified and progressed. Build in time for collaboration.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The strategy will target reduction of carbon emissions from our supply chain. This will lead to the development of low carbon encouraging specification for goods and services which will include transportation from point of origin to us as the client. This has the potential to stimulate local supply chains and provide local benefit.

The programme will also look to leverage environmental benefit at the community level via Community Benefits process which will include the supported delivery of carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancing projects.

Human rights

N/A

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

The strategy will help support the Public Service Board (PSB) in the delivery of their "Environmental Resilience" goal.

The procurement service is a shared service with Flintshire County Council (FCC) and so work to decarbonise our supply chain can lead to more joint procurement and benefit in both counties.

The strategy and action plan will provide the narrative on which to seek external funding which we can do collaboratively across the region.

Reducing climate change

The strategy outlines where, what, how and when in terms of policy change, projects and activities needed for the Council to make its contribution to reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon sequestration to prevent the problem of climate change getting any worse and to improve biodiversity to combat and prevent nature's decline.

The strategy will make our contribution to the Welsh Government policy for the public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030, for Wales to meet its legally binding target of reducing emissions by at least 95% by 2050 and supports the Council's statutory duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to "seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity".

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The focus on local supply chain may mean spend on more national and international supply chains will reduce.

Human rights

N/A

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

Collaboration can sometimes slow progress initially but can lead to better outcomes. Need to programme in time for collaboration.

Reducing climate change

N/A

Appendix 3 – Activity undertaken as part of the Year 3 Review and Refresh of Denbighshire County Council’s Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30)

- Launching of approach and agreeing parameters to work within with CET and Performance Scrutiny March- June 2023.
- An initial public online survey was run between 18th May to 2nd July 2023 and an in person public workshop completed in November 2023.
- Service specific workshops were run with all service areas in November 2023.
- Engagement throughout with Greener Denbighshire Board and cross-party political Climate Change and Ecological Emergency working group throughout.
- Engagement throughout with Lead Member (Barry Mellor) and CET Lead/Programme Sponsor (Gary Williams).
- Engagement and confirmation of actions within document with Heads of Service, Middle Managers and key officers in the Council.
- Review of updated draft at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on 8th February and Cabinet Briefing on 4th March.
- A public consultation was run on the updated draft from March 25th until May 20th 2024 and strategy was discussed at all Member Area Groups.
- Outlining the conclusions of the Year 3 review and refresh and in particular the public consultation responses in detail with Cabinet Briefing on 3rd June and Performance Scrutiny on 6th June.

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You Said, We Did

**Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature
Strategy Public Consultation
May 2024**

Contents

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Background

Denbighshire County Council declared a [Climate and Ecological Emergency](#) in July 2019 which committed the Council to become net carbon zero by 2030 and improve biodiversity.

The [Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy \(2021/22 – 2029/30\)](#) was adopted in February 2021. This strategy is planned to be reviewed and refreshed every 3 years and this consultation is to gather feedback for the first of these reviews to enable us to produce an updated version of that strategy.

We ran an online public survey in May 2023 and a public event in November 2023 asking for your feedback on the Council's net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals and your ideas on how the Council can achieve them by 2030. It was also a chance to get initial feedback on the new proposed areas for inclusion, in this revised strategy, around supporting the reduction of carbon emissions, increased carbon absorption and nature recovery across Denbighshire, as well as increasing our resilience to the impacts of climate change in Denbighshire.

Building on your ideas we have worked with Members and Officers from across the Council to develop the Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 – 2029/30) (Year 3 Updated Draft Version).

This public consultation will gather feedback on that draft updated version. The document explains what we mean by the goals net carbon zero and ecologically positive Council, how the Council is currently performing on both, what we hope 2030 will look like for the Council having achieved our goals and the changes and actions we hope to deliver over the next 6 years.

Public Consultation Survey

A survey to gather feedback on the year 3 revised Climate and Ecological change Strategy was conducted between March 22nd and May 20th 2024, using the Council's County Conversation website. The survey was advertised in the 'News' pages of the website, on social media and via a press release sent to local newspapers.

Print on demand copies of the survey were also made available at local libraries.

The Council would like to thank everyone who took the time and effort to provide feedback. The results and actions resulting from that feedback are outlined below.

Summary of Results

Question 1: Do you want Denbighshire County Council to adopt the Revised Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/202 to 2029/30) (Year 3 Updated Draft Version)?

Response to this question outlined in table below and percentage given of the total responses received. Majority of respondents agreed that they did wish the Council to adopt the document.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	295	88%
No	41	12%
Total	336	

Question 2: What do you LIKE about the Revised Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 to 2029/30) (Year 3 Updated Draft Version)?

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

Responses to this question was via an open comments box. A summary of key themes and contributions to this question analysed as follows:

- Increased scope of strategy to include county wide carbon emission reduction, carbon absorption, nature recovery and risk resilience
- The intention to explore the increased provision of plant based / vegan / low carbon food options provided by the schools' catering service
- Green space in new social housing: The proposal to incorporate allotments and space for nature in all new social housing developments
- Greener Denbighshire Board and the intention to take a 12-month review paper to Full Council each year. It was felt this shows transparent monitoring arrangements are place
- [Climate Score Cards](#) has been acted upon and utilised to inform actions
- Investment in the improved energy efficiency of the buildings, lighting and vehicles owned and managed by Denbighshire. This action could have a good financial return on the investment, with the reduced emissions as a useful benefit
- Reduction in summer cutting of green space is worthwhile if it reduces overall management costs and does not impact road safety, for example, on highways verges
- Realistic and easy to understand
- Effort to incorporate area wide goals and work with landowners
- Effort to include increased low carbon energy solutions e.g. hydrogen bin lorry trials
- Like that the actions separated by years (action layout)
- Like the informative tables and measurable goals
- Like the action to decarbonise the Clwyd Pension fund
- Like the action to incorporate allotments and space for nature across council owned land
- Good transparency of the delivery of the strategy through regular reviews
- Council commitment and ambition

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

Question 3: What do you NOT LIKE about the Revised Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 to 2029/30) (Year 3 Updated Draft Version)?

Responses to this question was via an open comments box. A summary of key themes and contributions to this question analysed as follows:

- The title – Suggestion that the existing title is benign and the word ‘ecological’ was not widely used or understood. New title suggestion of ‘Denbighshire County Council’s Climate and Nature Strategy’ or ‘Greener Denbighshire - Our Climate and Nature Strategy’
- The length – it’s felt the document is a daunting read for the public. Infographics not detailed enough. Request for an ‘easy read’ or youth version
- Pie chart colour schemes to be consistent
- This strategy review has taken over a year to complete and does not indicate that the Council is responding to an emergency
- Supply chain emissions: further explanation is needed around what is included in these emissions, action being taken and why progress is poor
- Carbon emissions reductions are low: further explanation is needed regarding overall low carbon reduction progress
- Visible list of all the ideas / suggestions made and a list of those adopted was requested
- Further explanation around previous and new suggestions and how these have been used to inform the revised document
- Request to see the report created following the public consultation event and other options to be considered for future consultation events
- Further explanation around Carbon sequestration and included graphs. It was felt this is not clear to the average person. This needs a plain language explanation to be of any use to the public.
- Further explanation requested regarding targets and budgets
- More needed to aid with the protection of hedgerows and ‘wild’ habitats, e.g. gorse and shrub areas. When is this going to be achieved? Can it be expanded to private house owners?

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

- Climate Emergency UK – UK Scorecards: Request to ensure the council is making use of this organisation
- Concern about financial cost
- Needs more input from residents and relevant organisations
- More biodiversity in urban areas
- A challenge to do enough, global issue
- Lack of specific inclusion of nature spaces and allotment space in developments
- More renewable energy in urban areas needed
- More County Councillor involvement
- Low carbon reduction to date empathises the magnitude of the challenge

Question 4: Any other comments?

Responses to this question was via an open comments box. Key themes and contributions to this question analysed as follows:

- Request to have a pie chart for territorial emissions in 2021 / 22
- Question regarding will the council be joining Larder Cymru, as other north Wales councils have, to support local food in schools and other catering provided by the Council?
- Question asking ‘Why can’t green space for nature and allotment space be requested for all developments - private housing and buildings of any sort?’
- Praise for taking the climate and ecological emergency seriously
- Important for the council to act quickly
- Hope for Wales to be first Race to Zero nation
- Request to support local farmers with this ambition
- Ensure the progress is clearly outlined with challenges and shortfalls made clear – target and known pathways explained
- To prioritise actions in the strategy to make these actions SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound)
- Ensure the Climate Scorecards are utilised and used to inform and direct action

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

- There were also comments from respondents who did not feel the climate emergency should be a council priority

Amendments to the Final Strategy

As a result of the survey responses and feedback, the following changes have been incorporated into, or are being explored for, the final strategy version due to be taken to Full Council for adoption in July 2024.

Feedback / Theme	Suggested response/ change to be made
Request to include a pie chart for territorial emissions in 2021 / 22	Will be in final version
Will you be joining Larder Cymru, as other north Wales councils have, to support local food in schools and other catering provided by the Council?	Taken as an action to investigate and include necessary wording in the strategy document
The request to incorporate allotments and space for nature in all new developments	To be discussed with planning and biodiversity colleagues - planning policy will dictate what is required but we will explore how this can be encouraged- and work to include necessary wording in the strategy document

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

Feedback / Theme	Suggested response/ change to be made
<p>Title change request - Suggestion that the existing title is benign and the word 'ecological' was not widely used or understood. New title suggestion of 'Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy' or 'Greener Denbighshire - Our Climate and Nature Strategy'</p>	<p>Awaiting decision - Title change to 'Denbighshire County Council's Climate and Nature Strategy' to be approved internally</p>
<p>The length – feedback suggested the strategy is a daunting read for the public, with infographics not detailed enough.</p>	<p>Work in progress to create a young persons or easy read version ensuring the document is still compliant with Accessibility Standards.</p> <p>Will explore options to create an executive summary to provide a high-level overview, with links to further detail.</p>
<p>The pie charts should be a consistent colour scheme.</p>	<p>Will be in final version</p>
<p>Ensure text and charts are clear e.g. error in Chart 7</p>	<p>Will be in final version</p>
<p>This strategy review has taken over a year to complete and does not indicate that the Council is responding to an emergency</p>	<p>Noted. Team changes have meant this has been delayed</p>

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

Feedback / Theme	Suggested response/ change to be made
Supply chain emissions: further explanation around what is included in these emissions, action being taken and why progress is poor	Will expand on this in final version and include supply chain summary and/or breakdown of emission by category
Carbon emissions reductions are low: further explanation on progress required	Update around latest reporting figures and challenges has been included in the Appendices and will be expanded for the final strategy version. Progress updates are also included in the bi-annual newsletter (most recent created in May 2024)
Visible list of all the ideas / suggestions made and a list of those adopted	All suggestions, approved by services, have been included in the strategy. Completed actions have been included as an Appendix
Request to see the report created following the public consultation event and other options to be considered for future consultation events	Consultation report will be circulated to those who have requested to stay in touch with the council’s climate and nature programme and uploaded to the consultation webpage, along with this document.

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

Feedback / Theme	Suggested response/ change to be made
Further explanation around previous and new suggestions and how these have been used to inform the revised document	Noted. This wording will be reviewed.
Further explanation around Carbon sequestration and included graphs. It was felt this is not clear to the average person. This needs a plain language explanation to be of any use to the public.	Noted. This wording will be reviewed.
Further explanation requested regarding targets and budgets	The challenges in achieving this target have been outlined in the strategy. However, we have not amended these targets and maintain our ambition.
More needed to aid with the protection of hedgerows and ‘wild’ habitats, e.g. gorse and shrub areas. When is this going to be achieved? Can it be expanded to private house owners?	This will be discussed with Countryside and other relevant colleagues, but we will explore how this can be encouraged- and include necessary wording in the strategy document
Contribution towards Wales being first Race to Zero nation	Noted and investigating.
Request to support local farmers with this ambition	Noted and included as part of the increased scope of the strategy to influence carbon reduction,

You Said, We Did – Revised Strategy Public Consultation, May 2024

Feedback / Theme	Suggested response/ change to be made
	absorption, nature recovery and risk resilience across the county.
Ensure the progress is clearly outlined with challenges and shortfalls made clear	Will be included in the final version - additional graphs included in the appendix. Target and known pathways explained further
To prioritise actions in the strategy to make these actions SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound)	Noted and team will work to implement following successful adoption of the revised strategy
Ensure the Climate Scorecards are utilised and used to inform and direct action	Noted and areas identified as requiring action will be included in the final version

Appendix 5: Notable Risks of Adopting this Strategy

RISK	DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION ACTION
<p>Affordability of the Council being able to achieve its net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals.</p>	<p>There is a risk that the Council is unable to commit or attract sufficient resource (revenue and capital) to coordinate the programme, deliver net carbon zero and ecologically positive projects and deliver other projects in an enhanced-eco way meaning funding bids are not submitted, opportunities not maximised, actions are not delivered and benefits are not realised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to capitalise on our track record of securing external grants and reputation for delivering well on pilot projects. • Proactively seeking external finance with Welsh Government and Whitehall Departments using the strategy as our narrative. • Submitting strong and coordinated external funding bids, working collaboratively across the region as well as across internal DCC departments. • Ongoing dialogue with Section 151 officer in relation to longer financial plans via the Medium Term Financial Plan. • Implementing whole life costing into business case process to capture fully the long term costs and benefits of schemes. • Maximising on the delivery of the many projects which save both money and carbon annually for the Council.
<p>Meeting Public Expectation.</p>	<p>There is a risk of not meeting public expectation on this agenda and the democratic and reputational damage that could cause.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with the public proactively, constructively and sensitively on this agenda being open and transparent on challenges. • Through working with the Public Service Board (PSB) and community development partners, support the public in contributing

RISK	DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION ACTION
		<p>personally to this agenda at a community level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating the Council's existing and continued success in this agenda via press releases/social media and ensuring the public are aware of the range of work the Council are undertaking.
<p>Opportunities and challenges beyond our immediate control to reduce carbon and enhance biodiversity.</p>	<p>There is a risk that new opportunities and challenges that are beyond our immediate control may arise between now and 2030 that we need to respond to that will enable us to go further on reducing our carbon emissions or conversely restrict our achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon scan and keep abreast of developments within the climate and energy sectors. • Annual review paper to Full Council stating any major changes impacting the strategy. • Formally review and refresh the strategy document every 3 years up until 2030 (2026/27).

Appendix 6 - Power to make the decision, further detail

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

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Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	25 th June 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Jason McLellan, Leader and Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation / Tony Ward, Corporate Director: Environment and Economy
Report author	Tony Ward, Corporate Director: Environment and Economy
Title	Long Term Plan for Towns: Rhyl

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report is about the recently announced c.£20m fund for Rhyl, which is part of the UK Government's Long-Term Plan for Towns initiative.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To report back to Cabinet about the delegated decisions and actions implemented by the Corporate Director: Environment and Economy and the Leader/Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation following the Cabinet meeting on 21st May 2024.

3. What are the recommendations?

- 3.1. That Cabinet note and support the information included in, and appended to, this report, including the appointment as Chair of the new Rhyl Board and the proposed membership of the Board. The information submitted to UK Government is attached at Appendix A.

4. Report details

- 4.1. In September 2023, the UK Government launched the Long-Term Plan for Towns initiative as part of its levelling up programme. On 6th March 2024, it was announced that Rhyl would receive c.£20m as one of the 2nd tranche of towns to be included in the initiative. The funding will be awarded to DCC, and we remain accountable for the funding and for delivery of the plan.
- 4.2. DCC were required to invite a suitable person to become Chair of a new Rhyl Town Board by 3rd June 2024. This was to be a respected figure with an obvious passion for Rhyl and be best placed to convene partners, e.g. a businessperson or a local community leader. The person selected to become the Chair is Adam Roche. Among other things, Adam is the volunteer Managing Director of Rhyl Football Club. A pen portrait is included within Appendix A.
- 4.3. By 3rd June 2024, DCC were required to submit the Chair biography, Board Structure, Terms of Reference, Conflict of Interest Policy, and the Town Boundaries form. This task was delegated by Cabinet (on 21st May 2024) to the Corporate Director: Environment and Economy and the Leader/Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation. The information submitted to UK Government is attached at Appendix A.
- 4.4. Subsequently, by **1 November 2024**, the Board must do the following:
 - Agree Governance.
 - Agree an engagement plan.
 - Undertake a data review.
 - Undertake public engagement.
 - Develop the 10-year Vision.
 - Develop the delivery plan for the first 3-year period.
- 4.5. The Long-Term (10-year) Vision for the town must be based on the priorities of local people. It must set out the town's vision and priorities for investment and regeneration, aligned to the three themes of: 1) safety and security; 2) high streets, heritage and regeneration; and 3) transport and connectivity. This, and the 3-year Delivery Plan, need to be agreed and submitted by 1st November 2024.

4.6. Rhyl will receive a 10-year endowment-style fund of c.£20 million. The intention is that this will provide long term certainty to deliver projects over multiple years and the flexibility to invest in interventions based on evolving local needs and priorities. Although DCC/the Board will receive an annual amount (c.£2m per year), the funding does not all have to be spent each year and it can be rolled forward, at least within the period of each 3-year delivery plan.

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

5.1. The Long-Term Plan for Towns will support the Council's corporate plan themes, but in particular the Prosperous Denbighshire Board.

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

6.1. The Town Board will need to be supported by officers from a range of council services. Funding is available to help with the tasks required to be completed by 1 Nov 2024, for example, £200k will be available for public engagement work and to support the development of the 10-year vision and 3-year delivery plan.

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

7.1. No WBIA has been undertaken in relation to this report.

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

8.1. Given the timescales, there has been little opportunity for consultation so far. However, updates have been provided to Rhyl MAG by email, and the item was an agenda item in the Rhyl Reference Group on 25th April 2024.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. The report sets out the headline terms and conditions for the £20m of funding announced for Rhyl as part of the UK Government's Long-Term Plans for Towns initiative.

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

10.1. The main risk initially is not meeting the deadlines for submitting information to UK Government, which would result in not being awarded the funding.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. s24 Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021 – general power of competence.

11.2. Table 4, Appendix 1 to Section 13, Council Constitution.



Long Term Plan for Towns
Town Board Governance and Boundary Change requests

Purpose

This form is designed to capture information regarding the activity undertaken to date in each town to prepare for development and delivery of their Long-Term Plan. This information will be used to assess the readiness of local areas for the next stage of Plan development and to review, and agree where necessary, the geographic area to be covered by the Long-Term Plan intervention.

Completion Instructions

This form should be completed by the lead Local Authority for the relevant town.

It should be completed and submitted to the Department for levelling Up, Housing and Communities by email to LTPFTSubmit@levellingup.gov.uk, once the following have been established:

- Town Board membership
- Geographic area to be supported by the Long-Term Plan

Supplementary Guidance is provided to support completion of this form.

When completing this form, Local Authorities should also note the Town Board and programme requirements outlined in the [Long-Term Plan for Towns: guidance for local authorities and Town Boards Guidance](#), published in December 2024.

Town	Rhyl
Local Authority	Denbighshire County Council

1. Board Membership

- Please advise whether your Town Board is an interim Board or has been finalised.

~~Interim~~

Final

Any Interim Board will need to have any new members in place and finalised before submitting your Investment plan

Are all members fully engaged? Yes ~~No~~

If No please comment on any issues here:

Please provide details of your Town Board members:



Membership	Details
<p>Chair (Please provide a pen picture separately – For information only)</p> <p>Has your MP been involved in the selection of your Chair</p>	<p>Name: Adam Roche Organisation: Rhyl FC Role within Organisation: Managing Director & Club Secretary Contact Details: adamroche@rhylfc.co.uk 1st point of Board contact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Comment: MP sent out advert for chair role, has been kept informed and provided a letter of support for Adam Roche in this role. However, due to UK parliament being dissolved, there are currently no MP for Rhyl until the General Election on 4th July.</p>
<p>Secretariat Lead</p>	<p>Name: Tony Ward Organisation: DCC Role within Organisation: Director Contact Details: tony.ward@denbighshire.gov.uk 1st point of Board contact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Member(s) of Parliament</p>	<p>Name: TBC post election</p>
<p>Local Councillors</p>	<p>Name: Cllr Barry Mellor Council: Denbighshire County Council Name: Cllr Jason McClelland Council: Denbighshire County Council</p>
<p>Police and Crime Commissioner or their appointed representative or Senior Representative from the Police in Scotland</p>	<p>Name: Wayne Jones Organisation: North Wales Police Role within Organisation: Deputy PCC</p>
<p>Other Board membership 11 other members</p>	<p>Name: Cllr Andrew Rutherford Organisation: Rhyl Town Council Role within Organisation: Councillor Name: Chris Ruane Organisation: Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council Role within Organisation: Deputy Chair Name: Fiona Davies Organisation: Foryd Community Group Role within Organisation: Chair Name: Suzzane Mazzone Organisation: Clwyd Alyn Role within Organisation: Executive Director Housing services Name: Revd. Paul Robinson Organisation: ASK centre ran by Church - The United Church Rhyl</p>



	<p>Role within Organisation: Minster Name: Sue Nash Organisation: White Rose Shopping Centre Role within Organisation: Centre Manager Name: Nadeem Ahmed Organisation: Jean Emporium Role within Organisation: Manager Name: Rhiannon Wyn Hughes Organisation: Wicked Wales Films Role within Organisation: Festival Director Name: Jim Jones Organisation: North Wales Tourism Role within Organisation: Manager Name: Rona Jones Organisation: Emmanuel School Role within Organisation: Headteacher Name: Gareth Matthews Organisation: Itec Training Solutions Role within Organisation: Director</p>
<p>Regular Observer(s) (if appropriate) 1. 2</p>	<p>Name: SI Owain Llewlyn Organisation: North Wales Police Role within Organisation: Superintendent</p>
	<p>Name: Peter James Organisation: Welsh Government Regeneration Team Role within Organisation: Regeneration Manager</p>
	<p>Name: Tony Ward or representative Organisation: Denbighshire County Council Role within Organisation: Director</p> <p>Name: Liz Thomas or representative Organisation: Denbighshire County Council Role within Organisation: Head of Finance and Audit (Section 151)</p>

2. Geographical Boundary

There is scope to make representations to the department to alter your town boundary. Please indicate below whether this will be your intention

Do you intend to use the Geographical Boundary of your Town as detailed in the Data Pack provided by DLUHC?	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
If No please provide a clear rationale for any changes including why they are	The proposed boundary uses the existing City, Town and Community Council boundary for Denbighshire. The black



required to successfully deliver the programme in the local area.

Please note that any changes requested, will need to align with the spirit of the programme, reflect the 3 policy areas detailed in the Guidance, result in a single contiguous geographic area and any changes requested must still allow the benefits of the fund to be realised for your Town as indicated by the ONS BUA map, as outlined in the data pack.

The revised boundary must not exclude any areas from the original boundary as indicated in the ONS BUA map.

Please also provide evidence that the board is in agreement with the revised boundary and a revised map overlaying the original map in the data pack.

outline on the map is the current, accepted Rhyl Town Council area which is made up of all Rhyl electoral divisions. As this boundary excludes a small area of the original BUA map for Rhyl we are proposing to expand this boundary slightly as denoted by the dashed boundary line on the map to ensure compliance with the requirement to ensure all areas within the original boundary are included. This proposal is supported by the Chair for the Town Board.

The proposed small change to the boundary would seek to include:

1. There is a very small section of housing in the north east corner which is in the Rhyl community boundary but not in the UK Gov boundary. There is also a small caravan site in this grey section. These are considered part of Rhyl. The other side of the black line is the start of Prestatyn, the neighbouring town. (FYI - The long grey stretch within the black boundary is Rhyl golf course). This will extend the reach for the transport and connectivity and safety and security interventions in particular.
2. The promenade (which is adjacent to the Town Centre) is not within the UK Gov Boundary but would be within the DCC Boundary. This area runs adjacent to the town centre and is the location for a number of visitor attractions. This area is likely to be of interest to the board around the theme of safety and security.
3. Rhyl's Marine lake is not within the UK Gov built areas boundary but would fall into the DCC boundary. This is a visible landmark at one of the entry points to Rhyl and is a potential area for regeneration and is likely to be of interest to the board around the theme of safety and security.
4. Brickfields Nature Reserve is not within the UK Gov built areas boundary but would fall into the DCC boundary. This is an attraction for both residents and



	<p>visitors and is likely to be of interest to the board around the themes of regeneration and safety and security.</p> <p>Including these areas will ensure that the Board is able to target interventions to these areas should the data and engagement activities highlight them as a priority.</p>
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3. Supplementary Documentation

Please find below a list of Board documents that need to be provided to DLUHC ahead of any agreement to your proposals or release of Capacity funding.

3a. Documents to be provided to DLUHC:

A Chairperson Pen picture?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
A copy of your terms of reference?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
A copy of your Code of Conduct?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
A copy of your Conflicts of Interest Policy and record of entries (if available)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of Board Consensus to Boundary changes? If appropriate	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
A revised boundary map that overlays your new geographical boundary onto the ONS Map in your data pack? If appropriate	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Any missing documentation from above will result in the delay of payment of the next tranche of your capacity funding.

In line with the principles of public life, the operations of the Town Board must be transparent. The Town Board should therefore ensure it publishes membership and governance arrangements (including minutes of meetings and decision logs) on the lead council’s website.

3b. Please indicate below which documents have been published on your Lead Council’s website and where these will be added at a future date?

		If No please confirm date of publication
--	--	--



Board Membership	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Waiting for internal sign off from DCC members before publishing on the website. Will also require translation. Likely to follow during June
Decision logs	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Board meeting is yet to take place. Once inaugural meeting has taken place, minutes and papers will be published in line with guidance
Board papers including minutes	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Board meeting is yet to take place. Once inaugural meeting has taken place, minutes and papers will be published in line with guidance
Boundary Map	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Waiting for internal sign off from DCC members before publishing on the website. Will also require translation. Likely to follow during June
Policies	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Waiting for internal sign off from DCC members before publishing on the website. Will also require translation. Likely to follow during June

4. Engagement

As set out in the guidance, we expect the Long Plan for Towns to have been developed in close consultation with local residents and for this to be well evidenced. You should use the capacity funding provided to do so and consider passporting some or all of this funding to local community organisations. This section will provide the assurance that the Town Board has the capacity to undertake stakeholder engagement as detailed in the guidance and will enable us to establish areas where the DLHUHC Taskforce can offer support.

Please advise what community stakeholder engagement has been or will be undertaken ahead of the submission of your Investment Plan	To date there has been no community engagement due to no similar town board being already established in Rhyl. Before the Submission on November the 1 st the Board will meet on a monthly/bi-monthly basis to order to discuss and implement a plan of action for community engagement leading up to the submission and throughout the duration of the 10 year plan. This is likely to consist of a number of methods of engagement, to utilise the expertise and resourced available of those who make up the Rhyl Town Board. Such as:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident surveys on what matters most to the community • Outreach workshops with underrepresented groups • Workshops within local schools • Local Community group outreach programmes
Are there any areas where DLUHC or the Task Force can support you in, when developing interventions for your Investment Plan?	Until the first board meeting is held, it is unclear at this stage.
Do you require any support in undertaking your community engagement activity?	Until the first board meeting is held, it is unclear at this stage. Likely to require some level of support as capacity within DCC is restricted.


Capacity Funding

Please confirm how you are planning on allocating your next tranche of capacity funding, particularly with regard to funding for community or civic society groups.		
Organisation	Activity	Amount
Specialist Consultants (TBD)	Likely to commission specialist consultancy for the development of the statistical evidence base for the 10 year vision and 3 year investment plan, with a remit to cross reference with community generated insight and other qualitative evidence.	TBD
DCC Secretariat Function	Whilst we have chosen to commission specialist support to undertake the development of our evidence base to underpin our vision and plans, DCC will provide a secretariat function to support the Board in co-ordinating and ensuring the breadth and depth of our Community Engagement. We are likely to require a contribution for oncosts and estimated financial services, for this support from the Community Engagement capacity funding. This covers the community engagement function of this role for the first year of the programme.	TBD
DCC/Town Board	It is likely we will undertake a series of workshops and stakeholder events for the development of the 10 year plan vision and investment plan. This will require a level of capacity funding in order to run the workshops.	TBD

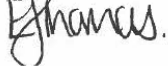


Various	It is likely we will allocate a level of funding to community groups/organisations/ social enterprises that reach out to a broad coverage of the town population to run workshops to reach out to their own networks in order to feed into the overall investment plan for Rhyl.	TBD
Various	We will liaise with business leaders to identify the best ways that the funding can support business engagement and what this will look like.	TBD
	DCC finance support as required.	TBD
	Communications and branding materials and translation costs	

Board Signatory (E-signature accepted)

Signed By	Signature: 	Name (Printed): ADAM ROCHE
Date	03/06/2024	
Position Held	Chair	

Local Authority S.151 Officer Signatory (E-signature accepted)

Signed By	Signature: 	Name (Printed): LIZ THOMAS
Date	01/06/2024	
Position Held	Head of Finance and Audit (Section 151 Officer at DCC)	

Intro and Background

In September 2023, the UK Government launched its 'Long-Term Plan for Towns', as part of the Levelling-Up programme. This programme intends to invest £1.1 billion in 55 towns over ten years. In March 2024, an extension was made to add a further 20 towns across the UK to the programme. Rhyl has been selected as part of this extension to receive £20 million in endowment-style funding from 2024/25, delivering a range of interventions across 3 broad investment themes:

- Safety and Security
- High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration
- Transport & Connectivity

Funding will be released to be invested over a 10-year period and will be split 25% revenue, 75% capital. Rhyl is one of five Welsh towns to have been selected for funding. Other funding should also be considered to support the delivery of the Town Plan.

In establishing how this funding is to be invested, the UK Government is taking a distinct approach by requiring the establishment of Town Boards as new decision-making bodies. These are to bring together residents, business and community leaders to devise and agree a shared vision for the future and to develop entrepreneurial, creative and forward-looking initiatives for each town. By devolving investment decisions to the town level, the Government also seeks the development of the capacity of local places to deliver positive change.

Milestones and Progress

For the additional 20 towns in tranche two the UK Government expects that by 3rd June:

- Local Authorities receive £50k of capacity funding
- A Chair is appointed to the Town Board
- Local Authorities work with the Chair to set up the Town Board
- A Town Board is established
- Town Boards start planning and initiating community engagement.

Rhyl successfully met the deadline of 3rd June and submitted the following to UK Government for review:

- UK Government LTPfT Governance Form
- Supporting ToR, MoU, Chair of the Board Pen and LTP boundary map

The chair, working alongside DCC decided upon the Board and is made up of the following members (May 2024), comprising:

Member	Organisation/representative	Category
Adam Roche	Rhyl Football Club	Chair
Cllr Barry Mellor	Local Authority	Compulsory Board Member
Cllr Jason McClelland	Local Authority	Compulsory Board Member
TBC	MP	Compulsory Board Member
Wayne Jones	Deputy PCC	Compulsory Board Member
Cllr Andrew Rutherford	Rhyl Town Council	Requested Member
Chris Ruane	DVSC Chair/ Board Member and Rhyl Resident	Community Partner

Fiona Davies	Chair of Foryd Community Group	Community Partner
Suzzane Mazzone	Clwyd Alyn	Community Partner
Revd. Paul Robnson (Minister)	ASK centre ran by Church- The United Church Rhyl	Community Partner
Sue Nash	White Rose Centre	Local Business/Social Enterprise
Nadeem Ahmed	Manager of Jean Emporium	Local Business/Social Enterprise
Rhiannon Wyn Hughes	Festival Director, Wicked Wales Films	Cultural, Arts, Heritage and Sporting Organisation
Jim Jones	North Wales Tourism Manager	Cultural, Arts, Heritage and Sporting Organisation
Rona Jones	Headteacher of Emmanuel School	Public Agency/Anchor Institution
Gareth Matthews	Itec Training Solutions	Public Agency/Anchor Institution

Town Boards should consider the size of the membership and could convene smaller working groups to facilitate wider engagement in the themes of the Long Term Plans for Towns Programme.

Denbighshire County Council will provide administrative support to the Board subject to the availability of resources.

The First Town Board is yet to take place and is in the progress of being diarised. The first board meeting intends to update members on the process of the Long Term Plan, key milestones and consider an engagement plan going forward.

By 1st November 2024 the UK Government expect that:

- Local Authorities receive the next £200k capacity funding
- Town Boards submit their Long-Term Plans (comprising the 10-year vision and 3- year investment plan).

The Plan will set out how funding will be allocated and spent, with the local authority as the body ultimately accountable for the funding.

While the local authority remains the accountable body for funding and executing plans, Town Boards are responsible for developing the Long-Term Plan, working closely with local people.

The Town Board's 10-year vision should be a long-term strategic document. It should be backed by insights gained through engagement with local people, to create buy-in with the public. It should include:

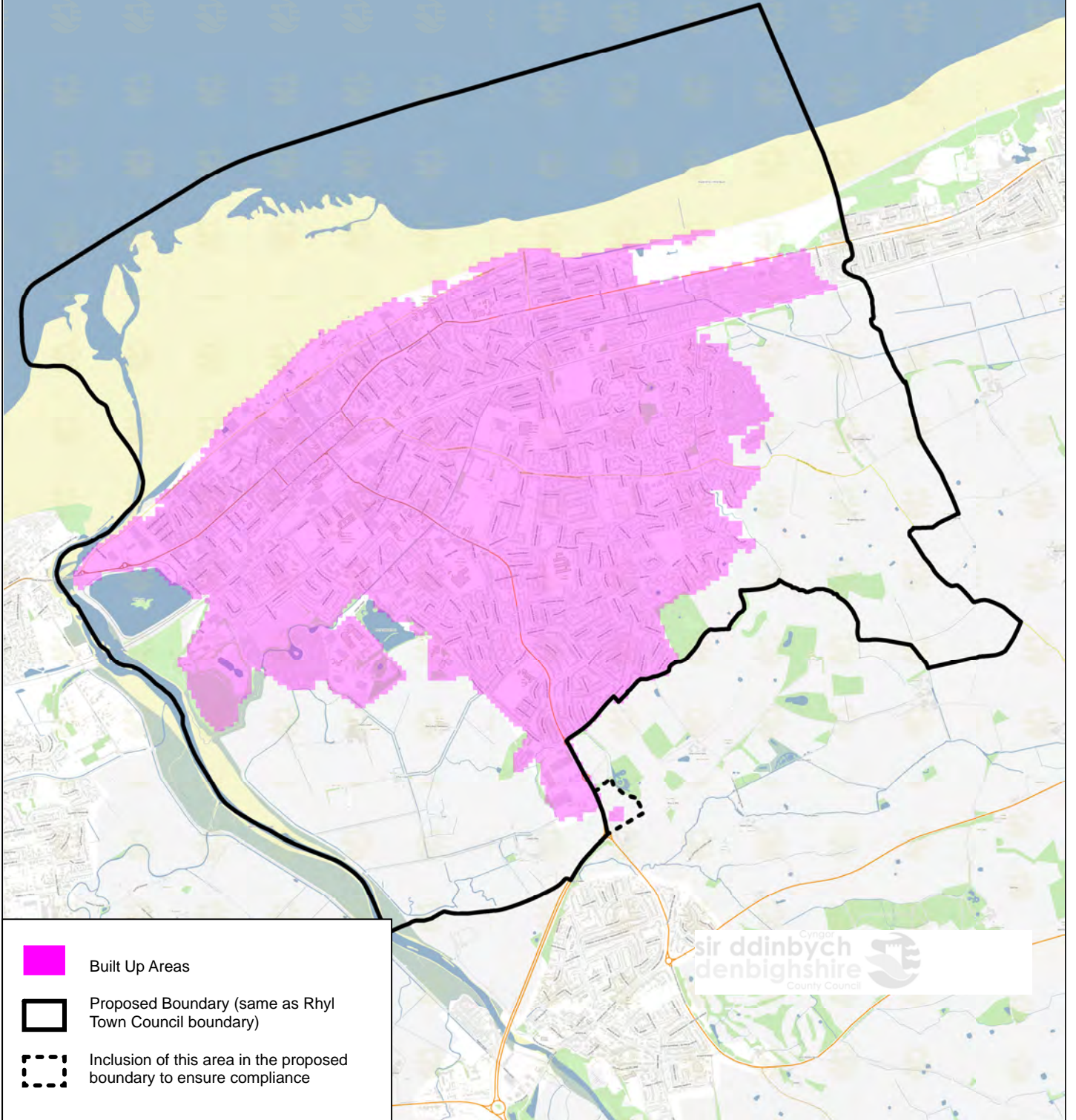
- A 250-word vision statement that articulates, at a high-level, the vision for the future of the town and how success will be judged.
- The strategic case for change, building of the evidence in the pack provided by UK Government.
- The outcomes and objectives that the town is trying to meet and how these align with the priorities of the local community, including what local people think needs fixing, the opportunities the investment offers over the decade and priority outcomes for 2034 and beyond.




- The planned direction of travel for the regeneration of the town across the 3 investment themes.
- Clear evidence that the Town Board is community led describing how stakeholders have been engaged to date and how the engagement will continue going forward.
- How the Board will attract and combine new and existing private, public and philanthropic investment, setting out the existing commitments and ambitions to secure further support going forward.
- High level delivery milestones over the 10-year lifespan of the programme, with an overview of potential future interventions and how the powers in the policy toolkit will be used in a way that best suits the town across the 3 investment themes.

The approach to monitoring delivery is still in development and further guidance on the Programme will continue to be issued by UK Government.

Appendix A – Long Term Plan Area boundary

Appendix B - Chair Pen Picture



-  Built Up Areas
-  Proposed Boundary (same as Rhyll Town Council boundary)
-  Inclusion of this area in the proposed boundary to ensure compliance

Proposed Rhyll Boundary



PEN PORTRAIT



ADAM ROCHE

Adam, a product of Rhyl's educational success in coming through Rhyl High School, embodies a steadfast dedication to both community and career. With an illustrious career spanning 35 years, he stands as an inspiration of commitment and change professional within the Co-op, currently holding the role of Head of Portfolio and Assurance overseeing all projects and programmes.

Beyond the confines of corporate demands, Adam's heart finds solace behind the scenes of Rhyl Football Club, where he assumes the role of volunteer Managing Director, leading the club with a blend of passion, pragmatism and commercial success.

Yet, amidst the demands of professional and sporting endeavours, Adam remains rooted in the sanctity of family life. Alongside his cherished wife, Hayley, with whom he has shared three decades of unwavering companionship, Adam stands as a devoted father to Ellie (26) and Dylan (21), nurturing their dreams with the same fervour he brings to his multifaceted roles.

Adam plans to end his career at the Co-op and then wants to commit more time to his passion for football in Wales and travelling to experience and learn from more diverse and different cultures.

In Adam Roche, Rhyl finds not just a son educated by its shores, but a stalwart advocate, a devoted leader, and above all, a testament to the enduring power of community and family values.

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Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	June 25, 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
Head of Service	Helen Vaughan-Evans, Head of Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets
Report author	Emma Horan, Strategic Planning and Performance Officer
Title	Council Performance Self-Assessment 2023 to 2024

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report accompanies the council's Performance Self-Assessment for 2023 to 2024, providing our end of year analysis of progress and challenges with our key performance objectives (i.e. our Corporate Plan themes).

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 Regular reporting is part of our [values and principles](#) around being clear and transparent about our performance and being accountable. It is an essential monitoring requirement of the council's performance management methodology and our statutory duties in relation to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Equality Act 2010 and Wales Measure 2011, and our contributions to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2.2 We monitor our performance regularly, taking quarterly reports to Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings. Our Executive Summary, presented alongside this report, provides an evaluative statement of our progress. Feedback is sought on the content of the draft reports, attached at appendix I and II, before we take the reports through committees and seek approval of the final documents by Council in July. The report also presents the draft Scope for the Panel Performance Assessment for further input.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 Cabinet considers the report, and agrees any further actions required to respond to any performance related issues highlighted within the report (please note the six improvement actions listed in section 4.4).
- 3.2 Subject to any agreed changes, Cabinet confirms the content of the Performance Self-Assessment for 2023 to 2024 prior to its approval by County Council in July.
- 3.3 Cabinet reflects on key messages arising from the Self-Assessment and provide feedback on the draft scope for the Panel Performance Assessment (appendix IV).

4. Report details

- 4.1 With this report, we present three documents. Appendix I presents our Executive Summary, which seeks to draw out the highlights of our performance against our objectives (i.e. our Corporate Plan themes that are also our Well-being and Equality Objectives) and the seven governance areas prescribed in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The short paragraphs within this document are effectively our statement of performance against our functions, also looking ahead to the challenges that we face and areas for improvement.
- 4.2 Appendix II is our familiar quarterly Performance Update Report, which is our process for ongoing self-assessment and embodies all the evidence (internal and external) and analysis that seeks to answer the questions of 'How well are we doing', 'How do we know', and 'What and how can we do better'? This Performance Update Report presents the latest picture covering October 2023 to March 2024, and is the first performance report for our revised Corporate Plan. This Performance Update Report for October to March, when combined with the Executive Summary and the two preceding Update Reports, makes up our Self-Assessment for 2023 to 2024. Reviewing all Performance Update Reports together will allow the reader to see improvement activity that we have identified throughout the year in support of performance. Appendix III summarises the actions arising from all the Service Performance Challenges that took place during the year.
- 4.3 These reports reflect the turbulence of recent months as the council has worked to ensure it achieves a balanced budget. These reports demonstrate that our governance is working effectively and that our culture, our values and principles, are standing us in good stead. There are some good achievements to be proud of

including: homelessness prevention (although some measures remain a 'Priority for Improvement'); local economy and community benefits delivered through procurement; the growth in micro providers, allowing greater access to services for residents; early years support; investment in electric vehicle charging, coastal defence schemes and energy efficiency schemes in our buildings; strong governance and a growing understanding of what it means to be a part of the "Denbighshire family" and our "one council" approach, and a growing confidence in using Welsh. And areas where progress needs to improve, including: stakeholder feedback has deteriorated this year (for reasons we understand); high number of people on the housing waiting list; damaged roads and pavements made safe in the target time; poverty and the vitality of our local economy remains a concern (including Year 11 Leavers from schools know Not to be in Education, Employment or Training).

4.4 Six improvement activities have been identified this period:

- Provide an update on the reasons for poor performance relating to the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) (this is a continuing action).
- The new Economic Strategy should take into account the county's cultural offer and how it contributes to wider economic and well-being outcomes.
- Following agreement and to allow the council to focus on the development of the Regional Transport Plan, close the Sustainable Transport Plan project and amend the commitment within our Corporate Plan.
- Consider the Stakeholder Survey 2023 to 2024 responses.
- Consider the findings and recommendations of the Well-being of Future Generations Commissioner's New Ways of Working Journey Checker.
- Keep Corporate Plan commitments and performance expectations under continual review in the context of the present difficult financial environment.

4.5 Included in appendix IV is the proposed scope for the upcoming Panel Performance Assessment (PPA), which the council is required to host once within an ordinary term under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The document

explains the background and purpose of the assessment and outlines the recommendations of the PPA Working Group for the focus of the assessment.

- 4.6 The Working Group comprised of the Corporate Director for Governance and Business; the Head of Corporate Support Services – People; the Head of Corporate Support Services – Performance, Digital and Assets; the Head of Finance (S151); the Chief Internal Auditor; the Leader; Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets; Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities; and key performance officers from the Strategic Planning and Performance Team. The group was also supported by the WLGA.
- 4.7 Three areas of focus were decided on, covering: **1. Leadership, 2. Budget Proposals / Transformation, and 3. Partnership Working.** Suggestions for key questions relevant to these areas have been picked out from the WLGA’s suggested line of questioning, taken from their [methodology](#), giving consideration of, and avoiding duplication with other recent audits or ongoing areas of work.
- 4.8 The scope is being shared alongside the council’s Self-Assessment of Performance to obtain further input from senior leaders and elected members. It is anticipated the Cabinet will appoint panellists in July, with fieldwork taking place in September.

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

- 5.1 The Performance Self-Assessment includes an evaluation of the council’s success in delivering against its Corporate Plan themes. The Panel Performance Assessment will also consider how well the council is able to deliver against its priorities.

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

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

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

- 7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) is not required for this report. A WIA was undertaken on the Corporate Plan itself, which has been updated as part of the revision of the Corporate Plan, approved by [County Council](#) in February.

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

- 8.1. The reports have been developed by the Strategic Planning Team, in consultation with other council services. Feedback has already been sought on the report from the Senior Leadership Team, Performance Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Committee. Further consultation will take place with County Council, with approval being sought in July 2024.
- 8.2. The Scope for the Panel Performance Assessment was initially considered by Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team during their Corporate Plan Tranche Review meeting in March, following which a Working Group of key officers and Cabinet members was twice convened to develop the draft. Further input is now sought to this alongside the Self-Assessment.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. No statement is required with this report.

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

- 10.1 Failure to publish our Self-Assessment would likely result in statutory recommendations from Audit Wales, with significant implications for the reputation of the council. The risk of poor performance being reported out of context, impacting on our reputation. On this basis, we have already shared the draft report with the Communications Team. There is a risk that the output of the Panel Performance Assessment brings no value to the council. It is therefore important that the council engages with the scoping exercise to give clear direction to the panel.

11. Power to make the decision

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

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Appendix I – Executive Summary: Self-Assessment of Performance, 2023 to 2024

Together with our quarterly update reports for 2023 to 2024 that have functioned as our ongoing assessment throughout the year, this document makes up our Self-Assessment of Performance required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. It presents an accessible end-of-year summary of our performance against key functions, specifically our Well-Being Objectives (otherwise referred to as our Corporate Plan themes), the seven governance areas, and the Public Sector Equality Duty (which includes the new Socio-Economic Duty). To review the evidence behind the conclusions in this document, please refer to the Performance Update Reports, published on our [website](#).

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Contact details and more information

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

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By telephone: 01824 706291

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

By post:

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

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

To keep up-to-date:

Like us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

Visit the [council's website](#) for information on the Corporate Plan

Visit the [County Conversation Portal](#) and sign up for *Y Panel!*

Subscribe to the [County Voice Newsletter](#)

Our Approach to Self-Assessment

Our approach to Self-Assessment follows the same one undertaken for the first year that one was legally required, in 2020 to 2021. We have continued to use a new style of Performance Self-Assessment Update report, one that responds to the performance requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and reflects on the Corporate Health of the organisation. Our Performance Update Reports, published [online](#), involve an analysis of the seven governance areas recommended by the Act's statutory guidance, as well as continuing to catalogue the activity of our principle meetings (Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny, and Governance and Audit), key news items, and reports by our internal audit and external regulators. This Executive Summary brings the volume of the reports together alongside a critical overview of our performance, the extent to which our performance is driving positive outcomes and how well our governance is supporting continuous improvement. This summary also looks ahead to key opportunities and challenges.

It is a requirement that the council, through its self-assessment process, identify improvement actions, and in subsequent self-assessment reports provide an update on our progress against them. We have achieved this through our Performance Update reports (supporting the principle of ongoing assessment), which have identified improvement actions during their production. The council's Service Performance Challenge programme, recommenced this year and fed into Update reports. We have a great body of quality evidence around how we are performing as a council, which has been comprehensively catalogued in our quarterly Self-Assessment Performance Update reports. These make up our ongoing self-assessment. During this year, due to resources and capacity, we produced three quarterly reports for the periods April to June 2023, July to September 2023, and October 2023 to March 2024.

During September 2023 and February 2024, the council issued its 'Stakeholder Survey' for the third time, achieving a response of 494. Based on a population estimate of 96,550, the response exceeds what is considered an 'ideal sample' of between 267 and 383. An analysis of the most recent results is provided in our accompanying Self-Assessment Performance Update report for the period October 2023 to March 2023.

Equality and Diversity

The Corporate Plan contains our equality and well-being objectives, and these are reported through our quarterly reports. In addition, our activities broadly align to the proposed regional public sector objectives and to the national challenges published in the [Equality and Human Rights Commission 'Equality and Human Rights Monitor 2023: Is Wales Fairer?' report](#) produced in November 2023.

Up until February 2024, the Fairer, Safe and More Equal Board (FSE Board) received these reports and monitored equality and diversity matters. Following the changes to the Corporate Plan, we enhanced the remit of the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group (SEDG) to include oversight of all equality and diversity matters and subsequently closed the FSE Board in March 2024.

SEDG, chaired by the Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities, has, during the year, agreed the content of the statutory Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Pay Gap reports; received an update on the Council's Menopause Policy and; approved the collation of a comprehensive list of organisations that support people with protected characteristics or those living with socio-economic disadvantage in the county, including seldom heard groups, which will be reviewed every six months. Use of this list will assist us in strengthening our engagement and communication work and ensuring more equal outcomes for people, including reducing inequalities associated with poverty. The Group has also considered the completion and quality of Well-being Impact Assessments (for example, the impact assessment of the Relationship and Sexual Education Policy); discussed how Welsh Government Action Plans on equality (this past year it has been the LGBTQ+ Action Plan) can be incorporated into council business; and agreed the council's response to the Welsh Government's consultation on its draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024 to 2028.

Whilst SEDG is not a decision-making body, it can refer issues and make recommendations to relevant committees and groups as deemed necessary. One such recommendation was to County Council to look at including equality as a mandatory e-learning module for members (it is already mandatory for officers). SEDG is therefore working with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to provide equality and diversity training for members in April 2024.

In the autumn of 2024, our Strategic Equality and Diversity Group will consider a report looking at the impact of the budget proposals to date, their impact from an equality and diversity perspective (both in terms of community impact and impact on staff).

The Council website pages on [equality and diversity](#) were updated in March 2024, to incorporate the demographics of the county, with data compiled by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), related to the Census 2021.

Overall, how well are we doing?

This past year has been the most challenging year, financially, for the council – with members and officers having to make very difficult decisions to ensure we deliver a balanced budget whilst considering the impact of our decisions on current and future generations. This section summarises our performance and governance across the year into some general observations about our strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges.

- During the year we have responded to the financial pressures all local authorities are facing responsibly; we have used our resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; our governance is functioning and effective; and our focus is on securing the best possible outcomes for our environment and communities in Denbighshire.
- Our efforts to actively engage members and staff from across the organisation around the budget have been good and positively received. We are already working on our approach to the 2025 to 2026 budget to ensure we can build an even deeper engagement and understanding, whilst also tracking the savings we have already committed to. Our approach is to be adaptive and do more of what works best.
- Our governance is well-functioning and responsive - demonstrated by the additional Scrutiny that has been put in place, at the request of members, around aspects of our budget proposals.
- The challenge to ensure backbenchers continue to feel a part of the decision-making process around budget and in terms of the delivery of the Corporate Plan over the next few years remains. As predicted in last year's Self-Assessment, members have been asked to make ever more challenging decisions over finances and service delivery. Members have responded to the challenge and considered what are often undesirable but pragmatic steps in ensuring we can deliver a balanced budget whilst trying to minimise, as far as possible, negative impacts for community and environmental well-being.

- Through the Corporate Plan and the work of the Well-Run Board, we are taking every opportunity to bring our values and principles to life. We are a self-reflecting, learning authority, and whilst difficult decisions around budget have had to be considered and implemented, we want to capitalise on the growing understanding of our culture, what it means to be a part of the “Denbighshire family” and promote our One Council approach. Our [principles and values](#) will stand us in good stead. In the year ahead, we want to establish an on-going programme of cross-service conversations and capitalise on the growing confidence of members and officers using Welsh informally and formally during council business.
- The new senior leadership structure is now in place and is working well. Whilst reduced capacity as the workforce shrinks is an issue there are growing opportunities to consider new transformational ways of working. What were previously cited as gaps for which no clear agreed way forward had been agreed, such as around Denbighshire’s cultural and heritage potential, have started to be addressed. We must strive to be agile in recognising and resolving barriers to progress; and ensure we remain resilient as our capacity reduces.
- Whilst the council still faces some recruitment and retention issues the financial pressures all councils are experiencing has resulted in the council having to take implement controls during the period to limit spend, including implementation of vacancy control procedures. Recruitment was still able to take place in critical areas such as Adult Social Care and Children’s Services, but vacancies in those services persist. Whilst we continue to pursue opportunities to reduce pressures in workforce, we face limitations in doing so because of our reducing capacity and resources. More detail can be found in the [Director of Social Services annual report for 2022 to 2023](#) (the 2023 to 2024 report is due imminently).
- The recommencement of Service Performance Challenges has been an important development this year, leading to improved performance in respect of the completion of 121s. Going forward (and responding to the present crisis), the 2024 to 2025 Challenges will likely focus on finance and transformation. We also look forward to our first ever Panel Peer Assessment, due to take place in the autumn of 2024. The key to the success of the Assessment will be to tailor it to meet our council’s needs and work is already underway with close working between officers, members and the Welsh Local Government Association.

Performance Objectives – Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027

A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

The Corporate Plan Housing and Homelessness Board continues to oversee this theme and has recently reviewed the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, which had some minor issues in terms of time slippage, mainly because we are currently awaiting new Welsh Government Flood Risk guidance. We are working on the development of the Development Viability Model, which will form the basis of the work to review the current approach and thresholds for affordable housing requirements in Local Development Plan (LDP) policies. Our Capital Works Programmes continue to be delivered but cost increases are impacting on the volume of work in terms of affordability. Budgets are being closely monitored and programmes of works amended and prioritised accordingly. Welsh Government launched Wales Housing Quality Standards in October 2023 with newer measures to be introduced from 1 April 2024; we are still considering the implications of these, ahead of their introduction. The number of people on the SARTH register increased to 1,706 this period, and remains a concern. However, we successfully secured 25 additional council homes for people in Denbighshire by the end of March 2024.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: On Target

The measures status for this theme has been summarised overall as a 'Priority for Improvement'. However, it should be noted that these include broad and long-term indicators such as those from the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation and stakeholder survey responses. Recognising the local and global economic challenges it faces, the council is currently developing (April 2024 onwards) an Economic Strategy to include green, rural, and urban economic growth plans as well as enhancing tourism. The new Economic Strategy should take into account the county's cultural offer and how it contributes to wider economic and well-being outcomes.

A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: On Target

Overall, the status of measures for this theme is 'Acceptable.' A 'Priority for Improvement' is the number of schools achieving trauma informed status – although more schools are working towards this status - and the percentage of stakeholders who agree that they can live safely, happily, and independently, in Denbighshire. The fall in the annual percentage of new assessments completed for children during the year that were completed within statutory timescales means this measure remains a priority to improve. Excellence is being achieved in adult safeguarding and social care through micro providers, and there is a status upgrade to 'Good' for the percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the social infrastructure needed to support personal and community well-being. Access to advice and assistance continues to be provided through the Single Point of Access (SpoA) and Talking Points and an encouraging 92% of citizens receiving assistance from Talking Points did not need to be referred into Adult Social Care during January to March 2024. We now monitor hate crimes reported in Denbighshire to North Wales Police. During January to March, 34 hate crimes were reported, the majority of which were categorised as racial.

A learning and growing Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

The measures in this theme have been graded overall as 'Acceptable,' however, we await the end of the academic year for a fuller picture of the data relating to schools. Some data relating to care leavers for 2023 to 2024 is also awaited pending verification. A 'Priority for Improvement' is the nationally benchmarked percentage of Year 11 Leavers from schools known not to be in education, employment or training. For 2023 to 2024, Denbighshire's figure of 2.4% is higher than that of 17 of the other 21 local authorities in Wales. The support provided to promote the development of children in the early years has continued to strengthen, with excellent rates of children taking part in the childcare offer and continued excellent performance in supporting entry to nursery. Projects related to early years child development are progressing well, with the expansion of Flying Start 'On Target' as well as the completion of two other projects as seen in the table below. Whilst

the number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D is considered 'Excellent', the Modernising Education Programme continues to be at risk due to delays in the progression of work. By January 2024, the universal free school meals offer was made available to all primary pupils across Denbighshire.

A greener Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy is scheduled to be reviewed and refreshed every three years; the first of which began in 2023 to 2024. There are a number of key performance indicators that are being used to judge the performance of the council in achieving its 2030 goals, including: reducing carbon emissions the council emits from various sources, increasing carbon sequestration of land the council owns/leases and manages and increasing the species richness of the land the council owns/leases and manages. Whilst we are going in the right direction it is not currently at the pace to suggest sufficient progress is being made to meet the 2030 goal of net carbon zero. The financial pressures all local authorities are facing now and in the coming years will continue to impact on that pace. We plan to maintain our Climate and Ecological Improvement ambition and not adjust targets - despite their challenge - as we go into the next three years of our strategy. A key project for this theme is the introduction of a new recycling system in June of this year to help us meet Welsh Government's 70% recycling target (the target set for all local authorities in Wales).

A well-run, high performing council

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: On Target

The Well-run Board is settling into its role in nurturing and ensuring good governance and a positive 'one council' culture. The Board is taking a growing role in a number of key areas; including annual self-assessment, service performance challenges, and the peer-led Panel Performance Assessment. Anecdotally there is a much greater use of Welsh formally at committee meetings, and informally in the day-to-day business of the council. The Board is keen to capitalise on the growing confidence in using Welsh. The general decline in positive responses to our stakeholder survey has brought the overall status of our measures down from 'Acceptable' to 'Priority for Improvement'. This decline is

unsurprising given the difficult financial climate and the savings proposals the council has most recently consulted on and begun implementing.

Governance Functions – The Council’s Corporate Health

Denbighshire’s [annual governance statement](#) highlights specific strengths and areas for improvement. The 2022 to 2023 statement built on the improvement actions identified in 2021 to 2022 that link to our governance functions, such as workforce capacity and resilience, code of conduct, procurement and contract management, funding and whistleblowing. Our Annual Governance Statement for 2023 to 2024 will be presented to Governance and Audit Committee in July 2024.

Corporate Planning

This section looks at how the council sets out and delivers its strategic objectives. In this last year, the council had to take significant steps in light of worsening financial and capacity pressures to revisit and revise its Well-being and Equality Objectives, whilst ensuring that it continued to meet legislative requirements under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the Equality Act (Wales) Regulations 2011. A revised Corporate Plan, which reduced the number of themes from nine to six, was unanimously approved by [County Council in February 2024](#). It should also be noted that the council in this year received a favourable report from Audit Wales for the way in which it set its original Well-being Objectives in 2022. The council has been working over this last year to put in place its new Corporate Executive and Senior Leadership Teams from April 2023, which has included two new directors, and recruitment to four vacant Head of Service posts. We have also moved our New Ways of Working project forward to the next phase, looking to reduce the size of the office accommodation that we hold. We received an Audit Wales report on our Corporate Support Functions which was positive and we have made good progress against its recommendations. We are making excellent progress with the arrangements for a Panel Performance Assessment to be held in September 2024, responding to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, 2021. Improvement actions identified over the last year have therefore, on the whole, progressed well. However, we acknowledge that overall stakeholder satisfaction with the council and its long-term plans is not where we would like it to be. Our revised Corporate Plan maintains a clear focus on how the council works, including customer service, engagement, and our performance. It is important that we demonstrate improvement in these areas and respond to the expectations of our

customers. The key challenge for the council in the months ahead, however, will be with the establishment of its transformation programme, which will need to enable the council to respond innovatively and collaboratively to the challenges that it is facing. We must also as a council keep our Corporate Plan commitments and performance expectations under continual review in the context of the present difficult financial environment.

Financial Planning

This section looks at our [financial planning](#), which relates to the management of our income and expenditure. The council's financial planning arrangements have proven robust, and the council holds a reasonably stable reserve and has strong monitoring and planning mechanisms in place to actively manage pressures, such as the Medium Term Financial Plan, Treasury Management, the Budget Setting process, and a Capital Budget setting process. The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee has also provided assurance regarding the council's financial management processes during the year. Significant work has taken place this period to respond effectively to the significant financial pressures the council is facing to try to protect the most vulnerable as far as possible. Our accompanying September to March report outlines in some detail the process and decisions around budget setting for the year ahead. Some proposals have been subject to more intensive examination by our Scrutiny Committee structure, demonstrating that governance is effective, responsive and challenging. The 2024 to 2025 budget is being viewed as an evolving process rather than a one-off event in January. Significant engagement across the council, with members and with communities will therefore continue.

Performance Management

This section looks at our [performance management](#), by which we mean the structures and processes that we have in place to ensure we deliver what we said we would, whilst encouraging active involvement and challenge from across the council, our elected members and residents. The council began in this last year to report on its new Corporate Plan Performance Management Framework, with excellent engagement and input at all levels of the organisation, but acknowledging some initial teething and data gap issues to work through. Following February's decision by County Council to reduce the size of the Corporate Plan, the Framework was again revisited with senior managers and Cabinet members to help simplify and streamline our reporting. We had highlighted in our Self-Assessment last year that the size of the framework did present a challenge to us to

manage, so the recent reduction has been a welcome one. Governance arrangements have also been updated to support the revised Corporate Plan. The council has in this last year continued with its approach to self-assessment, reports being published on our [performance webpage](#). However, to support the capacity needs of the organisation, the council has made the decision to switch from quarterly Corporate Plan Performance Update reports to six-monthly reports. Our [Performance Management Guide](#) has been updated on our website to reflect all these recent changes. The council has also delivered on the third year of its annual stakeholder survey, which seeks to engage with our residents, businesses, partners, staff and councillors about how we are performing against our functions, once again seeing an increase in participant numbers from previous years. A report was produced by Audit Wales on the council's use of data pertaining to service user perspectives and outcomes, and the council is assured that present arrangements are robust and adequate within existing resources. Following approval of the new Senior Leadership Team structure, arrangements for the council's Service Performance Challenge programme commenced between May 2023 and March 2024, and key Improvement Actions have been included in our Performance Update Reports. We have also agreed our approach to 2024's Service Performance Challenge programme to help the organisation meet the present financial challenge. Finally, we are also pleased to report that capacity pressures within the council's Internal Audit Team have been addressed, though there has been a significant workload to tackle during the year.

Risk Management

This section looks at our [risk management](#), which describes our planned approach to identify, assess, control and monitor risks and opportunities facing the council. We have continued to deliver our six-monthly reviews of our Corporate Risk Register, with our most recent [review](#) taking place from February to April of this year. It remains the case that around half of our corporate risks (54%) are inconsistent with the council's Risk Appetite Statement. However, this is to be expected as the register contains the council's most serious risks. It is good practice to review the Statement each year and following our most recent review, it was decided that the Statement should be revised in places to reflect the pressures associated with escalating costs and an uncertain economic environment. During the year, prompted by Governance and Audit Committee, it was agreed that we would commence quarterly, lighter-touch reviews with risk owners, to supplement tabled six-monthly reviews and annual reports to Governance and Audit Committee.

Workforce Planning

This section looks at our workforce planning, which is the process by which we analyse, forecast and plan workforce supply and demand, and assess gaps to ensure that we have the people and skills - now and in the future - to deliver our services and fulfil our strategic objectives. Our senior leadership restructure was fully in place from November 2023. This has taken longer than expected but will result in a transformational redesign of services, whereby the council is on the 'front foot' in relation to influencing and preventing demand; better positioned to maximise opportunities; and has clearer leadership on important matters like climate change and Welsh language. During the year the council had to implement significant savings to enable us to set a balanced budget for 2024 to 2025 (with similar challenges facing us for 2025 to 2026). This has involved a range of measures including vacancy control measures, service reductions and the implementation of a voluntary exit scheme. Workforce planning will commence in the autumn/winter of 2024 and will focus on supporting the pressures associated with the budget and its impacts. An Internal Audit review into workforce planning will be undertaken before the end of June 2024. This review will be critical in ensuring our responses to recruitment and retention are correct and effective. During the year, we launched an [Agile Working policy](#) and a new Denbighshire Management Induction Programme. A new People Strategy is in development and plans are underway for a staff survey, expected to take place during 2024.

Assets

This section looks at the latest developments to do with our management of the council's estate (including office buildings and highway infrastructure owned and / or controlled by the council) and digital assets. As we stated last year, the council faces significant challenges with regards to its assets. We have a perennially deteriorating and very large network of roads and bridges, requiring a continued financial budget commitment in order to address this decline, combined with meeting the challenge of progressing significant projects such as the replacement of the Llanerch Bridge; a large portfolio of buildings to align with our Net Carbon Zero ambition; a growing need to support and facilitate decarbonisation in procurements; and growing pressures on our ICT infrastructure. However, we have made improvements. We have delivered a range of projects to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, particularly school buildings, and support the reduction of running costs over the long term in the Council's non-domestic building estate which is responsible for over 60% of council carbon emissions. We have continued to invest in our

capability to generate the council's own electricity from installed renewable energy generation; achieving over a megawatt of installed renewable energy capacity (1099kWp) this year, through, for example, roof mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. Our investments in green public transport, such as through the [electric vehicle charging hub at Rhyl's West Kinmel car park](#), are yielding many benefits, with the hub in Rhyl providing over 250,000 miles of greener transport for motorists in its first year alone. We continue to have robust health and safety and fire safety procedures in place. Community Focussed Schools and how those are maximised as assets will be a focus for the year ahead, as described under our [learning and growing theme](#). The [Digital Strategy Review](#) undertaken by Audit Wales in November 2023 was largely positive, finding that the council has a clearly articulated strategy, but made some recommendations that will inform the development of a new strategy that will run from 2025. A new Asset Management Strategy has been approved by the Corporate Executive Team and will be taken through the democratic process for approval by Cabinet in summer 2024. Once the strategy is in place, we will develop and deliver portfolio plans to determine the shape, size and future use of assets for each of the council's asset management portfolios. The strategy and portfolio plans are closely aligned to workforce planning to ensure our assets are managed for the longer term, in a way that supports and integrates with our workforce plan. This is demonstrated by the New Ways of Working project that has been examining capacity and use of offices to seek ways to maximise the use of space across the council's portfolio (resulting in the closure of Caledfryn, Denbigh, to council staff).

Procurement

This section looks at [procurement](#). Procurement is the process by which the council meets its needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money and good outcomes for society, culture and the economy, whilst contributing to decarbonisation and nature's recovery. The council spent, during the 2023 to 2024 financial year, via procurement (including grant funding), a total of £226,978,810 buying third party goods or services. Denbighshire has continued to prioritise securing local community benefits through our procurements. £83,426,447 has been spent within Denbighshire (35.2%) and 56% of relevant procurements contained community benefits. The third generation North Wales Construction Framework will be officially launched in May 2024. We have been supporting services across the council, businesses and partners to prepare for the changes in procurement legislation; to ensure we are best placed to

secure greater local benefits. The Procurement Service is a collaborative service shared with Flintshire County Council, which we will review over the coming year.

Appendix II – Corporate Plan Performance Update: October to March 2024

This document presents the council's performance against its Corporate Plan themes and governance areas between October to March 2024, including our application of the Sustainable Development principle, the Public Sector Equality Duty, and Socio-Economic Duty.

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Contact details and more information

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

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

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Summary position

The chapters below provide a summary of activity that has taken place during the last period beneath our Corporate Plan themes, with a round-up of contributing news and committee items. Before we get into this detail, it is important to note the changes that have recently been agreed in relation to our Corporate Plan.

The increasingly difficult and unprecedented financial environment that the council is operating in has resulted in us needing to rationalise and focus our efforts. In February, [Council](#) agreed to a proposal to reduce the size of the [Corporate Plan](#) from nine to six themes. The following are the council's revised Well-being and Equality Objectives.

- A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs
- A prosperous Denbighshire
- A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire
- A learning and growing Denbighshire
- A greener Denbighshire
- A well-run, high performing council

Although we have had to rationalise our ambitions, we remain aspirational, and the Plan is underpinned by our desire to work as 'One Council', where our diverse services are working together towards shared goals more effectively. We will continue to provide a focus on preventative actions that protect people from harm and address the challenges that our communities face, such as the cost-of-living crisis and the climate emergency, ensuring sustainable economic growth, promoting well-being, and quality of life. We still want to work collaboratively with our residents, communities, businesses, and partners to help shape the services we provide and the way in which we provide them in challenging times. Accepting that the financial context is going to remain difficult for some time, as a council we must continually keep our Corporate Plan commitments and Performance expectations under review.

Each Corporate Plan theme below includes an update for each pledge in the theme, although titles have been truncated. Hyperlinks to the full detail of the theme and its pledges are included.

Corporate Plan theme summary

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

A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

The Corporate Plan Housing and Homelessness Board continues to oversee this theme and has recently reviewed the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, which had some minor issues in terms of time slippage, mainly because we are currently awaiting new Welsh Government Flood Risk guidance. We are working on the development of the Development Viability Model, which will form the basis of the work to review the current approach and thresholds for affordable housing requirements in Local Development Plan (LDP) policies. Our Capital Works Programmes continue to be delivered but cost increases are impacting on the volume of work in terms of affordability. Budgets are being closely monitored and programmes of works amended and prioritised accordingly. Welsh Government launched Wales Housing Quality Standards in October 2023 with newer measures to be introduced from 1 April 2024; we are still considering the implications of these, ahead of their introduction. The number of people on the SARTH register increased to 1,706 this period, and remains a concern. However, we successfully secured 25 additional council homes for people in Denbighshire by the end of March 2024.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: On Target

The measures status for this theme has been summarised overall as a 'Priority for Improvement', however, it should be noted that these include broad and long-term indicators such as those from the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation and stakeholder survey responses. Recognising the local and global economic challenges it faces, the council is currently developing (April 2024 onwards) an Economic Strategy to include green, rural, and urban economic growth plans as well as enhancing tourism. The new

Economic Strategy should take into account the county's cultural offer and how it contributes to wider economic and well-being outcomes.

A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: On Target

Overall, the status of measures for this theme is 'Acceptable.' A 'Priority for Improvement' is the number of schools achieving trauma informed status – although more schools are working towards this status - and the percentage of stakeholders who agree that they can live safely, happily, and independently, in Denbighshire. The fall in the annual percentage of new assessments completed for children during the year that were completed within statutory timescales means this measure remains a priority to improve. Excellence is being achieved in adult safeguarding and social care through micro providers, and there is a status upgrade to 'Good' for the percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the social infrastructure needed to support personal and community well-being. Access to advice and assistance continues to be provided through the Single Point of Access (SpoA) and Talking Points and an encouraging 92% of citizens receiving assistance from Talking Points did not need to be referred into Adult Social Care during January to March 2024. We now monitor hate crimes reported in Denbighshire to North Wales Police. During January to March, 34 hate crimes were reported, the majority of which were categorised as racial.

A learning and growing Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

The measures in this theme have been graded overall as 'Acceptable,' however, we await the end of the academic year for a fuller picture of the data relating to schools. Some data relating to care leavers for 2023 to 2024 is also awaited pending verification. A 'Priority for Improvement' is the nationally benchmarked percentage of Year 11 Leavers from schools known not to be in education, employment or training. For 2023 to 2024, Denbighshire's figure of 2.4% is higher than that of 17 of the other 21 local authorities in Wales. The support provided to promote the development of children in the early years has continued to strengthen, with excellent rates of children taking part in the childcare offer and continued excellent performance in supporting entry to nursery. Projects related to early

years child development are progressing well, with the expansion of Flying Start ‘On Target’ as well as the completion of two other projects as seen in the table below. Whilst the number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D is considered ‘Excellent’, the Modernising Education Programme continues to be at risk due to delays in the progression of work. By January 2024, the universal free school meals offer was made available to all primary pupils across Denbighshire.

A greener Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy is scheduled to be reviewed and refreshed every three years; the first of which began in 2023 to 2024. There are a number of key performance indicators that are being used to judge the performance of the council in achieving its 2030 goals, including: reducing carbon emissions the council emits from various sources, increasing carbon sequestration of land the council owns/leases and manages and increasing the species richness of the land the council owns/leases and manages. Whilst we are going in the right direction it is not currently at the pace to suggest sufficient progress is being made to meet the 2030 goal of net carbon zero. The financial pressures all local authorities are facing now and in the coming years will continue to impact on that pace. We plan to maintain our Climate and Ecological Improvement ambition and not adjust targets - despite their challenge - as we go into the next three years of our strategy. A key project for this theme is the introduction of a new recycling system in June of this year to help us meet Welsh Government’s 70% recycling target (the target set for all local authorities in Wales).

A well-run, high performing council

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: On Target

The Well-run Board is settling into its role in nurturing and ensuring good governance and a positive ‘one council’ culture. The Board is taking a growing role in a number of key areas; including annual self-assessment, service performance challenges, and the peer-led Panel Performance Assessment. Anecdotally there is a much greater use of Welsh formally at committee meetings, and informally in the day-to-day business of the council. The Board is keen to capitalise on the growing confidence in using Welsh. The general

decline in positive responses to our stakeholder survey has brought the overall status of our measures down from 'Acceptable' to a 'Priority for Improvement'. This decline is perhaps unsurprising given the difficult financial climate and the savings proposals the council has most recently consulted on and begun implementing. Our revised Corporate Plan maintains a clear focus on how the council works, including customer service, engagement, and our performance. It is important that we demonstrate improvement in these areas and respond to the expectations of our customers.

Governance areas

Our [self-assessment against the seven key governance areas](#) has highlighted one key development this period: the revision to the Corporate Plan and performance reporting. Plans are underway for the peer-led Panel Performance Assessment, expected to take place in the autumn. Work is underway on a paper to shape the governance structures required around the council's transformation agenda. Significant work has taken place this period to respond effectively to the significant financial pressures the council is facing in order to try to protect the most vulnerable as far as possible. This report outlines in some detail the process and decisions around budget setting for the year ahead. Some proposals have been subject to more intensive examination by our Scrutiny Committee structure, demonstrating the governance is both effective and challenging. The 2024 to 2025 budget is being viewed as an evolving process rather than a one-off event in January. Significant engagement across the council, with members and with communities, will continue. Stakeholder feedback is very important to the council and in this period, we launched our Stakeholder Survey for 2023 to 2024. Stakeholder perceptions have generally declined across all questions – and, in particular, those relating to governance. This is not surprising given the difficult financial climate and the savings proposals the council has most recently consulted on and begun implementing. There has also been negative speculation in the press and social media regarding the financial sustainability of the council, and this has no doubt informed stakeholders' less favourable responses. The council concluded its annual programme of Service Performance Challenges during this period and the programme for the year ahead has been adjusted to reflect learning to date and to support upcoming budgetary discussions. Processes to support the continued management of the Corporate Risk Register have continued and our Risk Appetite Statement has been updated. A policy to support Agile Working, and development and training support for new managers has been launched. A significant focus for our Human Resources team has been the voluntary exit scheme. Impacts on the workforce (and any

risks to effective governance) as a result of budget proposals and the voluntary exit scheme will be considered by the council's Strategic Equality and Diversity Group in July 2024. The Asset Strategy has been approved by the Corporate Executive Team and is being taken through the democratic process for approval for final ratification this coming summer. During the period, the Corporate Executive Team agreed to the closure of Caledfryn, Denbigh, to council staff, with arrangements in place to relocate all council personnel currently working in those offices to either Russell House, Rhyl or County Hall, Ruthin. Our Procurement Team has been supporting services, businesses and partners to prepare for the changes in procurement legislation, and the opportunities for greater local benefits. The aim is for smaller local businesses to be more engaged in, and benefit from, procurement. The third generation North Wales Construction Framework will be launched in May 2024.

A Note on Measuring Performance

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

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

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

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

A Denbighshire of quality housing that meets people's needs

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

Corporate Plan Update

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

The Ruthin Extra Care project has now been superseded by Llys Awelon (Phase 2), which is progressing and contributes towards meeting the specialist housing needs of vulnerable people in Denbighshire. Whilst this project continues to progress 'On Target', the completion date has slipped to the end June 2024 and has been challenged to ensure no further slippage occurs. The Corwen Extra Care project remains at business case stage and will enhance this provision further.

Prevent homelessness, and ensure that any instances of it are rare, brief, and unrepeatable. This includes young care leavers (equality objective)

The number of referrals received into the homelessness Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) service increased from 54 to 64 at the end of March 2024. During the period, there was a slight decrease in the number of Early Intervention and Prevention referrals, that were prevented from presenting as homeless.

The council continues to take steps to ensure early engagement with people at risk of homelessness, and we can report that 40 people were supported by the Citizens Advice Denbighshire Homelessness Prevention Team link officer.

The way we measure care leavers experiencing homelessness has changed since the previous reporting period. The percentage has risen from 15% to 17%, which is a priority to improve.

The percentages of households successfully prevented from homelessness (Section 66) and successfully relieved from homelessness (Section 73) have worsened since the same period last year and remain a 'Priority for Improvement'. That being said, whilst still considered a 'Priority for Improvement', the percentage of households positively

discharged from homelessness (section 75) has improved: resulting in 251 outcomes, 136 of which were positive.

Upgrade the council housing stock to ensure it is safe, secure, and well-maintained and where possible, suitable for the needs of residents, for example, those with disabilities (equality objective)

The percentage of emergency housing repairs completed within target time for the reporting period has remained at an 'Acceptable' rate of 95.57%. A further 51 disabled adaptations were carried out for council house tenants between January and March 2024.

The most recent Tenants and Residents Survey (STAR) results for council home found that 85% of tenants were "satisfied with Denbighshire Housing, taking everything into account". As a result of the survey, we have: developed an action plan for communicating with tenants about the Welsh Housing Quality Standards and how and when it will impact on our property improvements; we will review our Repairs Policy; we will explore concerns about anti-social behaviour in more detail; and we will develop our Engagement Plan to improve how we listen and communicate with tenants.

The project on Improving Energy Efficiency in Council Houses was closed in April 2024, following changes in the project such as those in relation to the Welsh Housing Quality Standards. Future work will now be incorporated into an activity within the Climate and Ecological Change Programme.

A new activity has been added to this theme, to promote and administer the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) Scheme via Flintshire County Council for energy efficiency in private sector dwellings. ECO4 is a government scheme that helps homeowners improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Deliver more homes to meet local need and demand

During 2022 to 2023, a total of 256 new homes were completed in Denbighshire. Data for 2023 to 2024 is pending. We successfully secured 25 additional council homes for people in Denbighshire by the end of March 2024, bringing the total number of additional council homes secured to 92 since 2017. Our ability to achieve our ambition, which is to have secured 170 new councils homes by 2027, is dependent on funding from Welsh Government. The delivery confidence has increased for affordable housing projects such as Edward Henry Street and the Additional Council Housing Developments Project. The Planning application for an amended renovation scheme for the Victorian Post Office

building on Wellington Road in Rhyl to deliver a residential conversion of the upper storeys was validated during the period; the purchases of two former council flats and a former council house in Rhyl were completed; and terms were agreed for the purchase of a former council house in Prestatyn. Further good progress is anticipated in the next period with the development Passivhaus homes in Denbigh.

The original Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) project is complete, and we will now report on the next phase of the project called “Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Site Selection”.

Progress on the Rhyl Residential Strategy now runs under the activity, “Work with Rhyl Regeneration Programme Board to contribute to progressing Rhyl Residential Strategy”.

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

The number of people on the SARTH register increased by 146 to 1,706 and remains a concern.

The number of empty private properties brought back in to use has decreased from 181 in 2022 to 2023 to 150 during 2023 to 2024, however, performance is still considered ‘Acceptable’.

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity related to the support offered to those experiencing homelessness please see our [learning and growing theme](#).

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The percentage of emergency housing repairs completed within target time - Benchmarked Locally	97.22% Acceptable Better	97.06% Acceptable Worse	96.90% Acceptable Worse	95.82% Acceptable Worse	95.97% Acceptable Worse

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The number of disabled adaptations carried out for council house tenants – Count Only	56	53	56	68	51
The number of people on the SARTH waiting list (live applications only) - Benchmarked Locally	1,734 Priority to Improve Better	1,785 Priority to Improve Worse	1,760 Priority to Improve Better	1,560 Priority to Improve Better	1,706 Priority to Improve Worse
The number of referrals received into Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) – Count Only	80	43	64	54	64
The percentage of referrals Early Intervention and Prevention (My Home Denbighshire) that have been prevented from presenting to homelessness prevention service - Benchmarked Locally	89.36% Excellent	72.26% Good Worse	92.18% Excellent Better	92.59% Excellent Better	90.62% Excellent Worse
The number of people at risk of homelessness supported by the CAD-HPT (Citizens Advice Denbighshire-Homelessness Prevention Team) link officer – Count Only	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	28	39	38	40

Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The number of dwellings improved with a disabled facilities grant - Benchmarked Nationally	66 Priority to Improve Worse	63 Priority to Improve Worse
The number of people who were on the Complex Disabilities Specialist Housing Needs Register for whom supported housing has been secured - Benchmarked Locally	16 Excellent Better	8 Good Worse
The percentage of households successfully prevented from homelessness (section 66) - Benchmarked Nationally	38.35% Priority to Improve Worse	37.11% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of households successfully relieved from homelessness (section 73) - Benchmarked Nationally	15.96% Priority to Improve Worse	11.68% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of households positively discharged from homelessness (section 75) - Benchmarked Nationally	50.22% Priority to Improve Better	54.18% Priority to Improve Better
The percentage of care leavers who experience homelessness during the year (As defined by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) - Benchmarked Locally	15% Priority to Improve	17% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of council properties compliant with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard - Benchmarked Nationally	100% Excellent Same	100% Excellent Same
The percentage of tenants that were satisfied with Denbighshire Housing, taking everything in to account - Benchmarked Locally	No data: does not apply	85% Acceptable
The percentage of existing and acquired Council housing stock achieving an EPC (Energy) rating of C or above - Benchmarked Locally	41.89% Acceptable Better	46.1% Acceptable Better
The additional supply of affordable housing, including social housing, provided during the year - Benchmarked Locally	139 Excellent Worse	145 Excellent Better

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The additional supply of Council Homes provided - Benchmarked Locally	15 Acceptable Better	25 Good Better
The total number of (new) homes completed during the year in Denbighshire - Benchmarked Locally	256	Data expected summer 2024
The number of empty private properties brought back into use through direct action by the local authority - Benchmarked Locally	181 Good Worse	150 Acceptable Worse

Stakeholder Survey

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that there is sufficient, good quality housing in Denbighshire, which meets people's needs - Benchmarked Locally	40% Priority to Improve	31% Priority to Improve Worse

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Until new data is published (Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026), please refer to our [Performance Self-Assessment Update: July to September 2023 report](#).

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

There are fifteen projects and activities listed within this theme in the Corporate Plan. The number of these that are running 'On Target' is seven, three are complete, one is 'At Risk'. One project is 'Experiencing Obstacles', and the remaining three activities are either at project brief, business stage case, or new.

Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Deliver and monitor the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan	On Target Same	No exception
Llys Awelon (Phase 2)	On Target Same	No exception
Further develop the extra care offer across the south of the county	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Infrastructure improvements need to occur before we are able to increase capacity at Corwen. A possible site at Llangollen is being explored.
Reduce the reliance on unsuitable temporary accommodation by establishing some in-house emergency housing facilities for homeless citizens	Experiencing Obstacles Same	We are identifying potential sites for a small number of emergency accommodation units with the facilities to provide a support hub and working across the council to identify and develop suitable sites for permanent accommodation (expected to take until December 2024). We also want to ensure the right planning status is in place for any privately-run temporary emergency accommodation used to accommodate homeless households.
Improving Energy Efficiency in Council Houses	At Risk Same	Inflated costs, limited funding and the lack of qualified trades in the sector are all issues contributing to the status of this project. Given this project did not reflect the new Welsh Housing Quality Standards it will be closed in May 2024 and replaced by the activity below.

Title	Status	Exception
Devise and implement a targeted energy pathway by 31 March 2027 to demonstrate how we will achieve SAP / EPC 75 by 31 March 2030, included estimated costs	New activity commencing April 2024	This activity will replace the above project and incorporates the Standard Assessment Procedure /Energy Performance Certificate requirements.
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	Complete	
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Site Selection	At project brief stage	No exception
Denbighshire replacement Local Development Plan	On Target	No exception
Edward Henry Street	On Target Better	No exception
Additional Council Housing Developments	On Target Better	No exception
Work with Rhyl Regeneration Programme Board to contribute to progressing Rhyl Residential Strategy	On Target Same	No exception
Develop a tenant involvement framework for Denbighshire Housing	Complete	No exception
Signpost to Welsh Government's NEST Scheme	Complete	No exception
Promote and administer the Energy Company Obligation Scheme (ECO4) via Flintshire County Council – energy efficiency in private sector dwellings	On Target Same	No exception

A round up of news

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

In October 2023, the [Minister for Finance and Local Government visited Ty Pride in Rhyl](#) and [energy efficiency work was completed on 41 council homes](#) in Rhyl.

Communities Scrutiny Committee met in October and December to consider the [revised Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#) and [the housing rent increase](#). In December, [Partnerships Scrutiny Committee](#) examined affordable rent levels.

In December, [Cabinet](#) approved the annual housing rent increase, housing budgets for 2024 to 2025; the Housing Stock Business Plan; and a new project to support people to sustain their accommodation and prevent homelessness.

Four new [energy efficient apartments](#) became available in Prestatyn in January 2024.

In February, Communities Scrutiny Committee examined the [management of council housing and estates](#) and considered [feedback from council tenants](#). [Cabinet](#) approved the re-tendering of the Community Housing Voids Framework.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: On Target

Corporate Plan Update

[Work collaboratively with communities and partners to deliver projects and initiatives that will stimulate economic growth](#)

The measures status for this theme has been summarised overall as a 'Priority for Improvement', however, it should be noted that these include broad and long-term indicators such as those from the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation and stakeholder survey responses. Within this theme there are a number of nationally benchmarked measures that give an indication of performance compared to other local authorities in Wales. However, there are some gaps as we await the publication of new national data. Our Levelling Up funded projects are progressing, albeit with some uncertainty in some areas. We have secured additional Ambition North Wales Growth Deal funding to plug the viability funding gap for the former North Wales Hospital in Denbigh, although the project remains 'At Risk' until all the necessary funding and planning agreements are in place. Another significant project is the new Queen's Market in Rhyl. Negotiations with our previous preferred operator have ceased and an alternative option to operating the Queen's Market is being progressed.

[Develop an economic strategy](#)

Recognising the local and global economic challenges it faces, the council is currently developing (April 2024 onwards) an Economic Strategy to include green, rural, and urban economic growth plans as well as enhancing tourism. Our last performance report included an improvement activity to "develop an overview of the cultural offer, with examples from across council services, as part of the plan to be developed setting out how a cultural strategy could connect and contribute to wider outcomes in terms of our economy and personal well-being". The new Economic Strategy should take into account the county's cultural offer and how it contributes to wider economic and well-being outcomes.

The total economic impact of tourism was £628.58m during 2022 to 2023, a significant increase on £432m in 2021 to 2022, evidencing a recovery from social distancing measures during the pandemic. The 2023 to 2024 figures will be released later in the year.

Work in partnership to support an economy that promotes fair work, justice, and socially responsible public procurement, benefitting the local supply chain and local communities (equality objective)

The total spend via procurement, including grant funding, during the 2023 to 2024 financial year was £226,978,810; £83,426,447 of this being spent within Denbighshire (35.2%). 56% of relevant procurements contained community benefits and work is ongoing to align these with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023. The North Wales Construction Partnership, the 3rd iteration of the Framework (NWCPF3) is due to be publicly launched in May 2024.

Support access to education, employment, services, goods, and activities

There are a number of benchmarked measures that give an indication of performance compared to other local authorities in Wales. However, there are some gaps as we await the publication of new data, namely the percentage of classified A, B and C roads that are in overall poor condition. Our previous report identified an improvement action to “Provide an update on the reasons for poor performance relating to the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale).” This is a continuing action, as the service continues to struggle due to resource issues. We are however looking to review the Code of Practice, which is a driver for Category 1 defects. This might help to reduce demand in the future.

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of skills, training and employment please see our [learning and growing theme](#) and the [well-run, high performing council](#) for further activity connected to the local economy.

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 4 2021 to 2022	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The percentage of working age people who are claiming Out of Work Benefits - Benchmarked Nationally	3.7% Priority to Improve Worse	3.8% Priority to Improve Worse	3.6% Priority to Improve Better	3.5% Priority to Improve Better	3.8% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of spend with suppliers based within Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	35% Good Same	33% Good Same	15.90% Priority to Improve Worse	41.8% Excellent Better	38.6% Good Worse
The cumulative percentage of Denbighshire contracts over £25k and under £1m containing community benefits – Benchmarked Locally	66 % Excellent Better	66 % Excellent Same	53.3% Good Worse	55.60% Good Better	56.00% Good Better
Year to date average for the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) Benchmarked Locally	16% Priority to Improve Worse	29% Priority to Improve Better	23.33% Priority to Improve Worse	52.33% Priority to Improve Better	42.00% Priority to Improve Worse

Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The percentage of children in poverty in Denbighshire – Benchmarked Nationally	28.1% Priority to Improve Better	Data pending

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Average gross annual pay for people who live in the area and work full time (£) - Benchmarked Nationally	27,121 Priority to Improve Better	Data pending
External funding (in pounds) secured for economic development – Count Only	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	£1,041,250
STEAM - Total Economic Impact of Tourism (£ million) - Benchmarked Locally	£628.58m Excellent Better	Expected July 2024
Births of businesses per 10,000 of the population aged 16 to 64 - Benchmarked Nationally	56 Priority to Improve Worse	Data pending
Deaths of businesses per 10,000 of the population aged 16 to 64 - Benchmarked Nationally	69 Priority to Improve Better	Data pending
The percentage of principle A roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	2.2% Excellent Better	Data pending
The percentage of non-principal/classified B roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	3.5% Excellent Better	Data Pending
The percentage of non-principal/classified C roads that are in overall poor condition – Benchmarked Nationally	16.4% Priority to Improve Worse	Data pending
The percentage of premises that receive less than 30Mbps - Count Only	4.57%	3.88%
The percentage of premises that receive less than 10Mbps - Count Only	2.88%	2.4%

Stakeholder Survey

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has a prosperous economy that provides access to the right skills, jobs, and income - Benchmarked Locally	40% Priority to Improve	30% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the transport and road infrastructure to support thriving, cohesive, and well-connected communities - Benchmarked Locally	31% Priority to Improve	28% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the digital infrastructure (such as good broadband connectivity, good mobile internet or mobile phone signal) to support thriving, cohesive, and well-connected communities – Benchmarked Locally	52.2% Acceptable	52% Acceptable Same
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the rich cultural heritage and natural assets of Denbighshire are being used to their full potential - Benchmarked Locally	51% Acceptable	49% Priority to Improve Worse

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Until new data is published (Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026), please refer to our [Performance Self-Assessment Update: July to September 2023 report](#).

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

Overall, good progress has been made with the twenty-four projects and activities identified in support of this theme. Fifteen are 'On Target' and six projects are 'Experiencing Obstacles'. It is worth noting that the success of these projects overall is not reflected in the measures which are, in the main, a 'Priority for Improvement'.

Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Programme: Shared Prosperity Fund	On Target Same	No exception
Programme: Levelling Up Fund – Clwyd South	Experiencing Obstacles Same	There is uncertainty around the budget of one project that is still to be procured (Active Travel). Overall, the Denbighshire Round 1 Clwyd South LUF projects are making good progress.
Programme: Levelling Up Fund – Clwyd West	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	There is a level of uncertainty and increased risks that require monitoring and action at this early stage of the programme delivery. Overall, round 2 Clwyd West LUF projects are making good progress.
Placeholder: Levelling Up Fund Round 3 – Vale of Clwyd	At project brief stage	Awaiting formal award. Resources are under pressure but project teams are being formed. The delivery approach will take into account resources, timescales and pressures.
Enabling and supporting North Wales Growth Deal projects in partnership with Ambition North Wales	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Quarterly reports are provided to the Partnership Scrutiny Committee. The annual report from Ambition North Wales will be presented in July.
Former North Wales Hospital	At Risk Same	The project remains 'At Risk' until all the necessary funding and planning agreements are in place. The project has made excellent progress, however, in terms of securing additional Ambition North Wales Growth Deal funding to

Title	Status	Exception
		plug the viability funding gap.
Queen's Buildings Rhyl	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Negotiations with our previous preferred operator have ceased and an alternative option to operating the Queen's Market is being progressed.
Coordinating Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding programme streams	On Target Same	No exception
Develop Town Centre Place Making Plans	On Target Same	No exception
Develop the council's new Economic Strategy	On Target Same	No exception
Victorian Post Office (Rhyl)	On Target Same	No exception
Progress the Rhyl Public Realm Strategy	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Discussions continue to take place with the relevant Programme Board to agree a way forward.
Reconnect the top of Rhyl High Street with the beach (Rhyl promenade)	Experiencing Obstacles Better	Work is currently taking place to prepare for the project restarting.
Seeking to improve the appearance of poorly maintained Rhyl Town Centre properties	On Target Better	No exception
Rhyl Gateway	At project brief stage	No exception
Co-Relocation of Rhyl Tourist Information Centre and Rhyl Museum	At business case stage	No exception
Develop the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Tourism Plan and work with local businesses to develop the actions	On Target Same	No exception
Deliver the Denbighshire Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2022 – 2027	On Target Same	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Raise awareness of the provision of Welsh training for adults who work in the business community	On Target Same	No exception
Complete feasibility report for move-on accommodation at St Asaph Business Park	On Target Same	No exception
Develop a Community Benefits Framework to align with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act	On Target Better	No exception
Aim to deliver the most viable option to replace the Llannerch Bridge	On Target Same	No exception
Contribute to the development of the new Regional Transport Plan	On Target Better	No exception
Work with partners on the proposed designation of a National Park in North East Wales	On Target Same	No exception
3rd Generation - North Wales Construction Framework	On Target Same	No exception

A round up of news

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

Levelling Up Funding was awarded to projects at [Loggerheads and Moel Famau](#) and [Horseshoe Falls](#). A project bid for [Tackling Deep Rooted Denbighshire Deprivation](#) was provisionally awarded as part of third round Levelling Up funding.

From February until the end June 2024, [Mill Street car park in Llangollen was be partially closed](#) to enable construction work for the [Four Great Highways project](#).

In December, the council and the Mikhail Hotel and Leisure Group mutually agreed not to take forward their proposed partnership at the [Queens Market in Rhyl](#).

During October we consulted on [new revised table of fares for taxis in Denbighshire](#). [Cabinet](#) approved in October, a procurement to ensure the storage of salt for winter maintenance operations. Our Highways Team were out [gritting](#) and in February we

undertook [Resurfacing Works in Trefnant](#). In November, we consulted on [the Nant Hall Road link to Prestatyn Station](#). We began introducing [active travel enhancements in Lower Denbigh](#) in February and ran an [active travel consultation in Llangollen](#) throughout March. In February, Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the [draft Car Park Investment Plan](#) for 2024 to 2029.

We held some key events during the period, namely a [free Business Support Event](#); [an employment wellbeing event](#) and a [Working Denbighshire's Job Fair](#). We reminded [businesses of the support, advice](#) and [funding](#) that is available, and ran our '[March For Business](#)' campaign. [Two online Tourism Forums](#) and a [Tourism Forum](#) were held in November. We promoted [Wales Ambassador Week](#) and four Denbighshire Businesses were recognised at the [Go North Wales Tourism Awards](#).

In January, communities in South West Llandegla [benefitted from new fibre installations](#) through our Fibre Community Partnership project.

Ruthin Gaol opened over the [Halloween period](#) and offered a [unique Australian experience](#). We launched a podcast about [Castell Dinas Brân](#). We announced the timetable for the [Dee Valley Picturesque Bus Service](#) and launched a new [book](#).

A Notice of Motion was put forward for consideration by [Full Council in February](#) to suspend any further engagement with the proposed new North Wales National Park.

[Communities Scrutiny Committee](#) received a report in March, on the Rhyl Regeneration Programme and Governance.

A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: On Target

Corporate Plan Update

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

Adult safeguarding enquiries completed within 7 working days have remained high at 98% during this fourth quarter. The annual percentage of new assessments completed for children during the year that were completed within statutory timescales fell from 77% to 65% and this is a priority to improve. The annual percentage of child protection conferences held within statutory timescales also fell from 95% to 93%. With increasing numbers of children looked after in Denbighshire, we continue to provide support through our corporate parenting role, and the activity to implement the requirements of Foster Wales continues and is 'On Target.' A number of projects are in place and making good progress in support of those with additional learning or complex needs. The council continues to review care packages to ensure as many as possible are right sized to single handed care with the right type of specialist equipment and there has been excellent progress in developing greater numbers of micro providers in the county, allowing greater access to services for residents.

Support the well-being, mental-health, and resilience of individuals within communities (equality objective)

The council continues to support the well-being of its citizens. More schools are adopting a whole school approach to mental health and well-being, and school counselling numbers remain at an 'Acceptable' level. Though the number of schools that have achieved trauma informed status is considered a 'Priority for Improvement' at this stage, a further two schools are in the process of working towards this goal. Access to advice and assistance continues to be provided through the Single Point of Access (SpoA) and Talking Points and an encouraging 92% of citizens receiving assistance from Talking Points did not need to be referred into Adult Social Care during January to March 2024. The project to progress towards digitalisation of telecare services has been upgraded to 'On Target', which will promote greater resilience of individuals within communities. Activities

supporting age-friendliness and dementia awareness in communities continue and are 'On Target'.

Promote personal and community well-being

In support of community well-being, the council's Community resilience Team and Edge of Care volunteer service have continued to support a number of projects, groups, and individuals, though the data shows a decrease in these numbers during this period. Several projects aiming to promote community well-being are running 'On Target'. However, the Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project remains 'At Risk' as its delivery is dependent on securing funding.

Foster community cohesion by ensuring people are protected from harm, abuse, and exploitation (equality objective)

The council continues to monitor rates of reported domestic abuse in Denbighshire. North Wales Police report that there were 490 repeat victims reported and 88 repeat offenders of domestic abuse reported during 2023 to 2024. There have been changes to home office crime recording in that the 'principal offense' approach has been resumed during the year, which explains the fall in the volume of recorded crimes between the second and third quarters. The decrease in reported domestic abuse crime between 2022-23 and 2023-24 may correlate to this change in approach. A further measure has been introduced to this framework to provide a clearer picture - one that is not solely reliant on North Wales Police data - of the rates of domestic abuse in Denbighshire. The number of referrals into the Domestic Abuse Support Unit (DASU) for the fourth quarter was 382, of which 39 were children. Also new to the framework is the figures of hate crimes reported for Denbighshire to North Wales Police. 34 hate crimes were reported between January to March 2024, the majority of which were categorised as racial.

Continue to support and resettle refugees through the UK Global Resettlement Scheme, in support of Wales' declaration to be a Nation of Sanctuary (equality objective)

The council continues to support and resettle refugees and during 2023 to 2024, the number of families resettles within the county had increased to 50.

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For information about our work to reduce deprivation and inequality, please see our [prosperous](#) and [well-run, high performing council](#) themes respectively. For further detail around our work to support learning, development and well-being, see our [Learning and Growing](#) theme.

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The percentage of safeguarding enquiries from adults completed within 7 working days from the receipt of the reported alleged abuse - Benchmarked Locally	98.8% Excellent Worse	100% Excellent Better	99% Excellent Worse	96.5% Excellent Worse	98% Excellent Better
The number of referrals and enquiries recorded on Children and Family Support Gateway - Count Only	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	4,350	4020	3731	4001
The number of children looked after in Denbighshire – Count Only	200	203	206	209	210
The number of care and support packages that have been right sized to single handed care with the right type of specialist equipment – Baseline Year	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	48	11	16	12
The percentage of schools in the county using the Public Health Wales Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Well-being Tool – Benchmarked Locally	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	27% Priority to Improve	No data.	66% Acceptable Better	67% Acceptable Better

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The number of Single Point of Access contacts for information, advice and assistance – Count Only	5,134	5,307	4,911	4,821	4,259
The number of Talking Point contacts for information, advice and assistance (libraries, One Stop Shops and hosted by Community Navigators etc) - Count Only	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	231	218	214	194
The percentage of citizens receiving information, advice and assistance from Talking Points who did not need to be referred into Adult Social Care - Baseline Year	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	88%	87%	97%	92%
The number of projects or groups supported by the Community Resilience Team - Benchmarked Locally	61 Excellent Better	78 Excellent Better	73 Excellent Worse	75 Excellent Better	53 Acceptable Worse
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse reported including non-crime occurrences (3 or more in 12 months, measured as year to date) - Count Only	537	99	368	360	490
The cumulative (year to date) number of repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse reported (3 or more in 12 months) - Count Only	56	6	73	63	88

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The number of referrals to the Domestic Abuse Safety Unit North Wales (DASU) for Denbighshire to support victims of domestic abuse – Count Only	Data reported from January 2024	Data reported from January 2024	Data reported from January 2024	Data reported from January 2024	382
Denbighshire hate crimes reported (from North Wales Police) – Count Only	42	41	54	52	34
The number of young people referred to the Youth Justice Service during the year from Denbighshire – Baseline Year	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	70	65	78	78
The number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) looked after by Denbighshire – Count Only	13	15	20	18	17

Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The percentage of new assessments completed for children during the year that were completed within statutory timescales - Benchmarked Nationally	77% Priority to Improve Better	65% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of child protection conferences held within statutory timescales - Benchmarked Nationally	95% Good Better	93% Acceptable Worse
The number of contacts by adult carers received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided - Count Only	1,159	1,094

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The total number of carers needs assessments for adults undertaken during the year (cumulative) – Count Only	401	370
Number of micro providers in existence in Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	30 Excellent	57 Excellent Better
The number of schools that have achieved Trauma Informed School status by 2027 - Benchmarked Locally	1 Excellent	1 Priority to Improve Worse
The number of young people who receive school-based counselling in Denbighshire – Benchmarked Locally	338 Acceptable Better	301 Acceptable Worse
The number of contacts provided through the council's Edge of Care volunteer service - Count Only	795	333
The cumulative number of families resettled within Denbighshire – Count Only	41	50

Stakeholder Survey

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that they can live safely, happily, and independently, in Denbighshire and also receive good support when needed to promote resilience and well-being - Benchmarked Locally	55% Acceptable	46% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire has the social infrastructure needed to support personal and community well-being – Benchmarked Locally	62% Acceptable	66% Good Better
The percentage of stakeholders who agreed that people in Denbighshire are treated fairly and equally, and have	46% Priority to Improve	53% Acceptable

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
access to opportunities to promote their well-being and community cohesion - Benchmarked Locally		Better

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Until new data is published (Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026), please refer to our [Performance Self-Assessment Update: July to September 2023 report](#).

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

Of the fourteen projects and activities listed under this theme, eleven are 'On Target', two are 'Experiencing Obstacles', and one is 'At Risk' (the Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project).

Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Monitor and implement requirements of Foster Wales and monitor effectiveness of national approach.	On Target Same	No exception
Implement Post 16 of Additional Learning Needs work	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Regional work continues to explore provision and funding.
Develop an in-county residential short breaks and emergency care provision for children with complex needs and disabilities within Denbighshire	On Target Same	No exception
Implement and embed the Autism Code of Practice requirements at local authority level across Children's Services.	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Compliance with the Code is progressing, and staff training needs are being addressed.

Title	Status	Exception
Bwthyn y Ddol Phase 2 (Activity) Develop and implement, including staffing, a new Children's Assessment Centre jointly with Conwy County Borough Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	On Target Same	No exception
Ysgol Tir Morfa - Hydrotherapy pool	On Target Same	No exception
Work with local unpaid carers to identify the respite opportunities they need, and how barriers are overcome to enable this.	On Target Same	No exception
Work towards becoming an age-friendly Denbighshire, with World Health Organisation, in partnership with Ageing Well in Denbighshire multi-agency group.	On Target Same	No exception
Work in partnership regionally to contribute to the embedding of the All Wales Dementia Pathway of Standards	On Target Same	No exception
Progress towards digitalisation of telecare services before the 2025 deadline for ceasing of analogue telephone services.	On Target Better	No exception
Bruton Park, Rhyl (working with Bruton Park residents to maximise community well-being).	On Target Same	No exception
Develop Croeso Cynnes hubs throughout the County.	On Target Better	No exception
Develop and deliver the county wide Food Strategy and Food Partnership Network (including social supermarket project – Cogog) around Denbighshire	On Target Same	No exception
Denbighshire and Flintshire Joint Archive Project	At Risk Same	Delivery of the project is dependent on securing funding.

A round up of news

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

The council's [adult social care and health team](#) held a 'meet the team' event, celebrated [Social Work Week](#), and thanked a social worker for their [40 years of service](#). [New electric vehicles](#) will be used to transport equipment and will also be available for [staff providing care](#) in people's homes. [Virtual Reality training](#) has helped staff to better understand trauma and safeguarding. Across Denbighshire [over 50 micro providers](#) have now been set up, providing over [800 weekly care hours](#).

A [Care Inspectorate Wales inspection](#) report (August 2023) has found that Domiciliary Support Service requires no areas of improvement. [Governance and Audit Committee](#) also considered the report.

Foster Wales has been encouraging more people in Denbighshire to consider [local authority fostering](#) to help more children to stay in their communities.

The recommendation for [Care Home fee setting](#) was [approved by Cabinet](#) in March. The [report](#) describes how the uplift will enable providers to pay the Real Living Wage to their care staff.

[Partnerships Scrutiny Committee](#) in March considered the North Denbighshire Community Hospital Project.

In October, the Minister for Finance and Local Government visited [Tŷ Pride](#). In November, the council announced it would be providing free [period pants for PE](#). February's [LGBTQ+ History Month](#) was celebrated. [A notice of motion](#) was put forward and agreed by County Council in February for a commitment to supporting those affected by events in Israel and Palestine.

October's World Mental Health Day was celebrated by the [Mental Health Volunteer Service](#). In January, [North East Wales Archives sought volunteers](#). The Countryside Service announced the revival of an [allotment in Prestatyn](#). A social group has been set up who meet to [knit in Rhuddlan library](#). In March, citizens were urged to check if they are eligible for [Marriage Allowance](#) tax relief.

Welsh Government's consultation on the [proposed changes to the Council Tax system](#) was considered by Cabinet in January. County Council agreed to adopt the [Council Tax Reduction Schemes](#).

Partnerships Scrutiny Committee considered in October an annual performance report about the [Community Safety Partnership](#). In November, Denbighshire landmarks were lit up in white in recognition of [White Ribbon Day](#). A school in St Asaph has become the first in North Wales to be recognised as a '[School of Sanctuary](#)'.

County Council in November agreed to adopt the [revised Gambling Act 2005](#) Statement of Licensing Principles. Following a [public consultation](#), the council and North Wales Police secured a [Public Space Protection Order](#) to address issues of anti-social behaviour in Rhyd town centre. A town centre site was also found for the [new Prestatyn police station](#).

A learning and growing Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

Corporate Plan Update

[Promote the learning and development of our children and young people \(equality objective\)](#)

During this period the support provided to promote the development of children in the early years has continued to strengthen, with excellent rates of children taking part in the childcare offer and continued excellent performance in Family Link Workers supporting entry to nursery as well as in library services such as Bookstart. Projects related to early years child development are progressing well, with the expansion of Flying Start 'On Target' as well as the completion of two other projects as seen in the table below.

There has been continued collaborative working between the council, schools and GwE, our school improvement partner, to support high standards of education in Denbighshire. The number of schools in either Estyn Review, Significant Improvement or Special Measures is 3, which is 'Acceptable'. Further data is expected from schools in the autumn of 2024 as the academic year draws to a close.

Schools are being supported to deliver against new standards, such as the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, with an increase in the percentage of reception pupils receiving Welsh medium education to 28.4%. The project to deliver the new curriculum for Wales is also 'On Target' as is the implementation of the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs Reform Act.

[Provide high quality buildings and facilities that meet the needs of pupils, families, and the wider community, including working with the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme](#)

The council continues to progress its long-term plans for the provision of high-quality buildings and facilities for learners. Schools are surveyed annually and categorised in terms of building condition according to Welsh Government definitions as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. The council is working to reduce the number of schools in Denbighshire in the lower categories C and D, despite the

challenges this kind of work entails. The current figure of 27 is rated 'Excellent' and keeps the council within reach of the goal for 2027 for this number to be reduced to 21. Unfortunately, delays in the progression of certain projects within the Modernising Education Programme mean that this stream of work remains 'At Risk.'

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

The council continues to work collaboratively with partners to enhance people's opportunities for employment, further education, or training. Though the percentage of year 11 pupils leaving school and known not to be in education, employment or training as at 31 August 2023 remains a 'Priority for Improvement', there are fewer year 11 pupils that do not have an identified Post-16 Pathway in place, which is a positive development. Work continues through the Regional Skills Partnership and through the council's Community Benefits Policy in support of this theme. It will not be possible to report on Care Leaver Pathway Plans going forward as there has been a change in the system. The percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training is now recorded in the collection year and is rated 'Excellent' at 75%.

Improving the well-being of children from low income and disadvantaged families (equality objective)

By January 2024, the universal free school meals offer was made available to all primary pupils across Denbighshire. The percentage of eligible school pupils taking free school meals data will be adjusted once attendance figures are known in the Autumn. The School Holiday Enrichment Programme to support children to eat well continues and is 'On Target,' as is the project to reduce the impact of poverty on Education Attainment.

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of well-being please see our [healthier, happier and caring theme](#) and for further detail around our work to support employment and the economy see our [prosperous](#) theme.

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The number of children taking part in the childcare offer – Benchmarked Locally	570 Acceptable Better	570 Acceptable Same	624 Good Better	701 Excellent Better	772 Excellent Better
The number of schools in either Estyn Review, Significant Improvement or Special Measures – Benchmarked Locally	3 Acceptable Same	2 Good Better	2 Good Same	2 Good Same	3 Acceptable Worse
The number of voluntary / work experience placements offered through Llwybrau – Benchmarked Locally	No data. New to 2023 to 2024	1 Priority to Improve	13 Excellent Better	20 Excellent Better	Data expected Autumn 2024

Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The percentage of children entering nursery that have been provided with a 'Me in a Nutshell' profile by Family Link Workers, supporting their effective transition – Benchmarked Locally	82% Excellent Better	83% Excellent Better
The percentage of parents that have reported a positive impact through attending Bookstart and Rhyme-time – Benchmarked Locally	99% Excellent	99% Excellent Same
The percentage of pupils (using Pupil Attitudes to Self and School - PASS) who respond positively against pupils' feelings about school – Benchmarked Locally	85.4% Good Worse	Data expected Summer 2024
The number of reported occurrences of prejudice related bullying in schools - Benchmarked Locally	Data expected Autumn 2024	Data expected Autumn 2024

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools – Benchmarked Locally	90.8% Priority to Improve Worse	Data expected Autumn 2024
The percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools – Benchmarked Locally	86% Priority to Improve Worse	Data expected Autumn 2024
The percentage of pupils engaged through Llwybrau that achieve a positive outcome, including level 1 or 2 qualifications – Benchmarked Locally	88% Acceptable	Data expected Autumn 2024
The percentage of reception pupils receiving Welsh medium education - Count Only	27.4%	28.4%
The number of schools providing education through suitability and condition categories C and D – Benchmarked Locally	27 Excellent Same	27 Excellent Same
The percentage of Year 11 Leavers from schools know Not to be in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), at the preceding 31 August in Denbighshire – Benchmarked Nationally	2.3% Priority to Improve Worse	2.4% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of Year 11 pupils that do not have an identified Post-16 pathway in place – Benchmarked Locally	10.50% Priority to Improve Worse	2.4% Good Better
The percentage of children or young people who are looked after that have a Personal Education Plan in place – Benchmarked Locally	96% Good Worse	98% Good Better
The percentage of initial Care Leaver Pathway Plans completed during the year that were within the statutory timescales, where the young person has care leaver status – Benchmarked Locally	71% Priority to Improve Better	Count not possible due to system change
The percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the collection year – Count Only	73% Excellent Better	75% Excellent Better

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The percentage of eligible primary school pupils taking Free School meals (Denbighshire) – Benchmarked Locally	57% Priority to Improve Worse	Data expected Autumn 2024
The percentage of eligible secondary school pupils taking Free School meals (Denbighshire) – Benchmarked Locally	66% Good Worse	Data expected Autumn 2024

Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that good quality learning and training is available in Denbighshire, allowing people of all ages to reach their personal and professional potential – Benchmarked Locally	62% Acceptable	56% Acceptable Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire is a county where the Welsh language is a living, thriving language - Benchmarking Locally	62% Acceptable	56% Acceptable Worse

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Until new data is published (Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026), please refer to our [Performance Self-Assessment Update: July to September 2023 report](#).

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

There are sixteen projects and activities within this theme, eight of which are 'On Target', three are 'Experiencing Obstacles', and two are now complete. As reported previously, the Modernising Education Programme remains 'At Risk'.

Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Flying Start Expansion	On Target Same	No exception
Recommissioning of Families First	Complete	No exception
Review Early Years provision in the context of WG Early Years Transformation funding and the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) agenda	Complete	No exception
Implement School Improvement Guidance: Framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	Impacted by reforms in the Welsh Government School Improvement Partnership Programme.
Support the regional project on Emotional Health, Well-being and Resilience Framework, which will provide resources for parents	Experiencing Obstacles Same	Regional discussion with lead to take place in June 2024 to discuss next steps of implementation.
Support schools in developing digital competency through educational leadership of the EdTech project	Experiencing Obstacles Worse	A digital learning strategy is to be consulted upon this term.
Implement the WESP to support 1 million speakers by 2050	On Target Same	No exception
In partnership with GwE, Support schools and non-maintained settings to deliver the new curriculum for Wales to ensure our learners become capable, ambitious, enterprising, ethical, healthy and confident adults	On Target Same	No exception
Implement requirements of the of ALN Reform Act within Education and Children's Services to ensure compliance	On Target Same	No exception
Modernising Education Programme	At Risk Same	Delays have occurred in the progression of Band B projects.
Community Focussed Schools: Prestatyn High Pilot	On Target Same	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Engage with the North Wales Ambition Board and the Regional Skills Partnership to ensure that skills and training secured through our Community Benefits Policy is fit for the future and / or transferrable	On Target Better	No exception
Through our Community Benefits Policy, secure business led strategy workshops for the benefit of residents seeking to upskill	Experiencing obstacles Same	Engagement held with Balfour Beatty. We are awaiting a proposal.
Universal Free School Meals for all Primary School Pupils	On Target Same	No exception
Enhance the School Holiday Enrichment Programme to support children to eat well	On Target Same	No exception
Reducing the impact of poverty on Education Attainment, including implementing the Price of Poverty project	Status pending	Update pending

A round up of news

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

The Families First and Flying Start team offered [free family activities during half term](#). In November an extension was completed, and an [open day](#) held, at the [Oaktree Integrated Children's Centre](#) in Rhyl, which provides early years support.

In October, Denbighshire libraries announced that 2,478 children had taken part in the [2023 Reading Challenge](#), and in March 2024, [free book vouchers](#) were provided to celebrate World Book Day. Performance Scrutiny Committee in January considered the [Library Service's performance](#) against National Standards for the year 2022 to 2023.

Performance Scrutiny Committee in January considered a report to promote [school attendance and engagement](#) in education. The Committee in March considered and endorsed the Authority's policies regarding [Elective Home Education](#).

At the end of 2023, Denbighshire's [Young Rangers](#) were given vital life-saving training.

In March, young people in Denbighshire were advised to check if they have any money due to them from an [unclaimed Child Trust Fund](#) account.

Working Denbighshire, the council's employability service, announced in October its provision of [social group sessions](#) and [walks with therapy dogs](#). Another project, the [Work Start scheme](#), has successfully joined Denbighshire-based businesses with residents looking to upskill and gain experience. Working Denbighshire announced it is offering fully [funded training courses](#).

In January, it was announced that by the Spring term every primary school pupil in Denbighshire would be able to have a [free school meal](#) (FSM). The FSM team were honoured with a [national award](#), as were individual staff members from the catering service. Both Denbighshire County Council's Catering Service Team and Street Lighting Team were also named as [finalists at the 2023 APSE \(Association for Public Service Excellence\) performance awards](#).

A Greener Denbighshire

Measures: Acceptable

Projects: Experiencing Obstacles

Corporate Plan Update

[Deliver our Climate and Ecological Change Strategy to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030](#)

The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy is scheduled to be reviewed and refreshed every 3 years. The first official review and refresh of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy began during 2023 to 2024. The draft Year 3 updated Strategy document was out for [consultation](#) during March and May 2024. An [interactive public event](#) was held in November 2023 as part of our engagement around the Strategy Review. Over 50 people attended the session, providing valuable feedback for us to drive fresh ideas forward for tackling county climate change issues.

There are a number of key performance indicators that are being used to judge the performance of the council in achieving its 2030 goals, including: reducing carbon emissions the Council emits from various sources, increasing carbon sequestration of land the Council owns/leases and manages and increasing the species richness of the land the Council owns/leases and manages. Data for the year 2023 to 2024 data will be available in late summer 2024.

Whilst we are going in the right direction it is not currently at the pace to suggest sufficient progress is being made to meet the 2030 goal of net carbon zero. The financial pressures all local authorities are facing now and in the coming years will continue to impact on that pace. We plan to maintain our Climate and Ecological Improvement ambition and not adjust targets - despite their challenge - as we go into the next three years of our strategy.

[Improve recycling rates and reduce waste](#)

We will be introducing a new recycling system in June of this year to help us meet Welsh Government's 70% recycling target which has been set for all local authorities in Wales. In October 2023, we released the [winning names of our new Welsh Government funded recycling vehicles](#) which will come into service in 2024. [Young winners of the competition](#) were presented with their prizes at a special event held in January.

In February we announced the [new recycling and waste service](#) which will start on [Monday, 3 June 2024](#). The new system will have many benefits not only for the environment as it will lead to increased recycling rates but also it will be cheaper to run, providing better value for money and will also be good for the local economy. The new service, which is 55% funded by Welsh Government, will require residents to separate their 'dry' recycling using a new three-tier Trolibocs. With over 45,000 new containers required to facilitate the new service, we started to deliver the Trolibocs to households in February, together with a comprehensive information pack, whilst we continue to deliver the current recycling and waste collections service until June. We have provided information on our social media and our [website](#) around [schedules, updates, information packs](#) and [explainer videos](#). [Six drop-in sessions](#) are also scheduled to be held in April and May giving residents the opportunity to ask questions. Following our successful pilot scheme for residents in LL16 and LL17 postcodes areas last year, our [Absorbent Hygiene Products \(AHP\) collections](#) will also be rolled out throughout the county from June 2024.

[Support communities to mitigate and cope with the impacts of climate change](#)

March 2024 marked the [first anniversary of the Coastal Defence Scheme](#) work starting at both the Central Prestatyn and Rhyl sites. A published [case study](#) by Welsh Government evidenced how we have worked with partners to maximise well-being outcomes while working to protect Rhyl from flooding. The case study sets out several beneficial outcomes from the model adopted, including environmental and economic benefits, employment opportunities and health and well-being benefits for participants.

[Develop a Sustainable Transport Plan that makes travel and tourism within our county 'greener'](#)

Whilst we now have quarterly data for 2022 to 2023 for the number of journeys using Fflecsi bus services and the total number of concessionary journeys, data for the number of journeys on service buses is unavailable and we propose to remove this measure. All other 2023 to 2024 data is expected to be available in July. However, no progress has been made in progressing the Sustainable Transport Plan and resources are severely stretched having been focussed on Levelling Up funded projects. Following a discussion with project leads, the Greener Denbighshire Board, and the Senior Leadership Team around the barriers faced by the project, it is now recommended that the project is closed and removed from the Corporate Plan. It has been confirmed that there is no statutory duty

on the council to produce a sustainable transport plan, and there are no financial implications to the council of not having a plan. Working closely with the Corporate Joint Committee on the Regional Transport Plan must be the council's priority going forward.

[Support our county's green infrastructure](#)

At the end of 2023, our [Electric Vehicle Charging Hub at Rhyl's West Kinmel car park](#) reached its first anniversary. Since becoming operational it has provided over 250,000 miles of greener transport for motorists. The public electric vehicle project is now complete.

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of greener initiatives please see our [Housing](#) theme for energy efficiency and our [Prosperous](#) for sustainable travel.

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2022 to 2023	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
Cumulative number of journeys using Fflecsi bus services – Count Only	22,572	Data pending	Data pending	Data pending	Data pending
Number of journeys on service buses	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
Cumulative number of concessionary journeys – Count Only	678,120	Data pending	Data pending	Data pending	Data pending

Annual or Biennial Measures

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Net Carbon Zero - Total carbon tonnage emitted and absorbed by the council (excluding supply chains) – Benchmarked Locally	11,832 Priority to Improve Worse	Data expected in September
The percentage of DCC owned and operated land in highest categories of species richness – Benchmarked Locally	42.00% Acceptable	Data expected in September

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
	Better	
Total carbon tonnage emitted (Corporately) through fleet – Benchmarked Locally	2,302 Acceptable Better	Data expected in September
Total carbon tonnage emitted (Corporately) through business travel– Benchmarked Locally	251 Excellent Worse	Data expected in September
Total carbon tonnage emitted (Corporately) through supply chains– Benchmarked Locally	Data pending	Data expected in September
Capacity (in MW) of renewable energy equipment installed in our buildings (owned and operated) - Count Only	1Mw	1.190Mw
The percentage of municipal waste reused, recycled or composted - Benchmarked Nationally	65.91% Good Worse	67.59% Excellent Better
The number of properties with a high or medium risk of flooding (DCC wide) - Count Only	1,171	1,171
Number of cycle journeys per annum on designated Active Travel routes (Sample)	Baseline data being established	Data pending
Number of pedestrian journeys per annum on designated Active Travel routes (Sample)	Baseline data being established	Data pending

Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2023

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that Denbighshire is resilient against the impacts of climate change and nature's decline - Benchmarked Locally	52% Acceptable	44% Priority to Improve Worse

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation Measures

Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data is published infrequently - every four to five years - with the most recent data being available for 2019. Until new data is published (Welsh Government's next WIMD update is expected in late 2025 or early 2026), please refer to our [Performance Self-Assessment Update: July to September 2023 report](#).

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Project Update

This theme is supported by the overarching Climate and Ecological Change Programme 2021 to 2030 and a further 10 projects and activities. Seven are 'On Target', two are 'Experiencing Obstacles' and one is in development.

Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Programme: Climate and Ecological Change Programme 2021 – 2030	Experiencing Obstacles Same	In year 2023 to 2024 status update: Delays in project delivery, which means benefit realisation will also be delayed.
Deliver the annual programme of Ash Dieback work	On Target Same	No exception
Rhyl Green Infrastructure	On Target Same	No exception
Remodelling Waste Service Operations	Experiencing Obstacles Better	Whilst the permit from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has now been issued, successful completion of the recruitment exercise is crucial, and this remains in progress.
Reduce plastics in schools and promote recycling in relation to the new waste model	Experiencing Obstacles Same	We are continually looking for alternative provision that would eradicate single use plastics.
Develop and implement a new Denbighshire Flood Risk Management Strategy for the county	On Target Same	No exception

Title	Status	Exception
Prestatyn Central Coastal Defence Improvement Scheme	On Target Same	No exception
Rhyl Central Coastal Defence Improvement Scheme	On Target Same	No exception
Develop a Sustainable Transport Plan (to include Active Travel)	At business case stage	No exception
Review, develop and modernise rural, urban and inter-urban transport services, where appropriate, working with partners within the Metro project and alongside the emerging bus reform	On Target Better	No exception
Work with Conwy and Denbighshire Public Service Board to develop and assess our organisation's climate risk resilience	New	No exception

A round up of news

The following additional news and committee items took place in this last period in support of this them. The council's website contains a wealth of news about nature, our local environment and community activity around climate change, which can be found on our [news](#) page by applying the filter for "Climate and ecological change".

The Council's Energy Team are working on a range of projects to improve building energy efficiency and support the reduction of running costs over the long term in the Council's non-domestic building estate which is responsible for over 60% of council carbon emissions. Recent highlights include:

- [Community hub \(Ysgol Dyffryn Ial\)](#)
- [Low carbon heat project \(Ysgol Brynhyfryd\)](#)
- [Energy efficiency improvements \(Ysgol Llywelyn\)](#)
- [Reduce carbon emissions and lower long term usage costs \(Ysgol Emmanuel\)](#)
- [Council renewal energy generation](#)

In October, [Communities Scrutiny Committee](#) considered a report on the Waste Service Remodelling Project, which gave an update on progress to date and highlighted the risk around the timely approval of the operational permit required for the new Denbigh

Waste Transfer Scheme. [Cabinet](#), in December, approved an extension to the contract for the haulage, sorting and brokerage of Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR).

We announced in March that we are working together with Rhyl Golf Club on a [new Club House](#), which will ensure that the Club gets replacement facilities and that the Central Prestatyn Coastal Defence Scheme will be delivered on time.

A well-run, high performing council

Measures: Priority for Improvement

Projects: On Target

Corporate Plan Update

[Embed a positive “one council” culture \(equality objective\)](#)

The Well-run Board is settling into its role in nurturing and ensuring good governance. Its focus is on embedding our four [values and five principles](#), which are fundamental to everything we do as a council. Three formal Board meetings have taken place and workshops with staff (office-based and front line) and Members have been successful and well-received. The Board is keen to capitalise on the growing understanding of our culture and what it means to be a part of the “Denbighshire family”, and a communications plan is being put in place, which includes case studies from staff and managers and a video featuring the Lead Member and Chief Executive. The Board is taking a growing role in a number of key areas including annual self-assessment, service performance challenges, and the peer-led Panel Performance Assessment, expected to take place in the Autumn. The Board, at its next meeting in July, will discuss the emerging transformation agenda and how our culture can enable that to happen effectively. The Board has also supported the creation of a small set of service-level people and budget management indicators to include in all service plans, which will bolster this year’s redesigned Service Performance Challenge programme. After some quarters of poor performance, the percentage of staff who are eligible for one or three one-to-ones and who have had at least one or three one-to-ones in the last 12 months (by person) has increased to 91% at the end of March 2023 (from 54% in December). Whilst still considered a ‘Priority for Improvement’, the improvement is significant and positive. Our Performance Challenges had highlighted the improvement needed in this area, and this increase is also likely due to some recording issues being resolved. Our revised Corporate Plan maintains a clear focus on how the council works, including customer service, engagement, and our performance. It is important that we demonstrate improvement in these areas and respond to the expectations of our customers.

Reduce inequalities by ensuring that the experiences of people from diverse backgrounds, seldom heard groups, and those at a socio-economic disadvantage are heard and inform decision making (equality objective)

An engagement network of people and groups with protected characteristics has been developed in partnership with the Community Cohesion Team, the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network and Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC). The final list will be presented to the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group in April 2024, with a view to publishing it on our website. The Well-run Board will also evaluate current workstreams to ensure we maximise our contribution to this pledge. The number of community projects co-produced with the community and third sector increased from 7 last year to 18 this year, which is 'Excellent'. This work supports our [healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire theme](#).

Play our part in achieving one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050, by building a culture and ethos that encourages the daily use of Welsh

As reported previously, officers have been developing guidance to inform recruitment of staff with Welsh essential and Welsh desirable skills. The aim is to move to a position whereby every job has, as a minimum, a Level 1 Welsh language skills requirement (some positions will require a Level 5 skill). There has been some slowing of pace whilst recruitment for a Welsh Language Officer is underway. Anecdotally there is a much greater use of Welsh formally at committee meetings, and informally in the day-to-day business of the council. There has also been an improvement in the percentage of staff that have completed Welsh Language Awareness e-learning, which stood at 85% at the end of March 2024. Corporate Support Services: People has been tasked with an action to support and encourage the greater use of Welsh, informally and formally, throughout the council, following its Performance Challenge in March 2024. Furthermore, the Well-run Board will evaluate current workstreams to ensure we maximise our contribution to this pledge.

Working collaboratively to alleviate problems with recruitment and retention

Whilst the council still faces some recruitment and retention issues the financial pressures all councils are experiencing has resulted in the council having to act during the period to limit spend, including implementation of vacancy control procedures. Recruitment was still able to take place in critical areas such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services, but

vacancies in those services persist. The Social Care Recruitment and Retention Operational Group has pursued a range of actions to alleviate the issues. A Regional Care Career Connector is now hosted by the Regional Collaborative in Denbighshire and council representation at various workforce-related meetings is in place. We have supported students to undertake studies with the Open University, with three students progressing to Stage 2 and one to Stage 3. We are working across the region, with our partners, including with Wrexham University. On the basis that all opportunities are being pursued the Social Care Recruitment and Retention Operational Group has been closed.

Performance Framework: Measures Update

For further measures and activity in support of procurement and community benefits, please see the [Prosperous](#) theme.

Quarterly or Biannual Measures

Annual or biennial measures

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
The percentage of projects whose delivery confidence was updated in the last three months – Benchmarked Locally	96% Good Improved	96% Good Same	100% Excellent Better	98% Good Worse	90% Good Worse
The cumulative number of Internal Audit low assurance reports, financial year to date – Benchmarked Locally	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same	0 Excellent Same
Corporate and Service Budget Variance (£k) – Count Only	1,585 Priority to Improve Better	2,395 Priority to Improve Worse	3,446 Priority to Improve Worse	3,229 Priority to Improve Better	513 Excellent Better

Title	Quarter 4 2022 to 2023	Quarter 1 2023 to 2024	Quarter 2 2023 to 2024	Quarter 3 2023 to 2024	Quarter 4 2023 to 2024
Council reserves (£k) – Count Only	5,531 Excellent Worse	5,531 Excellent Same	5,531 Excellent Same	5,600 Excellent Better	5,577 Excellent Worse
The percentage of external complaints upheld or partly upheld over the last quarter – Benchmarked Locally	42% Good Better	29% Excellent Better	55% Acceptable Worse	20% Excellent Better	44% Good Worse
The rolling average number of working days / shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence – Benchmarked Nationally	9.8 Priority to Improve Same	8.79 Priority to Improve Better	8.82 Priority to Improve Worse	8.63 Priority to Improve Better	8.55 Priority to Improve Better
The percentage of staff who are eligible for one or three one-to-ones and who have had at least one or three one-to-ones in the last 12 months (by person) – Benchmarked Locally	61% Priority to Improve Better	58% Priority to Improve Worse	56% Priority to Improve Worse	54% Priority to Improve Worse	91% Priority to Improve Better
The percentage of employees that have completed all 10 mandatory e-learning modules by the end of the year (excluding schools) – Benchmarked Locally	49% Priority to Improve Better	51% Priority to Improve Better	49.8% Priority to Improve Worse	39.5% Priority to Improve Worse	48.32% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of staff that have completed Welsh Language Awareness e-learning - Benchmarked Locally	73% Priority to Improve	80.3% Acceptable Better	79.26% Priority to Improve Worse	82.6% Acceptable Better	85% Good Better

2020 to 2023 data

Title	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
The percentage of new appointees from applications where it was disclosed that they are either from a racial or religious minority group, have a disability, are gay or bi-sexual, or had their gender reassigned – Count Only	4%	21%	20%

2022 to 2024 data

Title	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
The percentage of the lowest paid salaries (bottom quarter) that are women – Benchmarked Locally	80.7% Priority to Improve Worse	80.6% Priority to Improve Better
The number of community projects co-produced with the community and third sector - Count Only	7 Good Same	18 Excellent Better

Stakeholder Survey 2022 to 2024

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council is transparent, well-run, and high performing – Benchmarked Locally	49% Priority to Improve	39% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council works well with partners – Benchmarked Locally	74% Good	63% Good Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that there is a good working relationship between political leaders and senior management – Benchmarked Locally	55% Acceptable	47% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council manages its	53% Acceptable	43% Priority to Improve

Title	2022 to 2023 With an opinion, and agree	2023 to 2024 With an opinion, and agree
performance well – Benchmarked Locally		Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council manages its risks and challenges well – Benchmarked Locally	55% Acceptable	44% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council manages its finances well – Benchmarked Locally	48% Priority to Improve	30% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council has effective long-term plans in place – Benchmarked Locally	56% Acceptable	40% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council treats its workforce well – Benchmarked Locally	76% Excellent	67% Good Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council makes best use of its assets and resources – Benchmarked Locally	35% Priority to Improve	30% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council purchases its goods and services in a fair and efficient way – Benchmarked Locally	54% Acceptable	47% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council acts on the concerns of residents – Benchmarked Locally	48% Priority to Improve	44% Priority to Improve Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council treats all people fairly – Benchmarked Locally	58% Acceptable	51% Acceptable Worse
The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the council's Corporate Plan and priorities reflect the needs of the local community - Benchmarked Locally	51% Acceptable	42% Priority to Improve Worse

Corporate Plan Performance Framework: Projects Update

There are 11 projects of activities in support of this theme. Currently, nine activities are 'On Target', one is 'Experiencing Obstacles', one is complete and one has not yet started.

Projects or Activities

Title	Status	Exception
Well-Run, High Performing Council workstream: Embed a positive culture of ambition, transparency and continuous improvement by placing our values of integrity, respect, unity, and pride at the heart of everything that we do	On Target	No exception
Well-Run, High Performing Council workstream: Be close to our communities	On Target	No exception
Well-Run, High Performing Council workstream: Have clear performance expectations	On Target	No exception
Well-Run, High Performing Council workstream: Promote strong staff and elected member relations	On Target	No exception
Well-Run, High Performing Council workstream: Ensure Denbighshire County Council is a good employer and is an excellent place to work	On Target	No exception
Implement new Panel Performance Assessment Process and report findings to Council	On Target Same	No exception
Review and revise the Youth Council for Denbighshire	Experiencing Obstacles Same	This activity will recommence after the summer holidays.
Undertake an annual review of the Corporate Workforce Plan 2022 to 2027	On Target	No exception
Improve the information we have about our workforce, including equality information, to support more detailed analyses in future Public Sector Duty Reports	On Target	No exception
Develop a network to engage people and groups with protected characteristics	Complete	

Title	Status	Exception
(through the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group)		
Review requirements for and procure a Corporate CRM system (including undertaking workshops with members and services to inform development of the new system)	Not started	Progress expected during next quarter

Self-Assessment: Governance Areas

The following is our self-assessment against the seven key governance areas and seeks to paint a picture of how well the council is performing, how we know that (linking to evidence where it is available), and what we can do to improve. Our news round up is included in each governance section.

Corporate Planning

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Corporate Planning is about how the council sets out and makes arrangements to deliver on its strategic objectives.

Corporate Plan Governance Arrangements

The increasingly difficult and unprecedented financial environment that the council is operating in necessitated revisions to our Corporate Plan during this period. This was a pragmatic step to reduce the administrative burden on already stretched council services across the board, and to help release some capacity to support our transformational agenda, which will enable us to innovatively respond to the challenges ahead. Discussions were held with senior managers and councillors between January and February 2024 to rationalise the content of the Corporate Plan, focussing on those ambitions that remain important areas of improvement for our communities, and de-escalating the reporting of already embedded, operational activity. This has seen us move from nine themes to six, which are underlined by the importance of Equality and Welsh Language as guiding principles in all of our work.

This revision has also been timely, and will help align the business planning cycles of both our Public Sector Equality Duty (which is on a four-year cycle) and the Well-being of Future Generations Act (five-year cycle) when we come to consider the next iteration of

our Corporate Plan in 2027. This revision, therefore, combined with the [supporting information](#) published on our Equality, Diversity and Human Rights webpage, constitutes our Strategic Equality Plan for 2024 to 2028. In considering this revision, we have again revisited the wealth of information that we gathered in our [Well-being Assessment](#); and in respect of the 2011 Engagement Provisions, through our annual Stakeholder Survey (most recently between September 2023 and February 2024) we have consulted widely with representative stakeholders in our communities on the content and relevance of our Corporate Plan objectives, particularly around the issue of equality and fairness.

The revised Corporate Plan was unanimously adopted by County Council at its [meeting in February, 2024](#). Governance structures have subsequently been amended (including revised terms of reference for our Boards) to align with the new themes. This has resulted in the cessation of the Fairer, Safer, More Equal Denbighshire Board, but will place greater importance on the work of the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group.

In the context of the present difficult financial environment, we expect that as a council we will need to keep our Corporate Plan commitments and performance expectations under continual review going forward.

Respond to the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Work continues on the implementation of the one outstanding performance aspect of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, concerning the requirement to arrange a peer-led Panel Performance Assessment within an ordinary term of the County Council. The council has opted to work with the Welsh Local Government Association on this, and a meeting to understand the process and timetable was held in October. Subsequently, an initial scoping discussion was held with Cabinet and SLT during their March Corporate Plan Tranche Review, where it was agreed that a working group of key managers and Cabinet members would meet during April and May to draft the scope and propose some key areas of focus for the assessment. The scoping document will accompany this Self-Assessment Performance Update Report through our committee cycle to obtain further input from the Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet, Performance Scrutiny, the Governance and Audit Committee and finally County Council. The scope and members of the independent panel will then be finally agreed and appointed by Cabinet in July. The Panel Performance Assessment is expected to take place in September.

Transformation Agenda

Work is underway on establishing the council's transformation programme, with governance structures now in place, helping to move the council to a place where it can respond innovatively and collaboratively to the challenges ahead. The Strategic Planning and Performance Team has also developed an Insight Strategy to outline what support that team could potentially provide in support of this key area of work for the council. The Team is presently testing out aspects of this new function on a couple of service areas, and key staff across the council will receive training between May and July in Continuous Improvement theories and practices to support this work.

Audit Wales: Corporate Support Functions

At its [meeting in March](#), Performance Scrutiny considered the findings and management response to the Audit Wales report on the suitability of the council's corporate support functions. The results of the review were positive with only two recommendations:

1. A need to review out-of-date Human Resource policies.
2. Internal Audit Reviews should consider the sustainable development principle.

The report being from May 2023, it was noted that considerable progress had already taken place to address the actions identified in response to these recommendations.

Audit Wales: Setting of Well-being Objectives

At its [meeting in March](#), the Governance and Audit Committee received, for its information, a report by Audit Wales on the way in which the council had set its Well-being Objectives in 2022. It was a very positive report that captured the breadth of good work that had taken place to develop our Corporate Plan. The report makes only one recommendation, encouraging the council to improve on how it draws on the full diversity of residents when designing its objectives. This was an improvement action that we were already aware of and have acknowledged in our assessment and Plan. The response we have provided to the report also outlines the many engagement actions that we have undertaken and continue to undertake to address this issue. It is, however, an area that many councils struggle with.

Other developments in the last period

New Ways of Working Journey Checker

In February 2024, the Well-being of Future Generations Commissioner wrote to public bodies to publicise the release of a Ways of Working Journey Checker to help organisations reflect on their use of the five ways of working; to assess progress with delivering the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; and to provide some helpful prompts for improvement and next steps to focus future work. Public bodies were requested to complete the exercise by September.

The assessment tool has been completed on behalf of the council by the Strategic Planning and Performance Team, applying their knowledge and understanding as to how the organisation works. The assessment asked 63 questions in total, structured around the five ways of working, and covered both Process and People / Culture within the council. Following completion, an assessment is made as to the overall progress of our journey within each way of working. The possible outcome of the assessment's results range in ascending improvement from No Change, to Simple Change, More Adventurous, Owing Ambition, and finally to Leading the Way. The results of Denbighshire County Council's assessment are summarised below:

- **Process:** The council scored as 'More Adventurous' or 'Owing Ambition', which reflects the great deal of work that has been undertaken within the organisation to embed the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the five ways of working within our systems and processes.
- **People and Culture:** We are broadly satisfied that our scores vary between 'More Adventurous' or 'Simple Change' but acknowledge that perhaps more could be done to support greater collaboration and integration.

The Journey Checker identified some recommendations in respect of integration and collaboration that could help us develop in this area; some of which we may already do to some degree, but perhaps require more consistent application more broadly across the organisation.

Financial Planning

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Financial planning relates to the management of our income and expenditure.

Finance Update Reports

At its meetings in [October](#), [November](#), [December](#), [January](#) and [March](#), Cabinet received an update on the council's financial position. In the Update report provided in March, a summary of the council's financial position was provided. The net revenue budget for 2023 to 2024 was £250.793m (£233.696m in 2022 to 2023); an overspend of £2.780m was forecast for service and corporate budgets; the report highlighted current risks and assumptions relating to corporate budgets and individual service areas; detailed service savings and efficiencies for the 2023 to 2024 budget (£8.172m); and provided a general update on the Housing Revenue Account, Treasury Management, Capital Plan and major projects.

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 in Education and Children's Services, Highways and Environmental Services and Adults Social Care and Homelessness budgets. 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.

Cabinet will, in April, receive an update report regarding the Medium Term Finance Strategy and Plan for 2025 to 2026 and a review of the council's financial resilience and sustainability. We will report on these in our next Performance Update report.

Voluntary exit

In response to the significant financial challenges facing the council, we ran a Voluntary Exit Scheme with the aim of making financial savings from employees leaving the organisation which would reduce the need for compulsory exits in the future. Employees were invited to express an interest in being considered for Voluntary Early Retirement or Voluntary Redundancy. The scheme was open to all council employees except for relief/supply employees and school-based employees who are directly employed by

governing bodies. A total of 138 applications were received and these were considered by Corporate Executive Team (CET) who determined, based on information provided by the relevant Head of Service, whether to approve or decline the application. In making their decision, CET considered the one-off cost of allowing the employee to leave; the recurring annual saving that will be made; and the impact on service delivery. As the scheme is voluntary, the council can decide which applications to accept. Similarly, employees were able to choose whether to apply and accept any offer made. In total, 44 applications were approved by CET with 33 employees accepting the offer made, which will deliver between £1.3-£1.5 million savings per annum. The one-off exit costs funded from reserves are circa £800k. Overall, the scheme has been successful and has contributed towards the overall saving target for 2024 to 2025. The process has taken some time but has been thorough. It has prompted reviews of how services are organised and could be delivered in the future.

Budget pressures

In October, we issued a [press release](#) emphasising the significant financial pressures the council is facing. The press release explained that the council will need to agree and implement significant savings to enable us to set a balanced budget for 2024 to 2025 (with similar challenges facing us for 2025 to 2026). We have been looking at all services and trying to protect the most vulnerable as far as possible. We outlined the approach to budget proposals (how all would be going through the appropriate process with some decisions made by Cabinet while others will be taken via delegated decision either by the Lead Member or Head of Service) and that all decisions likely to result in a significant impact on communities being subject to a public consultation.

At [October's Communities Scrutiny Committee](#), proposed changes to car parking tariffs were presented as part of a corporate approach to savings and as a mechanism for bringing income into the Council. The proposals included a review of payment options available in car parks and a revision of the hours in which the council would be asking for payment. The decision to impose the proposed changes to car parking tariffs would ultimately under delegated powers be the decision on the Head of Service however, it was stated that officers would work closely with Members to gain their thoughts and to engage with the public. Another part of the process would be for officers to work with the Communications Team to develop an Engagement Plan for various groups who would be most affected by the changes. The committee, subject to further consideration being given to the issues raised during the discussion, resolved to support the proposed increase to

parking tariffs and the other proposed changes detailed in the report. The draft Denbighshire Car Park Investment Plan 2024 to 2029 will be presented to the Committee for consideration prior to approval and adoption.

During the period, we invited staff to contribute ideas for areas of savings or efficiencies that could help contribute to ensuring that the council can set a balanced budget over the coming years. We also implemented a series of measures to introduce corporate budget controls (see our [Workforce Planning section](#)).

Budget 2024 to 2025

In November, [Governance and Audit Committee](#) received a report to update the Committee on the budget setting process and to provide assurance on the processes on setting the budget for 2024 to 2025. The Governance and Audit Committee requested that any significant events or deviations from the current projection be shared with the Committee.

We announced in [December](#), that despite an expected increase in funding of £6.7m (3.6%) by Welsh Government, the council still faced a significant funding gap. The settlement was not sufficient to meet the cost pressures we are facing. Like local authorities across Wales, the council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget and must do so through finding savings and efficiencies, increasing charges for services, increases in Council Tax or by reducing or cutting services. Next followed some very busy months of engagement with local members, officers, partners and communities to consider a range of budget proposals, including a [reduction to library and One Stop Shop opening hours](#). This consultation generated a significant response rate, with 4,600 responses, which equates to nearly 5% of Denbighshire's population. The proposal, which was reluctantly approved by [Cabinet](#) in December, is expected to release a saving of £360,000.

A special meeting of our [Communities Scrutiny Committee](#) took place in early January, in accordance with the council's Call-in Procedure Rules, to examine the decision taken by Cabinet in December 2023 in relation to the library/One Stop Shop Savings proposal. The Committee recommended a postponement in the implementation of the proposal. [Cabinet](#) acknowledged and thanked the Committee for its recommendations but resolved to proceed as planned. [Communities Scrutiny Committee](#) also reviewed the public conveniences savings proposal prior to being submitted to Cabinet for decision.

A finance report was presented to [Cabinet](#) in January on the implications of the Welsh Government's (WG) Provisional Funding Settlement for Local Government 2024 to 2025 and proposals to set a balanced budget for 2024 to 2025. The recommendations within that report were later approved, following a vote, by [County Council](#). The provisional settlement had resulted in a cash increase of 3.6% (£6.720m). Denbighshire's increase compared favourably to the Welsh average of 3.1% and follows increases in population and free school meals data used in the formula to distribute funding to councils. Whilst the increase in the settlement was above the planning assumption used in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and was welcomed, it did not materially change the unprecedented financial challenge the council faces in setting a balanced budget in 2024 to 2025 and in the future. Pressures amounted to £24.682m and the provisional settlement generated £6.720m, leaving a funding gap of £17.962m. These pressures were listed in the [report](#), and in summary related to pay pressures, the allowance increase in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, inflationary pressures, increase to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority levy, increase in demography e.g. the number of learners in schools, and demand e.g. for adult social care and homelessness and education and children's services.

A [Council Tax](#) rise of 8.23% plus an additional 1.11% for the increase in the levy to North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority equating to an overall uplift of 9.34% was proposed, and approved, to generate £7.580m additional revenue. The proposed use of earmarked reserves was also highlighted to assist the budget setting. The risks of not achieving a balanced budget had also been set out together with mitigation measures and further work required going forward. The medium-term financial outlook looked equally as challenging. The strategy for use of reserves therefore is to minimise the use of cash reserves in setting future budgets as far as possible and the proposal is not to use reserves in balancing the 2024 to 2025 budget.

The range of financial pressures were outlined together with a list of Major Savings Proposals (amounting to £2.388m) and service-level non-strategic savings/efficiencies (amounting to £1.367m) along with capital and corporate savings of £0.928m that had been identified - bringing the total non-strategic savings/efficiencies to £2.295m. Schools were also asked to plan for 3% savings which amount to £2.7m, after receiving funding increases to cover inflationary pressures. However, despite efficiencies, savings, and reductions in costs/services to date, they have in total been insufficient to set a balanced budget without an unsustainable use of reserves. All Heads of Service were therefore

issued with further savings targets totalling £3m. Budget sessions for Members were held in March, which involved each Head of Service presenting the savings they have found, what services are impacted and how those impacts will affect our communities. Ordinarily, these further savings proposals would have been identified before the budget is set but given the scale of the challenge this year and that the Provisional Settlement was not released until late December 2023 this has not been possible. Detailed information about these savings proposals can be found [here](#).

The 2024 to 2025 budget is being viewed as an evolving process rather than a one-off event in January. Significant engagement across the council, with members and with communities will continue.

Statement of Accounts

The council has a statutory duty to produce a statement of accounts that complies with approved accounting standards. The annual statement of accounts reports on the council's position at the end of the financial year and transactions during that year. The [draft Statement of Accounts for 2022 to 2023](#) is available online. After consulting with Audit Wales, it is currently planned that the audited accounts will be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in autumn 2024 for formal approval.

Annual Treasury Management

Treasury Management involves looking after the council's cash, which is a vital part of the council's work because approximately £0.5bn passes through the council's bank account every year. At any one time, the council normally has up to £20m in cash so it needs to ensure that the best rate of return possible is achieved without putting the cash at risk. At its meetings in [November](#) and [January](#), Governance and Audit Committee reviewed the [Annual Treasury Management report](#), which outlines the council's investment and borrowing activity. The [Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024 to 2025 and Prudential Indicators 2024 to 2025 and 2026 to 2027](#) were subsequently agreed by County Council in February.

Other developments in the last period

Capital Plan and Strategy

The Capital Strategy provides a high level, concise and comprehensive overview to members about how both the Council Fund (CF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of the council's services. An updated Capital Plan and the Capital Strategy Report for 2024 to 2025 was presented and approved by [County Council](#) in February.

Performance Management

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Performance management means the structures and processes we have in place to ensure that we deliver what we said we would, whilst encouraging active involvement and challenge from across the council, our elected members, and residents.

Internal Audit Reviews

The Chief Internal Auditor attended the Governance and Audit Committee in [November](#) and [March](#), to provide an update on the work of the Internal Audit Team's and a summary of Internal Audit reports. 16 audits had been completed since July 2023, with 15 receiving a high assurance rating and one a medium assurance rating (Resettlement and Refugees). It was noted that the Internal Audit Team had been engaged in seven special investigations during this period, which had hampered the capacity of the team.

Self-Assessment of Performance

During this period the council has revised the frequency of its Corporate Plan performance reports to help release some capacity within the Strategic Planning and Performance Team in support of its new Insight function and the council's transformation agenda. Reports will now be produced on a bi-annual basis, but continuing to be tabled with committees at the end of quarters 2 and 4. Quarters 1 and 3 that were previously produced and circulated by email for information only will no longer be available, but those periods will be covered within the tabled reports. Our previous report to this one (which covered July to September) was tabled with [Cabinet](#) and [Performance Scrutiny](#) in November, and has subsequently been published on our website – www.denbighshire.gov.uk/performance. Combined with this present report, which now covers two performance quarters (October to March), there are three reports that make up our ongoing Self-Assessment for the year.

Corporate Plan Performance Management Framework and Tranche Review

In March, Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team held their third tranche review on the Corporate Plan, which on this occasion focussed on reviewing performance information in support of the Corporate Plan's newly revised Performance Management Framework. Considerable work had been undertaken by the Strategic Planning and Performance team to reduce the size of the framework following County Council's approval of the revised Plan, and but for a few small changes, was accepted by the group as still being true to the original ambition of the Corporate Plan. The meeting identified a small number of actions for the Boards and strategic leads to take forward. This Performance Update Report is the first produced on the revised framework.

Update the Performance Management Guide

Following recent revisions to the Corporate Plan, its governance, frequency of reporting, as well as changes to the Senior Leadership structure, it was timely to review our Guide to Improving Services, which explains the council's approach to performance management. The updated guide will be shared with the Governance and Audit Committee for their information in [April](#), and may be viewed on [our website](#).

Annual Stakeholder Survey

In this period, we launched our Stakeholder Survey for 2023 to 2024, inviting feedback on how the council is performing. The Survey ran from September 2023 until February 2024, online and as paper copies available on request at our libraries. It was promoted through our partner networks, social media and the press. Once again we have managed to increase the rate of respondents (494), comfortably falling within ideal sample size for our population (of between 267 and 383). The results of the survey have been included within the data tables in this end-of-year Self-Assessment report, and will in the coming months be shared in more detail with managers to inform service improvement.

Service Performance Challenge

The council concluded its annual programme of Service Performance Challenges during this period, the improvement actions from which have been included in our previous Performance Update reports and this present report. We have carried out a lessons learned exercise reflecting on the programme over this last year, and have held discussions with the Corporate Executive Team and the Senior Leadership Team as to the

format that they should take during 2024 to 2025. It has been agreed that some changes are needed to the panel, frequency of meetings, and focus of the agenda to best respond to the financial situation. At present, it is anticipated that the Challenges will be concentrated over a one-month period during November, helping to inform then upcoming budgetary discussions with a greater focus on finance and transformation. Broadly the agenda is proposed be in three parts – Identified Savings and Performance; Future Savings and Performance; Transformation and Re-Shaping.

Audit Wales: Use of Performance Information

At its [meeting in March](#), the Governance and Audit Committee received for information a report by Audit Wales on the council's use of performance information with regard to service user perspectives and outcomes. The report made three recommendations, and the organisation's response to these were included in the papers. Although the council acknowledges that there is always improvement to be made in gathering diverse user perspectives, at present it is assured that its management of its service user data is robust and proportionate within existing resources.

Risk Management

Risk management refers to our planned approach to identify, assess, control and monitor risks and opportunities facing the council. Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance.

Corporate Risk Register

The purpose of the Corporate Risk Register is to identify the potential future events that may have a detrimental impact on the council's ability to deliver its objectives, including its corporate priorities. The identified controls and actions are, therefore, crucial to the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027. Our [most recent review of the Corporate Risk Register was carried out in February 2024](#). Whilst all risks were reviewed, no significant changes were made, and the residual risk scores remained unchanged for all of our 13 Corporate Risks. Seven of the 13 risks (54%) are currently inconsistent with the council's Risk Appetite Statement. However, this is to be expected as the Register contains the council's most serious risks.

Risk Appetite Statement

As part of the review above, it was timely to reevaluate our Risk Appetite Statement. Reflecting the present financial environment, the council's previously 'open' risk appetite in relation to project financing was amended to 'cautious'. Our 'cautious' risk appetite in relation to compliance and regulation (non-safeguarding), remains appropriate. However, it was agreed that the description would be amended to include risks about statutory guidelines (hence 'risks about adherence to law, regulations and statutory guidelines').

Risk Reporting

Following a recent challenge from the Governance and Audit Committee as to the frequency with which Corporate Risks are reviewed, we now facilitate quarterly, lighter-touch reviews with risk owners. These can be shared with Governance and Audit Committee meetings throughout the year and are tabled for discussion, as was previous practice, in November. In [its draft annual report of the Governance and Audit Committee](#), the Committee Chair noted the continued effectiveness of the Corporate Risk Register, and highlighted some concerns about the potential impacts and risks to service delivery and key governance functions following difficulties with recruitment and retention.

Managing Risk for Better Service Delivery

Following the changes summarised above, our [`Managing Risk for Better Service Delivery`](#) guide was revised.

Information Risk

[Governance and Audit Committee](#) received a report by the Senior Information Risk Owner for 2022 to 2023, outlining the council's information governance including data breaches of the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information, Environmental Information and Data Protection requests received by the council and information from schools. During the period, there were 27 data incidents involving personal data. Although three of these incidents were considered reportable to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), all of the reports resulted in no further action against the council.

Workforce Planning

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Workforce planning means the process by which we analyse, forecast and

plan workforce supply and demand, and assess gaps to ensure that we have the people and skills - now and in the future - to deliver our services and fulfil our strategic objectives.

Staff Training, Development and Mental Health

The [Agile Working policy](#) is now embedded in the organisation and the Time to Change action plan is complete. All HR Officers that support Services are trained mental health first aiders, and perform the role of Mental Health Champions offering advice, support and signposting, in addition to working with managers to support employees.

During the period, we launched Denbighshire's new Management Induction Programme, which will take new managers through their first 6 months in post and is linked to their probationary period. A new People Strategy is in development and plans are underway for a staff survey, expected to take place during 2024.

Staff remain our biggest asset and the council was pleased to celebrate the achievements of one of [Senior Care Assistants](#), who enrolled onto their dream nursing course, and one of our [Occupational Therapists](#) for winning the 'Innovation Award' at this year's Royal College of Occupational Therapists Celebration of Excellence Awards 2023.

Improve the information we have about our workforce

Due to continual changes in staff, the equality information we have about our workforce tends to fluctuate. HR has completed a data collection survey, which asked staff to update the information we hold about them to ensure that we have as much data in the HR system as possible. It should be noted however that some staff choose not to disclose information about themselves. Updated data will be available from September 2024. This information is used to support our Public Sector Duty Reports.

Workforce planning

During the period, due to the financial pressures all councils are experiencing, the council took steps to limit spend, including implementation of vacancy control procedures. Recruitment was still able to take place in critical areas such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services (see our [recruitment and retention section](#) for more information).

Workforce planning is a continually important area of work and HR Business Partners work closely with all services on a regular basis by issuing monthly reports. Workforce planning will commence in the autumn/winter of 2024 (by which time the senior leadership structure

will have been in place since November 2023) and will focus on supporting the pressures associated with the budget and its impacts. A follow up review of the Internal Audit Review of workforce planning (previously Medium assurance) was due to take place between January and March 2024, but will now be undertaken before the end of June 2024.

The Service Challenge Programme for 2023 to 2024 completed in March 2024. Across all challenges, recruitment and retention issues were highlighted and some services noted how they had potential single points of failure, which rely on key specialists. Loss of those specialists to the organisation is a risk. The Strategic Equality and Diversity Group met in October and received an update on equality and the budget, providing assurance that, through the council's Well-being Impact Assessment approach, the equality implications of any budget decisions made were being considered with due diligence. Impact on the workforce (and any risks to effective governance) as a result of budget proposals and the voluntary exit scheme remains under consideration and a report will be presented for discussion to the council's Strategic Equality and Diversity Group in July 2024.

Assets

Below are updates on areas of governance for assets. By assets we are referring to our management of the council's estate (including office buildings and highway infrastructure owned and / or controlled by the council) and digital assets.

Asset Management Strategy

The Asset Strategy has been approved by the Corporate Executive Team and is being taken through the democratic process for approval: initially going to Asset Management Group in May 2024, Performance Scrutiny in July and Cabinet in September 2024 for final ratification.

The New Ways of Working project continues to progress well, looking at capacity and use of offices to seek ways to maximise the use of space across the council's portfolio. The Corporate Executive Team agreed to the closure of Caledfryn, Denbigh, to council staff, with arrangements in place to relocate all council personnel currently working in those offices to either Russell House, Rhyl or County Hall, Ruthin.

ICT strategy

During November 2023, Audit Wales undertook a [Digital Strategy review](#). The review found that the council has a clearly articulated strategy that is understood by officers and

members; that the strategy informs the development of digital projects within service areas; and is aligned with our other strategic plans. Audit Wales noted the council had not fully costed or identified all of the funding required to deliver its digital strategy, and that the council does not consistently assess the impact or value for money of digital projects or the digital strategy as a whole. These latter findings are now under consideration moving forward. The current ICT Strategy runs until 2025 and preparations will soon be underway to work on a new strategy.

Procurement

Below are improvement actions that have been identified in support of this area of governance. Procurement is the process by which the council meets its needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money and good outcomes for society, culture and the economy, whilst contributing to decarbonisation and nature's recovery.

Denbighshire Procurement Strategy

The council's Procurement Strategy reflects and supports the council's corporate priorities and the seven well-being goals and aligns with the UK Government Procurement Act and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act. Expectations about what we buy and how we buy it are increasing, and we will be expected to deliver not only value for money but also have a positive impact on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of our communities, known as socially responsible procurement. A joined up and streamlined approach to commissioning, procurement, contract management and reporting will be required to ensure Denbighshire gains the best possible outcomes from new procurement regulations. This will involve working across the council to support Denbighshire's local supply chain. These outcomes include community benefits.

Two significant projects (costal defences and the Queen's Market in Rhyl) have delivered community benefits during this past year, such as employment, training, deeper engagement with communities and close working between contractors and suppliers to respond to community need. For example, Balfour Beatty, Brighter Futures and Men's Sheds worked together to create a new sleigh for use by the Rhyl community at Christmas time. This enables community events to take place, bringing people together and creates a legacy for the town. The Queen's Market project has delivered 276% of its expected community benefits, leading to sustainable jobs for local people. These achievements are

made possible by approaching community benefits from the perspective of the community; responding to their aspirations and creating meaningful opportunities for residents.

The Procurement Service is a collaborative service shared with Flintshire County Council. The Joint Management Board is the governing body of the joint procurement service, in place until March 2025, established as part of a collaborative agreement in 2014. Between now and March 2025, we will review, refresh or redesign the service, and consider the resources that are available to support and provide greater resilience for the collaboration.

Biodiversity Protection and Decarbonisation in Procurement

The new and updated Denbighshire Procurement Strategy that was approved by [Cabinet](#) in September 2023, includes carbon considerations e.g. Carbon Reduction Plans, and a flexible weighting will be introduced over the next 12-18 months for tenders over £5m (threshold to be determined per project). We will work with our Lead Officer – Ecology and Biodiversity to produce a curated collection of standard questions to be included into tender opportunities. Our Procurement team representative, including the Decarbonisation Business Partner, has attended March for Business and Meet the Buyer events and a series of carbon-themed engagements with Services have been delivered.

We will be seeking agreement to use the WLGA procurement toolkit and to incorporate decarbonisation indicators within that toolkit. We will be expecting suppliers to provide a decarbonisation plan and be in a position to measure carbon savings. Further work is required to work across the council to embed this approach at the earliest stages of procurement; when services are being designed or we are determining what and how something needs to be procured - this where most carbon savings can be achieved.

Contract Procedure Rules

It remains the case that Contract Procedure Rules will be updated to reflect new UK Public Procurement legislation once secondary legislation and statutory guidance is published (expected summer 2024). We will continue to report on progress through this report in the meantime. Cross-council workshops have been taking place to update officers on the changing procurement landscape.

Supporting Businesses and Partners to Adapt

The new and developing legislation from Welsh and UK Governments will represent a change to current practice for the council and its procuring services, businesses, and the

supply chain. The aim is for smaller local businesses to be more engaged in, and to benefit from, procurement. To this end, procurement featured in the [2024 March for Business campaign](#).

As reported previously, Balfour Beatty, as part of the coastal defence schemes, has committed to deliver workshops to community-led organisations on how to develop strategy early in 2024. They will be supported by Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council to deliver a workshop in the north of the county and are aiming to work with the South Denbighshire Partnership to offer an additional workshop in the south. Whilst workshops have not yet taken place, the intention to delivering them remains.

Implementation of the Procurement Act will involve increasing the transparency and visibility of procurements by the council, and more information will be added to our website in the year ahead. We will also be working with schools and learners to increase understanding of procurement and how procurement can achieve community benefits.

North Wales Construction Framework Phase 3

[Cabinet](#) considered, in December, the outcome of the procurement process for the third generation of the North Wales Construction Partnership Framework and approved the appointment of the successful contractors. This is a framework for all North Wales local authorities and has been a catalyst for engagement and upskilling of local contractors operating within the regional supply chain. The NWCPF3 will be launched in May 2024.

Improvement Actions

Service Performance Challenges are an important part of our ongoing self-assessment process in identifying improvement actions. Service Performance Challenges took place for Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets, Finance and Audit Service and Corporate Support Service: People, thus completing the Service Performance Challenge programme for the year. Many improvement actions were identified and a

summary of all actions emerging from Service Performance Challenges during the year can be found in Appendix III.

Six improvement actions have been identified through discussions about this report:

- Provide an update on the reasons for poor performance relating to the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale) (this is a continuing action).
- The new Economic Strategy should take into account the county's cultural offer and how it contributes to wider economic and well-being outcomes.
- Following agreement and to allow the council to focus on the development of the Regional Transport Plan, close the Sustainable Transport Plan project and amend the commitment within our Corporate Plan.
- Consider the Stakeholder Survey 2023 to 2024 responses.
- Consider the findings and recommendations of the Well-being of Future Generations Commissioner's New Ways of Working Journey Checker.
- Keep Corporate Plan commitments and performance expectations under continual review in the context of the present difficult financial environment.

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Service Performance Challenges 2023 to 2024 Summary of Actions

Key Actions	Generic issues arising across service challenges	
<p><u>Highways and Environmental Services 1</u></p> <p>Commit to finding solutions in order to reduce the use of plastic in the school catering service.</p>	<p>✓ Collaboration and partnership work</p>	
<p><u>Highways and Environmental Services 2</u></p> <p>Having regular 121s across the Service is difficult given the majority of the staff are not office based (e.g. Catering & Cleaning, Refuse Operatives, Highway Operatives, Streetscene Operatives etc). Seek different solutions for different teams that meet the way the team/individuals work whilst meeting the corporate standard.</p>	<p>✓ CSS: People (Personnel 121s)</p>	
<p><u>Highways and Environmental Services 3</u></p> <p>Consider options on how best to promote the circular economy (i.e. reuse, repair and recycle) from household items that they collect (e.g. promote repair shops, resale of items at recycling centres etc).</p>		
<p><u>Highways and Environmental Services 4</u></p> <p>Service to work with relevant Officers responsible for C360 to develop a better way of working in relation to use of C360.</p>	<p>✓ CSS: People (C360 system)</p>	
<p><u>Highways and Environmental Services 5</u></p> <p>ICT solutions can greatly improve the way the Service delivers its functions. The Service needs to work with ICT to horizon scan on ICT solutions.</p>	<p>✓ CSS: Performance, Digital, Assets (ICT systems)</p>	
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 1</u></p> <p>Staffing - Recruitment and retention challenges are apparent throughout the council. (as in other local authorities and Nationally)</p> <p>The service to continue to work with HR to look in detail at pressures and consider different options to address any issues with recruitment.</p>	<p>✓ CSS: People (Personnel recruitment)</p>	
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 2</u></p> <p>Collaboration - Service to explore options of closer working with other local authorities. Either;</p>	<p>✓ Collaboration and partnership work</p>	

<p>(i) Joint procurement of specialist consultants e.g. specialist ecology work.</p> <p>(ii) For more collaborative working e.g. Minerals & Waste Planning function.</p>		
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 3</u></p> <p>Town Plans - Service to develop useful and informative summary documents of regeneration/economic development activities in our Towns.</p>		
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 4 Sustainable Transport Plan</u> - Service to progress the development of the Sustainable Transport Plan: to consult with Members and the public on the draft Plan and present findings and final document for approval to Cabinet.</p>		
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 5</u></p> <p>Passenger Transport - Service to review bus stops and provide Members with information on: council responsibility and scheduled maintenance programme. Service to look at innovative ways for people to access transport e.g. promotion of QR codes at bus stops, promotion of App, more Flexi buses, etc.</p>		
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 6</u></p> <p>Economic Strategy – Service to progress the development of the Economic Strategy (to be led by Economic Business Development Team) that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow Denbighshire’s green economy. • Support rural businesses. • Regenerate town centres. • Enhance our tourism offer. 	✓	Collaboration and partnership work
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 7</u></p> <p>Good Officer and Member working relationships - Service to continue to engage with Members and continue to keep Members informed at all stages regarding Planning, Public Protection & Countryside Service matters.</p>		
<p><u>Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services 8</u></p> <p>Countryside Service - Service to continue to expand its Tree Nursery activities to include the provision of trees</p>	✓	Collaboration and partnership work

to both internal and external customers, particularly neighbouring authorities.		
<u>Education and Children's Services</u> <u>No actions arising from the performance challenge</u>		
<u>Housing and Communities 1</u> Staffing - Service to continue to work with HR to look in detail at pressures and consider different options to address any issues with recruitment, retention and succession planning for the service.	✓	CSS: People (Personnel recruitment)
<u>Housing and Communities 2</u> Service Risk Register - Service to update with new and current risks including housing legislation, libraries, budget challenges.		
<u>Adult Social Care and Housing 1</u> Service to consider the format and content of service plans going forward.		
<u>Adult Social Care and Housing 2</u> Service to review its finances (HoS and Lead Members for Finance and Adult Social Care).		
<u>Adult Social Care and Housing 3</u> Expand and enhance collaboration with other services and partners to increase involvement of volunteers and community initiatives which may support the service by reducing pressure and also benefit the wellbeing of citizens.	✓	Collaboration and partnership work
<u>Adult Social Care and Housing 4</u> Collaborate with Wrexham County Borough Council to work on a way of reframing the narrative around provision for homelessness accommodation.	✓	Collaboration and partnership work
<u>Adult Social Care and Housing 5</u> Explore ways for the service to improve data management with support from Corporate Support Services – Performance, Digital and Assets.	✓	CSS: Performance, Digital and Assets (ICT)
<u>Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital, Assets 1</u> Research potential use of Open Source within the Council. Report to CET on findings.	✓	Collaboration and partnership work
<u>Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital, Assets 2</u>	✓	Collaboration and partnership work

<p>Explore opportunity for collaboration regionally on cyber security resourcing across North Wales Local Authorities. Report to CET on progress.</p>		
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital, Assets 3</u></p> <p>Explore opportunities for income generation within Property Services building on the in-house capability and capacity held on Property Compliance.</p>		
<p><u>Finance and Audit 1</u></p> <p>Establish bi-monthly meetings for Lead Member and Chief Internal Auditor.</p>		
<p><u>Finance and Audit 2</u></p> <p>As part of our existing good contract management practices, gather best practice from providers (including their approaches to achieving efficiencies).</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Collaboration and partnership work</p>
<p><u>Finance and Audit 3</u></p> <p>Service to request SLT's support with implementation of the new financial system, including preparing existing users across the Council to be ready for the change.</p>		
<p><u>Finance and Audit 4</u></p> <p>Work with ICT to explore opportunities for automation and artificial intelligence, particularly with transactional work, and understand the return on investment.</p>		
<p><u>Finance and Audit 5</u></p> <p>Develop ideas for new collaborative arrangements across the service where resilience is a driver as much as efficiencies.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Collaboration and partnership work</p>
<p><u>Finance and Audit 6</u></p> <p>Ensure completion of 121s is recorded on iTrent.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>CSS: People (Personnel 121s)</p>
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 1</u></p> <p>Explore the potential to create a corporate customer contact team through a corporate conversation as to whether we (i) want a corporate customer service team at all (ii) retain the existing arrangements where we have a corporate customer contact team that only covers certain corporate functions and does not include others (iii) seek to grow the current corporate customer service team so it delivers more or (iv) have a genuine Council wide single corporate customer service team</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>CSS: Performance, Digital and Assets (ICT)</p>
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 2</u></p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>CSS: Performance, Digital and Assets (ICT)</p>

<p>Subject to the outcome of the corporate conversation regarding corporate contact/customer service, review requirements for and procure a Corporate CRM system (including undertaking workshops with members and services to inform development of the new system).</p>		
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 3</u> Review the corporate communications function and opportunities to become more proactive in our communication and present a report to CET and Cabinet Briefing before engaging more widely with SLT/Middle Managers and all Members.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Collaboration and partnership work</p>
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 4</u> Review our approach to managing social media and present a report to CET initially before agreeing where else to report the conclusions.</p>		
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 5</u> Review the procurement function and how we support teams undertaking procurements across Flintshire and Denbighshire.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Collaboration and partnership work</p>
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 6</u> Consider the approach to involving members, staff and the public in transforming and reshaping the council.</p>	<p>✓ ✓</p>	<p>CSS: Performance, Digital and Assets (ICT) Collaboration and partnership work</p>
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 7</u> Take a proactive “CSS: People-level” approach to understanding services’ needs over the short, medium and long term, and facilitate more learning between sections across the service.</p>		
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 8</u> Support and encourage the greater use of Welsh, informally and formally, throughout the council, at meetings and Committees</p>		
<p><u>Corporate Support Services: People 9</u> Evaluate the way CSS: People uses and reports back on feedback</p>		

Appendix IV – Scope: Panel Performance Assessment 2024

This document outlines the agreed parameters of the Panel Performance Assessment of Denbighshire County Council, taking place between **September 9 and 12, 2024 (to be confirmed on appointment of the panel)**. Facilitated by the Welsh Local Government Association, these arrangements comply with the council's duty to arrange a panel performance assessment under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Scope: Panel Performance Assessment 2024

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Scope: Panel Performance Assessment 2024

Introduction

This document covers only the scope of the fieldwork (i.e. document reviews and interviews) to be undertaken by the panel of peers appointed by the council. It captures the council's asks of the assessment, and should serve as a guide to the panel as to the parameters of their investigations.

This document does not cover the steps that will follow the fieldwork with regards to producing the report, creating the management response to the report, and publication thereof, as those requirements are covered clearly within the legislation, statutory guidance, and agreed upon methodology below:

- [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)
- [Performance and Governance of Local Authorities: Statutory Guidance, Chapter 3](#)
- [WLGA Panel Performance Assessment Methodology](#)

Neither does this document cover subsequent sector-led support that the council may expect from the Panel or the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) at the conclusion of the assessment. Those needs and any offer of support would be dependent on the outcome of the assessment and further discussions outside of the purview of the assessment. The WLGA, however, will endeavour to support councils in the identification, commissioning and delivery of sector-led support requirements identified in the Panel Performance Assessment, through either its universal or targeted offers.

Purpose

This is a corporate, organisational assessment, designed to consider the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements and its capability to deliver effective outcomes. The panel should not be seeking to undertake deep dives or in-depth service reviews, although a panel may draw on the findings of other peer reviews or in-depth service reviews in reaching their conclusions. The panel should not be looking to audit / check the councils own self-assessments, although the approach a council takes to self-assessment may inform a panel's view on the effectiveness of its governance arrangements.

Scope: Panel Performance Assessment 2024

Under the legislation, the panel, acting jointly, is required to assess the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements, that is, the extent to which:

- it is exercising its functions effectively;
- it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- its governance is effective for securing the above.

In this way the panel is building on, and complementing, the self-assessments already undertaken by the council. The panel's focus should be on looking at the current situation, and over a sufficient previous period to get a meaningful picture of the position in the council and any trends. The panel will be considering how capable the council is to respond to the changing environment in which it operates, and should be guided in its work by using the ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The panel may also find it helpful to consider the activities common to the corporate governance of public bodies as set out in the statutory guidance on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 201512:

- Corporate planning
- Financial planning
- Workforce planning (people)
- Procurement
- Assets
- Risk management
- Performance Management

Focus

The scope of the Panel Performance Assessment was initially discussed at a joint meeting of Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team in March 2023, supported by the WLGA. Following this, a working group comprised of Cabinet Members and Senior Managers with oversight of key governance functions met in April and May to consider self-assessment information. The recommendation of the working group is that the panel gives particular focus to the following areas within their assessment:

Scope: Panel Performance Assessment 2024

1. **Leadership:** How well is the council's corporate and political structure working, and how is the capacity and capability suited to the delivery of the council's priorities?
2. **Budget Proposals / Transformation:** How well has the council managed the current financial crisis, and how well is the council preparing for the future?
3. **Partnership Working:** How well placed is the council to work effectively with partners, and maximise resources across sectors?

Appendix 1 (which is derived from Appendix A of the [WLGA methodology](#)), provides a table of questions that the Panel may ask in support of the performance requirements that it is statutorily required to consider as part of its assessment. Performance requirements are defined as the extent to which a council: i) is exercising its functions effectively; ii) is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; and iii) has effective governance in place for securing i) and ii). Accepting these requirements, the Working Group has suggested within the table which questions it feels may be greatest value for the panel to explore given the focus it (the Working Group) has suggested above, but also taking into account other audit work that has or will take place.

Further input to the above areas of focus and appendix 1 will be sought between May and July from the Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet, Performance Scrutiny, the Governance and Audit Committee and County Council, alongside the council's Self-Assessment of its Performance for 2023 to 2024.

Approach

Using the above as a framework should guide the panel in understanding whether the council is governing itself effectively in order to maximise its contribution to the well-being goals.

The assessment will be a combination of desk-based research and interviews, with onsite work expected to take four days, with a presentation on the main findings and recommendations made on the final day. The panel will utilise a range of internal and

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external sources, ensuring a broad evidence base to inform conclusions on the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements and recommendations on how to improve.

In carrying out a panel performance assessment in respect of a council, a panel must consult the following about the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements:

- local people;
- other persons carrying on a business in the council's area;
- the staff of the council;
- and every trade union which is recognised (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (c.52) by the council.

While this is the minimum required by the legislation, the panel may choose to consult or involve others as it determines relevant to its assessment of how the council is meeting the performance requirements. The panel may, for example, seek to consult other partners involved in collaborative working with the council, as well as audit, inspection or regulatory bodies.

It is for the panel to consider how it might wish to consult in order to effectively contribute to the panel assessment process, for example utilising existing engagement mechanisms, web-based surveys, questionnaires etc. These should be designed to be representative of the relevant population (e.g. local people, or staff). It is for the council to make the necessary arrangements to facilitate the consultation.

The table below provides the planned timetable for the assessment:

Milestone	Date
Scoping Finalised	July 30
Document and interviews request sent	August 9
Panel receive documents and final interview schedule	August 31
Fieldwork	September 9-13

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Issue draft report	September 27
LA response on accuracy	October 11
Final Report Issued for Management Response	October 25
Draft response provisionally agreed by Cabinet	November 4
Report and Management Response tabled with Governance and Audit for input	November 20
Report and Management Response approved by Cabinet	December 17
Presentation to County Council	January 2024

The Panel

As a minimum, the panel must consist of:

- An independent panel chair – not currently serving in an official or political capacity within local government.
- A peer from the wider public, private or voluntary sectors.
- A serving local government senior officer, likely to be equivalent to chief executive or director, from outside the council to be assessed.
- A senior elected member, from outside the council to be assessed.

It is also recommended for the purposes of this assessment that the following members are included on the panel:

- To be confirmed with WLGA, but the Working Group would be eager for the panel to include someone with future / scenario planning / behavioural change expertise.
- The Working Group are also eager that the panel is representative of Denbighshire's diversity as far as is possible, and that senior officers and members on the panel have a strong understanding of local government in Wales.

Appendix 1: Question Hierarchy

The following is taken from Appendix A of the [WLGA methodology](#) for the Panel Performance Assessment. It is not intended to be an exhaustive or prescriptive list. The extent to which these issues are explored should be proportionate to the requirements of the council as outlined in the scope, whilst observing that minimum standards of a Panel Performance Assessment, required by the Act, are met. This approach should not inhibit the professional knowledge and experience of the peer team.

The Working Group have considered the tables below and suggested which would be key questions to ask in relation to the [focus areas](#) that have been determined as important for the scope of the assessment. In determining these key questions we have also given consideration of other recently scheduled audit work (past and future) to avoid duplication, and to ensure that the output of this assessment brings its own value.

Performance Requirement One: The extent to which the council is exercising its functions effectively.

Guiding Principle: The council is self-aware and able to demonstrate that it is delivering its functions in accordance with the local, regional, and national context. Where improvement is required, suitable interventions have been identified promptly that should achieve the desired outcomes.

Panel Considerations

Leadership:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">What do the leadership consider are the key issues from a political (executive and non-executive) and officer perspective? Are views consistent?	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Does the council provide effective place leadership?		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a collective narrative of place? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Public Services Board effective in ensuring that partners work collaboratively? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the council benefit from effective local and regional partnership arrangements? 	Yes	Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the community and voluntary sector describe their experience of working with the council? 	Yes	Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a focus on systems leadership and influence – locally, regionally, and nationally? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do leaders demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of local communities? Do they show commitment to working with partners to reduce inequality and delivering services that are inclusive and accessible to a diverse community? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the council's leadership champion and direct action on climate change? How is the council working with partners and the community to reduce the impact of climate change? 		

Corporate and Service Planning:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council have a clear vision and priorities which are evidenced based and informed by the local context (place shaping), with a wider understanding of how this relates to the regional and national context? Is the plan current and realistic? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the councils corporate planning process adequately meet the requirements of the WBFGA, socio-economic and equalities duties? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the council's approach to climate change mitigation measures relating to its own operations? Are the local government 2030 net zero commitments in Net Zero Wales understood and owned across the council? How is the council contributing to the target of net zero by 2050 across its whole community? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the approach to adaptation and building local resilience to climate change? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have planned mitigation and adaptation actions referred to above been prioritised 	Yes	Leadership

and costed, and aligned with the council's financial strategy?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an integrated organisational cross-cutting approach to tackling issues such as climate change, poverty, regeneration/local economy, wellbeing, etc.? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the policy framework integrated to ensure that core duties and cross-cutting priorities are aligned? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a shared understanding and ownership of the council's vision and priorities across officer groups and councillors? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there clarity over what is required to achieve the council's objectives, including due consideration for the 5 ways of working, resourcing, and governance of performance? Are these requirements evident at service planning levels (golden thread)? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council communicate effectively? How does the council use community capacity to shape and deliver priority outcomes? To what extent does the council listen, empower, co-produce, collaborate? 	Yes	Leadership; Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that under-represented 	Yes	Leadership;

groups are communicated and engaged with effectively? Do they have opportunities to be involved in decision making and the design and delivery of services?		Budget Proposals / Transformation; Partnership Working
Risk & Assurance:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there any evidence to suggest that there are concerns over the delivery of statutory duties that would have a corporate impact? If so, is the council managing these risks? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there sufficient assurance from Internal Audit, Audit Wales, and other regulators on performance against statutory duties and achievement of objectives? 		
Performance Management:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the outcome of the council's self-assessment of delivery against their functions? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation; Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is data used effectively to evaluate performance, identify risks, and drive improvement? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there is scope to determine local service delivery standards, has the council determined expected standards, against which performance is 		

measured using metrics and/or benchmarking?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a shared understanding of priorities for improvement across senior management, councillors, communities, workforce, and partners? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What progress is the council able to evidence from its reporting to date of its own emissions, in accordance with the Public Sector Net Zero reporting guide? Are any steps being taken to record, monitor and report on progress with emissions reduction in the wider community? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How satisfied with services are residents, including under-represented groups? How is this measured? 	Yes	Leadership; Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council collect, share and publish relevant EDI data and information about its communities? How is EDI information regularly updated and used to identify priorities for the local area? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence of an embedded and continuous approach to performance management, which identifies required interventions that are acted upon promptly? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation

Performance Requirement Two: The extent to which the council is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively.

Guiding Principle: Resources are effectively aligned to assist the council in delivering its objectives and statutory functions and the council is able to demonstrate value for money is being achieved.

Panel Considerations

Corporate and Service Planning:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are corporate objectives and key statutory duties embedded within service plans? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do service plans include an evaluation of service performance (including audit and complaints/compliments) to identify areas of improvement are these aligned with corporate improvement objectives? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a clear commitment to prevention, with suitable resource deployed to preventing or resolving issues (root cause) over treating and managing issues? Has consideration been given to collaboration with other services/partners to provide an integrated solution? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation; Partnership working.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is climate thinking integrated into medium and longer-term planning and are planned actions on climate change mitigation and adaptation 		

sufficiently resourced? Are resources focused on the activities which will have the most significant impact?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council regularly consider the most appropriate delivery options for services (e.g. outsourcing, co-sourcing, commercial arms-length company, community transfer, etc.)? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation; Partnership.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is failure demand identified and treated? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has capacity to deliver objectives been quantified is this evident at service planning levels? 		
Digital & Data	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council use digital tools and data to facilitate transformation and efficiency savings? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council have digital and data strategies that support corporate objectives and enable early identification and adapt to changing user needs? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council design its digital services around service user needs, and identify suitable metrics to continuously drive improvement? 		

Financial Planning:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the corporate planning cycle aligned to the statutory budget planning cycle and has the council allocated funding according to priorities and need? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a medium-term financial plan/strategy which demonstrates how the council will sustain service delivery and manage future budget, demographic, demand, inflationary (workforce and other, and legislative pressures)? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a shared understanding and ownership of the scale of the current and future financial challenges? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there sufficient reserves to provide assurance on management of risk and sustainability? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the council compliant with the principles Cipfa Financial Management Code, if there are areas for improvement is there evidence that action is being taken? (Refer to councils own self-assessment, internal audit review). 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do councils make good use of the powers available to them to recover costs/generate funding? E.g. full cost recovery, commercial strategies, 		

community asset transfer, grants, etc.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the council measuring value for money? Is there a clear understanding of unit cost and are trends in over/underspends monitored within the context of VFM? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation
Workforce:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council's organisation design support best use of the workforce? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are capacity and skills aligned to priorities? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the council proactive in managing recruitment pressures and skills gaps? (considerations such as employer brand, recruitment accessibility, apprenticeship and graduate routes, etc) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are staff retention issues highlighted and further explored to look at root cause and potential mitigation? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do workforce plans take account of current and future skills needs and gaps? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do workforce profiles represent the community? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the council embedded equalities and anti-racism practices into their HR policies and practices and does it 		

regularly review the effectiveness of these arrangements in line with the diversity and inclusivity of the workforce?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do individuals understand their contribution to the corporate objectives? 		
Procurement:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the council reviewed its supply chains and procurement strategy in the context of the WBFGA to support the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing for current and future generations? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council adopt a category management approach to procurement? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are contracts evaluated and awarded based on the interpretation of Welsh Governments Wales Procurement Policy Statement? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the councils procurement strategy maximise the councils spending capacity for community benefit and to support low carbon economic growth? Is there awareness of the WLGA procurement toolkit, which supports councils with embedding decarbonisation and sustainability into procurement at all levels. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council routinely publish and promote local service/goods provision gaps to support foundational economy? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there suitable evaluation mechanisms in place to measure impact and continuously refine approaches? 		
Risk & Assurance:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is risk management embedded in the council? Does risk awareness and management inform decision-making? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence of integrated identification and responding to corporate risks? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a shared understanding of the most significant corporate risks (threats and opportunities)? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a collective view of the councils risk appetite that is communicated and understood? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence of a robust assurance framework, including data/reporting from key support functions such as finance, risk management, business continuity, HR, asset management, procurement, climate change, IT, health and safety, etc.? 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is innovation encouraged and supported within the context of a mature approach to risk management? 		
Assets:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a strategic asset management policy, strategy and plan, which is aligned to corporate objectives and priorities, corporately owned and led, which identifies the objectives and actions that are required of many different services across the council? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the operation and management of the councils property portfolio known and regularly reviewed through quality data on inventory, condition surveys, regulatory compliance, voids, joint ventures, community transfers, etc.? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are assets being managed to support other agenda such as climate change, housing shortages (health and wellbeing) financial resilience, place shaping, social value and regeneration? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation; Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council operate a corporate landlord model, and does it deliver efficiencies and support the delivery of corporate outcomes? 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council have sufficient resources to maintain and manage the property portfolio to the expected levels? If not, is there a plan to increase resource, outsource or rationalise the portfolio to a manageable level? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation;
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Performance Requirement Three: The extent to which the council has effective governance in place for securing performance requirements one and two.

Guiding Principle: There are clear and robust governance arrangements, which encourages an open and transparent culture that welcomes scrutiny and constructive challenge.

Panel Considerations

Evaluation	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the Annual Governance Statement cover the key issues – and is it reflective / self-critical? When and how are the governance essentials reviewed? e.g., Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, etc. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an effective Internal Audit function (Public Sector Internal Audit Standards self-assessment and external assessment)? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an effective Governance & Audit committee? 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is scrutiny welcomed and supported – both formal O&S (if applicable) and scrutiny more generally? Do all members have the opportunity to inform and influence? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence that the governance arrangements of the council provide sufficient assurance and constructive challenge on key priorities and performance challenges, to enable early intervention where necessary? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does scrutiny add value through the provision of a broader perspective to influence policy, monitor and challenge performance, and review decisions to assess effectiveness on delivering intended outcomes? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do statutory officers have sufficient authority and support to undertake their duties? Do statutory officers work together and feel listened to? 		
Leadership	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the council well led by councillors and officers? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an effective top-team? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the roles of members and officers clear? Are there good 		

officer-member and member-member relationships?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the key governance issues from a political and officer perspective? E.g., clarity, transparency, speed of decision making, accountability. To what extent are they structural or cultural / behavioural? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are councillors and officers supported in their leadership roles – including learning and development? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do political group leaders take steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of their members? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do political and managerial leaders at all levels demonstrate leadership and commitment to reducing inequality and challenging discrimination within the councils? 		
Organisational culture:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a positive organisational culture – e.g. respect, transparency, co-operation, challenge, and a commitment to continuous improvement– and how is this reflected in behaviours and practice? 	Yes	Leadership

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do protected groups of staff say about the culture of the organisation? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there whistleblowing procedures in place? Do staff have confidence in this procedure? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are staff engaged with and listened to? Is there strong internal communications? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there staff led networks or other safe spaces for staff from protected groups to discuss equality issues? Do staff networks feel able to influence the organisation? 	Yes	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is overall organisational health? What is the direction of travel of key indicators? e.g., staff satisfaction / morale, sickness absence, senior management stability 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there effective governance structures and processes to oversee and monitor the delivery of equality objectives and strategies? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are managers trained and equipped to manage staff fairly and deal with any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion related issues? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What known equality gaps exist within the organisation (e.g. pay 		

gaps) and to what extent are mitigation plans in place?		
Financial Governance:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there effective budget monitoring arrangements? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there sufficient arrangements in place to oversee capital and treasury management arrangements? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are financial plans backed by business cases and delivery plans which identify the steps needed to achieve the desired outcomes? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the arrangements for managing and monitoring delivery sufficient? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the organisation act to rectify matters when actuals diverge from budgets? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there are commercial activities, is there sufficient understanding of the financial risks and evidence of effective governance and scrutiny? Are risks managed within the risk appetite? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the council work positively with its Governance and Audit Committee and its internal and external auditors to ensure effective financial controls are in 		

place and to address issues raised?		
Capacity to Improve:	Key Question for our locally selected Focus Themes?	For which locally selected Focus Theme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence of successful transformational change? Does the councils have a current transformation plan aligned to corporate and financial strategies? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the council's approach to self-assessment drive interventions and continuous improvement? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the council adapt and learn? Is the council agile and able to pivot? Is innovation encouraged and supported? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What will the council look like in the future? 	Yes	Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is change and transformation led and managed? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the key areas for development / capacity for improvement challenges? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation; Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are plans realistic (sufficient resource, achievable, timely, etc)? 	Yes	Leadership; Budget Proposals / Transformation

Appendix 2: Sample Document Request

The following list of documents may assist Panel members in the development of their understanding of the council. It is not intended that every peer reads everything, but that panel members select from the list below, those documents which are most relevant to their role within their team / the aspect of performance that they are focusing on. The documents may also provide evidence to substantiate or otherwise issues that emerge from interviews or focus groups.

- Corporate plan (current and previous)
- Annual statutory reports produced by the council for last three years, including Self-Assessment Report, Wellbeing Report (if separate to Self-Assessment Report), Annual Governance Statement (if separate to Self-Assessment Report), Social Services Annual Report
- External inspection and regulation reports (for last three years)
- Medium Term Financial Plan (current)
- Procurement strategy
- Commissioning strategy
- Workforce strategy
- Digital strategy
- IT strategy
- Asset Management Plan
- Commercialisation strategy
- Transformation plan
- Learning and Development Strategy
- Cabinet forward work plan
- Scrutiny forward work plan
- Scrutiny Annual Report (and any scrutiny self-evaluations undertaken recently)
- Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report and any self-assessment evaluations recently undertaken
- Public Participation and Engagement Strategy
- Strategic Equality Plan
- Any S54 Reports prepared by the Chief Executive
- Staff engagement and wellbeing plans and surveys
- Performance Dashboard/Reporting (councils' own KPIs)

- Citizen surveys/service user satisfaction surveys
- Customer Compliments/Complaints Reports
- Standards Committee Annual Report
- The Constitution (including Codes of Conduct, Overview and Scrutiny Structure and Terms of reference and Financial Regulations)
- Target Operating Model
- Performance Management Framework
- Risk Management Strategy & Corporate Risk Registers
- Data Management Strategy
- Head of Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion
- Net Zero and/or Climate Change Strategy

Appendix 3: Sample Interview Schedule

The following list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive (other than the expectation of statutory consultee's), but a suggestion of individuals and groups the panel may wish to meet during the assessment. For some it may be more efficient to hold remote sessions / phone calls (e.g., interviews with regulators and partners):

- Leader
- Chief Executive
- All Cabinet Members
- All members of Senior Leadership Team
- Chairs of Scrutiny Committees
- Chair of Governance and Audit Committee
- Chair of Democratic Services
- Chair of Standards Committee
- Group Leaders
- Councillor focus group/s
- Heads of Service Focus Group/s
- Staff focus groups
- Union representatives
- Stakeholder focus groups
- Public Service Board focus group⁸
- Regional Partnership Board focus group
- Director of Resources
- Section 151 Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Audit
- Head of Procurement
- Head of Human Resources
- Head of Property

Statutory members of each PSB are:

- Local authority
- Local health board

- Fire and rescue authority
- Natural Resources Wales

In addition, the following are invited to participate:

- Welsh ministers
- Chief constables
- Police and crime commissioner
- Relevant probation services
- At least one body representing voluntary organisations
- Head of Democratic Services
- A leader and/or chief executive from a neighbouring authority
- Partner organisation Chief Executives (e.g., Health Board, neighbouring councils)
- Regulators (e.g. Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales, Audit Wales) – it should be noted that no information will be shared with the panel that hasn't already been reported to the council.
- Business Leaders/Chair of Chamber
- Representatives from Town & Community Councils

The panel may use a combination of focus groups and web-based surveys/questionnaires to fulfil the statutory consultation requirements. The council's self-assessment consultation process will be considered by the panel when determining their approach.

Appendix 4: Sample Observation Schedule

In the week of September 9-13, the following meetings are scheduled to take place:

- Corporate Executive Team – Monday 9, 2024
- County Council – Tuesday 10,2024
- Licensing Committee – Wednesday 11, 2024
- Partnerships Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 12, 2024
- Standards Committee – Friday 13, 2024

Members of the Panel are, however, welcome to observe any committee meetings scheduled outside of the planned week for the onsite fieldwork. Public meetings are also recorded and available to view online.

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Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	25 June 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets / Liz Thomas, Head of Finance and Audit
Report author	Rhian Evans, Chief Accountant (Deputy S151 Officer)
Title	Finance Report (2023/24 Financial Outturn)

1. What is the report about?

Cabinet has received regular monitoring reports throughout the financial year on the performance of expenditure against budget and savings as agreed for 2023/24. This report details the final position at financial year end.

The draft Annual Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 is due to be submitted to the external auditors and the Governance and Audit Committee in September for information. In consultation with Audit Wales it is planned that the audited accounts will then be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in March 2025 for formal approval.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To report the final revenue position and approve the proposed treatment of balances.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 Members note the final revenue outturn position 2023/24 and approve the reserves position for 2023/24 as described in the report and detailed in Appendices 1-3

4. Report details

4.1 2023/24 Outturn The final Revenue Outturn figures are detailed in **Appendix 1** and the key points are summarised below:

- The final position on service and corporate budgets (including schools non-delegated budget underspend of £115k) is an overspend of £513k.
- On the funding side there was a small shortfall in Council Tax collection of £163k.
- This resulted in the requirement to use £676k of the Budget Mitigation reserve to fund the net overspend.
- School overspent by £5.258m resulting in total budget overspend of £5.934m.

The 2023/24 budget included savings and efficiencies of £8.172m, of which £6.09m were achieved from corporately held budgets, schools at £0.82m and the services put in place measures and monitored the remaining £1.26m within overall budgets.

4.2 Services – Collectively services overspent by £3.2m during the year. Budgetary control measures to mitigate against increasing costs and demand for services, put in place in the Autumn due to the predicted level of overspend which reached a peak of £4.5m, helped to reduce the overall level of overspend. Most services ended the year with an underspend. To help deliver the overall budget strategy, it is proposed that services do not carry forward any under spends.

Education and Children's, Highways and Environmental, and Adult Social and Homelessness Services ended the year in an overspend. Despite budgets increasing in 2023/24, increases in demand and the complexity of delivering, what are mainly statutory services, has outstripped the enhanced budgets.

4.3 Corporate Budgets – Centrally held contingency budgets are difficult to project, in particular this year. The key elements of the underspend of £2.7m relate to factors that have been reported to Cabinet throughout the year and are mainly due to contingencies for pay and energy costs, with energy in particular being managed within budgets and the contingency held not being called upon. The Capital Financing Budget overspend by £87k due to increasing borrowing needs for major capital schemes at a time of increasing interest rates in the latter part of the year.

4.4 Earmarked Reserves – The transfers to and from reserves, those which are set-aside for a specific purpose, are detailed in **Appendix 2**. The majority of the movements

have been budgeted for or have been approved in previous monitoring reports to Cabinet. All reserves are reviewed as part of the annual budget process.

Liability to the pension fund in-year was in a surplus position and that has been added to the Pension reserve. As part of the budget saving measures for 2024/25 the exit costs associated with the Voluntary Exit Scheme running since November 2023 have been funded by the Pensions reserve in 2023/24, resulting in a net increase to the reserve of £0.7m.

4.5 Schools - The budget agreed by Council for 2023/24 included a total net additional investment (excluding increases in Welsh Government grants) in schools delegated budgets of £3.03m. Individual schools' delegated reserves and the overall schools position is detailed in **Appendix 3**. The overall schools' balances carried forward into 2024/25 is £3.681m, compared with balances brought forward into 2023/24 of £8.939m, which means schools have collectively drawn down £5.258m from their reserves. Education and Finance colleagues are working closely with schools to help ensure that these balances are used in a timely and effective manner.

4.6 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - HRA balances carried forward into 2024/25 are £1.180m, compared with balances brought forward into 2023/24 of £1.568m, which means a drawdown of HRA reserves of £388k.

4.7 2024/25 Budget - The Council has an on-going project to replace most of the Council's existing financial systems to a new single finance system. This includes the automated system that produces the monthly budget monitoring information to Cabinet and we're working towards the first monthly update on budget monitoring and the savings tracker being brought to Cabinet in July. The finance team are having regular meetings with services and working through latest service demands and comparing with forecast budgets. It is early in the financial year and pressures in some areas do not become evident until early Autumn and there are always risks associated with managing budgets and achieving savings and these are being monitored. High risk areas include any changes in residential placements in Children's Services, and care fees in Adult Social Care. Though these risks could be mitigated by recurring corporate underspends described in 4.3.

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

Effective management of the council's revenue and capital budgets and delivery of the agreed budget strategy underpins activity in all areas, including corporate priorities.

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

The council's net revenue budget for 2023/24 was £250.793m. The final position on service and corporate budgets was a net overspend £513k (0.3% of the net revenue budget for those areas). Taking account of funding and schools, the variance on the total budget was an overspend of £5.934m (2.4% of net revenue budget). The net overspend figure includes £5.258m overspend within schools which is carried forward separately. The overall position required the use of £676k of the Budget Mitigation reserve to fund the net overspend position.

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

A Well-being Impact Assessments for the Council Tax rise was presented to Council on 31 January 2023.

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

In addition to regular reports to the Governance and Audit Committee, the budget process has been considered by SLT, Cabinet Briefing, Group Leaders and Council Briefing meetings. The School Budget Forum have been included in the proposals through-out the year. Trade Unions have been consulted through Local Joint Consultative Committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The substantial level of overspend across services is of concern and despite significant investment going into specific service areas in recent years the demand pressures remain for these services. All services were asked to find in-year savings by ceasing non-essential spending and delaying expenditure where possible. This approach,

along with corporate contingencies not being required, was successful in mitigating against the increasing cost pressures across the Council and reduced the level of overspend from that projected. The action in year to help reduce the overall pressure has meant that we have been able to fund the overspend from the Budget Mitigation reserve and keep the level of unearmarked reserves above the £5m level that we view as a prudent level to cope with unforeseen financial pressures.

9.2 School balances have decreased this financial year, and 13 schools have deficit balances (compared with 3 in the previous year). Whilst much of the movement was as expected as the high opening balances were mainly due to receipt of one-off funding to be spent on catch-up and recovery programmes, increasing costs have had an impact on all schools. It is likely that schools will face significant financial challenges in 2024/25 and 2025/26 and these balances are expected to fall further in those years.

9.3 Cost pressures have been included within the 2024/25 budget to reflect the 2023/24 and forecast service pressures as much as possible in order to build in resilience. These have been estimated based on latest forecasts of demands and costs and are therefore considered to be reasonable having regard to statutory services' spending needs in 2024/25 and the financial context within which the budget is set. The Council has a robust budget process in place which will help identify pressures and savings and methods of funding which will help maintain the Council's financial health going forward.

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

10.1 This remains a challenging financial period and some specific service issues, along with inflationary pressures across all services, are becoming increasingly hard to finance as our funding fails to keep up with inflationary, service, and demographic pressures. A Medium Term Financial Strategy, which provided a range of financial forecasts and a summary of the Budget Strategy for 2025/26 and beyond, was presented to Cabinet in April. This forms the basis of the risk management approach.

10.2 Despite careful monitoring of costs and tracking of savings proposals, ultimately if a significant in-year over spend materialises in 2024/25 of the like seen in 2023/24, and, if savings proposals cannot be delivered, this will lead to reserves being called upon in 2024/25. This will reduce the Council's level of financial resilience and sustainability going

forward. The financial situation is extremely challenging, and effective and disciplined in-year financial management is essential by all budget holders.

11. Power to make the decision

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

Appendix 1

	Outturn Position			Schools Movement £'000	Committed Service Balances £'000	Budget Mitigation Reserve Balances £'000	Final Outturn £'000
	Budget £'000	Outturn £'000	Variance £'000				
Services							
Housing and Communities Service	2,924	2,546	-379				-379
Education and Children's Service	22,121	24,411	2,290				2,290
Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital and Assets	7,255	6,755	-500				-500
Corporate Support Services: People	4,336	4,083	-253				-253
Finance and Audit	3,201	3,042	-159				-159
Highways and Environmental Services	18,702	19,323	621				621
Planning, Public Protection & Countryside Services	12,555	12,359	-196				-196
Adult Social Care & Homelessness Services	52,449	54,272	1,823				1,823
Leisure - ADM	3,679	3,674	-5				-5
Service Budgets	127,221	130,464	3,243		0	0	3,243
Corporate Budgets							
Corporate	17,331	14,628	-2,702		0	676	-3,378
Capital Financing/Investment Interest	15,221	15,308	87				87
Levies	6,064	6,064	0				0
Total Services & Corporate Budgets	165,837	166,464	628	0	0	676	-48
Schools							
Schools Delegated	89,134	94,392	5,258	5,258			0
Schools Non-delegated	-4,178	-4,293	-115		0		-115
Total Council Budget	250,793	256,563	5,771	5,258	0	676	-163
FUNDING							
Welsh Government Funding							
RSG B03	156,587	156,587	0				0
NNDR B15	31,437	31,437	0				0
	188,024	188,024	0				0
Council Tax	62,769	62,605	163				163
Balances	0	0	0				0
Total Funding	250,793	250,630	163	0	0	0	163
In-year Position	0	5,934	5,934	5,258	0	676	0

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Primary School Balances 31/03/2024

0.5 = Nursery

(Red) = DEFICIT

Cost Centre	WG Number	School	Balance as at 31.03.2023	Balance as at 31.03.2024	Movement in Year	Total Pupil Nos Sept 2023	Balance per Pupil	School Budget 2023/2024	Balance as %age of Budget
114	2214	Ysgol Betws Gwerfil Goch	101,705	99,750	(1,955)	20	4,988	276,146	36.12%
116	2051	Ysgol Y Faenol	116,154	26,544	(89,610)	140	190	628,725	4.22%
117	2070	Ysgol Bodfari	(29,196)	(24,773)	4,424	38	(661)	282,632	-8.76%
136	2215	Ysgol Carrog	84,921	70,391	(14,530)	31	2,271	278,731	25.25%
140	2124	Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog	49,705	15,439	(34,266)	52	300	325,446	4.74%
147	2268	Ysgol Carreg Emlyn	99,422	55,787	(43,635)	64	879	450,247	12.39%
162	2216	Ysgol Caer Drewyn	110,277	57,536	(52,741)	89	650	473,381	12.15%
165	2267	Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy	71,321	48,242	(23,080)	110	439	585,276	8.24%
168	2136	Ysgol Y Parc Infants	51,568	(65,685)	(117,253)	158	(417)	819,332	-8.02%
169	2125	Ysgol Frongoch Juniors	62,374	(30,743)	(93,117)	211	(146)	811,514	-3.79%
172	2134	Ysgol Twm o'r Nant	160,058	111,051	(49,006)	303	367	1,253,687	8.86%
173	2266	Ysgol Pendref	29,586	45,113	15,526	119	379	893,245	5.05%
176	2011	Ysgol Hiraddug	63,134	(67,213)	(130,348)	203	(331)	884,412	-7.60%
196	2164	Ysgol Gelliflor	96,420	73,210	(23,211)	37	2,006	309,119	23.68%
210	2219	Ysgol Bro Elwern	145,969	115,109	(30,860)	62	1,872	345,470	33.32%
219	2127	Ysgol Henllan	75,977	78,861	2,885	68	1,168	409,961	19.24%
247	2262	Ysgol Bro Famau	42,514	15,065	(27,449)	56	269	437,332	3.44%
249	3044	Llanbedr Controlled	47,648	40,330	(7,318)	63	645	389,999	10.34%
251	3061	Ysgol Dyffryn Ial	1,172	(41,246)	(42,418)	43	(970)	308,740	-13.36%
255	2135	Ysgol Bryn Clwyd	84,916	53,368	(31,549)	43	1,241	342,568	15.58%
258	3045	Ysgol Llanfair D.C.	55,640	36,104	(19,535)	104	349	557,966	6.47%
266	2234	Ysgol Bryn Collen	19,912	(58,923)	(78,834)	161	(367)	720,280	-8.18%
268	2261	Ysgol Bro Cwmmerch	112,380	87,945	(24,435)	94	941	483,227	18.20%
284	2067	Ysgol Melyd	(21,695)	(93,352)	(71,658)	148	(633)	719,027	-12.98%
325	2168	Ysgol Pentrecelyn	26,579	17,017	(9,562)	19	920	272,589	6.24%
332	2265	Ysgol Bodnant Community School	91,162	27,455	(63,707)	438	63	1,810,047	1.52%
333	2264	Clawdd Offa	64,909	(28,436)	(93,345)	340	(84)	1,428,093	-1.99%
336	2059	Ysgol Penmorfa	46,597	(51,504)	(98,102)	373	(138)	1,659,602	-3.10%
337	2227	Ysgol Y Lllys	154,849	124,894	(29,954)	326	383	1,470,048	8.50%
338	3057	Ysgol Pantpastynog	46,546	26,751	(19,795)	64	418	379,042	7.06%
361	2037	Ysgol Y Castell	280,919	255,678	(25,241)	206	1,244	944,932	27.06%
364	2072	Ysgol Bryn Hedydd	234,027	145,197	(88,830)	446	326	1,686,874	8.61%
365	2038	Christ Church C.P.	236,822	79,600	(157,222)	415	192	1,980,386	4.02%
366	2066	Ysgol Dewi Sant	214,271	143,045	(71,225)	385	372	1,647,351	8.68%
367	2060	Ysgol Emmanuel	442,156	136,761	(305,395)	429	319	1,980,527	6.91%
368	2039	Ysgol Llywelyn	350,743	231,762	(118,981)	654	354	2,610,704	8.88%
373	3050	Ysgol Borthryn Controlled	81,237	37,735	(43,501)	99	383	512,640	7.36%
374	2255	Rhos St. C.P.	118,167	113,392	(4,775)	209	543	902,104	12.57%
375	2256	Ysgol Penbarras	174,247	32,592	(141,655)	284	115	1,208,929	2.70%
390	3024	St. Asaph Infants V.P.	54,847	46,450	(8,397)	67	699	451,169	10.30%
392	3062	Ysgol Esgob Morgan	156,628	129,532	(27,096)	116	1,117	492,520	26.30%
405	3316	Ysgol Trefnant Controlled	94,794	31,703	(63,091)	69	463	456,406	6.95%
408	3020	Ysgol Tremerchion	31,299	37,634	6,335	74	512	403,865	9.32%
467	2263	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Gwernant	43,244	1,967	(41,276)	154	13	740,658	0.27%
TOTAL			4,575,925	2,187,137	(2,388,788)	7,572		36,024,950	6.07%

Average

289

Secondary School Balances

Cost Centre	School	Balance as at 31.03.2023	Balance as at 31.03.2024	Movement in Year	Total Pupil Nos Sept 2023	Balance per Pupil	School Budget 2023/2024	Balance as %age of Budget	
513	4026	Denbigh High School	254,905	167,366	(87,538)	505	331	3,640,277	4.60%
527	4027	Ysgol Dinas Bran	757,414	541,645	(215,769)	1,080	502	6,779,767	7.99%
537	4014	Prestatyn High School	676,150	129,018	(547,132)	1,491	87	8,157,224	1.58%
541	4003	Rhyl High School	439,400	(64,035)	(503,435)	1,195	(54)	7,168,791	-0.89%
549	4031	Ysgol Brynhyfryd	299,128	63,747	(235,381)	1,144	56	6,978,527	0.91%
553	4020	Ysgol Glan Clwyd	1,248,583	1,218,226	(30,357)	1,032	1,180	6,687,594	18.22%

TOTAL		3,675,579	2,055,966	(1,619,613)	6,447			39,412,180	5.22%
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Average 319

Special School Balances

Cost Centre	School	Balance as at 31.03.2023	Balance as at 31.03.2024	Movement in Year	Total Pupil Nos Sept 2023	Balance per Pupil	School Budget 2023/2024	Balance as %age of Budget	
619	7010	Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn	37,663	(117,939)	(155,602)	122	(967)	3,642,782	-3.24%
655	7000	Ysgol Tir Morfa	669,712	123,922	(545,791)	109	1,137	2,552,566	4.85%

TOTAL		707,375	5,983	(701,392)	231			6,195,348	0.10%
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Average 26

Middle School Balances

Cost Centre	School	Balance as at 31.03.2023	Balance as at 31.03.2024	Movement in Year	Total Pupil Nos Sept 2023	Balance per Pupil	School Budget 2023/2024	Balance as %age of Budget	
790	5901	St. Brigid's	(158,997)	(538,959)	(379,962)	462	(1,167)	2,689,622	-20.04%
795	5902	Christ the Word	139,218	(29,081)	(168,298)	848	(34)	4,811,684	-0.60%

TOTAL		(19,779)	(568,039)	(548,261)	1,310			7,501,306	-7.57%
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Average (434)

TOTAL ALL SCHOOLS		8,939,100	3,681,047	(5,258,054)	15,560			89,133,784	4.13%
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Average balance per pupil - all schools					Average	237			
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Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	Balance at 31/03/2023	Transfers Out 2023/24	Transfers In 2023/24	Balance at 31/03/2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Schools				
School Balances	(8,939)	5,287	(29)	(3,681)
Grant & Capital Related				
Capital Schemes: General	(6,870)	3,953	(592)	(3,509)
Capital Schemes: Coastal Defence	(5,270)	0	(5,269)	(10,539)
Capital Schemes: Social Care	(5,822)	0	0	(5,822)
Capital Schemes: Children's Services	(1,278)	0	0	(1,278)
Capital Schemes: Clwyd West LUF	0	0	(1,038)	(1,038)
Modified Loan Reserve	(4,416)	76	0	(4,340)
Revenue Grants Unapplied	(4,317)	2,147	(2,952)	(5,122)
Service Reserves				
<u>Corporate Support: Performance, Digital & Assets</u>				
Design & Development	(494)	0	0	(494)
New Ways of Working	(181)	4	0	(177)
IT Networks Development	(676)	284	0	(392)
IT Systems Development (EDRMS)	(69)	0	0	(69)
Resident Survey	(38)	0	0	(38)
Schools IT Network Development	0	0	0	0
Carbon Zero Project	(714)	164	(292)	(842)
<u>Housing & Communities</u>				
Ruthin Gaol Heritage Projects	(78)	18	0	(60)
Working Denbighshire	(364)	119	(46)	(291)
Major Events Reserve	(43)	0	0	(43)
<u>Adult Social Care and Homelessness</u>				
CESI Pooled Budget	(17)	0	(2)	(19)
Domiciliary Care Transport	(332)	332	0	0
Adult Social Care Reserve	0	0	0	0
Health & Social Care Support Workers	(38)	0	(18)	(56)
Social Care Amenity Fund	(14)	14	0	0
Social Care in Partnership	(10)	0	0	(10)
Social Service Improvement Agency	(116)	0	0	(116)
Safeguarding Business Unit	(181)	0	(67)	(248)
Delivering Transformation	(1,592)	819	(211)	(984)
Regional Commissioning Team	(131)	59	0	(72)
Cefndy	0	0	(87)	(87)
<u>Education & Children's Services</u>				
Modernising Education	(122)	0	0	(122)
ALN Reforms	(510)	133	(447)	(824)
Schools Financial Resilience	(300)	0	0	(300)
Education IT Investment	(241)	28	(45)	(258)
<u>Finance & Audit</u>				
Revenues & Benefits	(799)	348	(163)	(614)
Finance Systems	(166)	0	0	(166)
External Funding Administration	(116)	5	0	(111)
<u>Highways & Environmental Services</u>				
Pont y Ddraig Bridge	(90)	0	(8)	(98)
Severe Weather (incorporating Winter Maintenance)	0	0	0	0
Facilities	(154)	154	0	0
Free School Meals	(150)	0	0	(150)

Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	Balance at 31/03/2023 £000	Transfers Out 2023/24 £000	Transfers In 2023/24 £000	Balance at 31/03/2024 £000
<u>Corporate Support: People</u>				
Training Collaboration	(50)	0	0	(50)
Legal	(28)	0	0	(28)
NW Schools Framework	0	0	(92)	(92)
<u>Planning, Public Protection & Countryside</u>				
Town & County Planning Act (s.106) Requirements	(1,168)	8	(58)	(1,218)
Ash Die-back	(282)	6	0	(276)
Bodelwyddan Country Park	(91)	41	0	(50)
Picturesque Project	(152)	84	0	(68)
ECA Board	(238)	0	(50)	(288)
Signing Schemes	(10)	10	0	0
Prosecution/Appeal Costs	(61)	0	0	(61)
LDP Future Costs	(188)	26	0	(162)
Planning Delivery for Wales	(195)	70	0	(125)
Corporate Reserves				
2017 Corporate Priorities	(267)	69	0	(198)
Growth Bid	(50)	50	0	0
Elections	(69)	0	(25)	(94)
Risk Management Fund	(549)	0	(44)	(593)
Destination Managed Project	(400)	0	0	(400)
Health & Safety	(78)	0	0	(78)
Superannuation Recovery	(3,630)	979	(1,723)	(4,374)
Travelodge	(116)	0	(52)	(168)
Leadership Development	(13)	0	0	(13)
Area Member Reserve	(15)	0	0	(15)
Budget Mitigation	(4,731)	689	0	(4,042)
Coroner	(236)	100	0	(136)
Rhyl Regeneration	(16)	16	0	0
Insurance Fund	(871)	248	(180)	(803)
Energy	(374)	0	0	(374)
Corporate CJ	(287)	0	0	(287)
Total	(58,814)	16,341	(13,490)	(55,963)

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	
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 Ddol projects along with the public consultation report, and to seek Cabinet's authorisation to proceed with the detailed design phase.	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer – Mike Jones / Report Author – Sian Lloyd Price	12.04.24
	3	Replacement for PARIS IT System	To receive and approve the business case for the replacement of the PARIS IT system	Yes	Cllrs Elen Heaton & Gill German Lead Officer/Report Author – Nicola Stubbins, Dyfan Barr and Michael Jones	22.05.24 KEJ
	4	Keep My Home Service	To seek approval to go back out to tender and to extend the current contract end date from 31 October 2024, to 31 March 2025	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Nigel Jones/ Sharon Whalley	03.06.24 KEJ
	5	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	6	Update on Medium Term	To review and approve the latest	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis	15.05.24

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
		Financial Strategy and Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28	version of the MTFS / MTFP		Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	KEJ
	7	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	Denbighshire's Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)	To present the LAEP to Cabinet for endorsement	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans/Liz Wilcox Jones	22.04.24 KEJ
	2	Disposal of Caledfryn, Denbigh	To seek approval for the disposal of Caledfryn as part of the savings proposals	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Office/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Daniel Roebuck	23.05.24 KEJ
	3	Corporate Joint Committee Governance Arrangements	To approve updated governance arrangements	Yes	Cllr Jason McLellan Lead Officer/Report Author – Gary Williams	26.04.24, rescheduled 11.06.24 KEJ
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	5	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
22 Oct	1	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	24.05.24 KEJ
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	3	Update on Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28	To review and approve the latest version of the MTFS / MTFP	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 KEJ
	4	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	Public Conveniences Savings Proposal	To consider the Public Conveniences Savings Proposal	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer/Report Author – Paul Jackson/Joanna Douglass	07.06.24 KEJ
	2	Council Performance Self-Assessment Update – July to September (QPR2)	To consider a report by the Strategic Planning Team for Council to approve the Performance Self-Assessment July to September	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans/lolo McGregor, Emma	

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
					Horan	
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	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
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 – Iolo McGregor	12.04.24 KEJ
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	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
Jan	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	2	Revenue Budget Setting 2025/26	To review and approve the budget proposals for forthcoming financial year 2025/26	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 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
	3	Capital Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28	To review and approve proposals for inclusion in the Capital Plan	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 KEJ
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
Feb	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council’s current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	2	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting 2025/26	To review and approve the budget and Council Tax setting proposals for the forthcoming financial year 2025/26	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 KEJ
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item

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Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
25 June	11 June	30 July	16 July	24 September	10 September

Updated 11/06/2024 – KEJ
Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

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