

To: Members of the Partnerships
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 5 September 2024

Direct Dial: 01824 712554

e-mail: democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2024** in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Pages 5 - 6)

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

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

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

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 7 - 16)

To receive the minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 16 May 2024 (copy attached).

10.05am – 10.10am

The Committee will discuss the following item of business in its capacity as the Council's designated Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Police & Justice Act 2006 ss. 19 and 20.

5 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL UPDATE FOR APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024 (Pages 17 - 38)

To consider a report by the Community Safety Manager (copy enclosed) which outlines the activity of the Conwy and Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership during 2023/24 and seeks the Committee's observations on its performance and its future objectives.

10.10am – 10.40am

6 NORTH WALES REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 (Pages 39 - 86)

To consider a report by the Head of Regional Collaboration (copy enclosed) which summarises the work of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board during 2023/24 and seeks the Committee's observations on the progress made to date in achieving its objectives.

10.40am – 11.10am

BREAK 11.10am - 11.20am

7 ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 - 2029 (Pages 87 - 130)

To consider a report by the Council's Asset Manager (copy enclosed) which presents the Committee with the draft Asset Management Strategy for 2024 – 2029 and seeks the Committee's observations on its contents.

11.20am – 11.50am

8 UPDATE REPORT ON AUDIT WALES "DIGITAL STRATEGY REVIEW" (Pages 131 - 180)

To consider a report by the Interim Chief Digital Officer (copy enclosed) which presents the Committee with information on the progress achieved to date in addressing Audit Wales' recommendations following its review of the Council's current Digital Strategy. The report also seeks the Committee's views on the proposed approach towards developing the Authority's new Digital Strategy from 2026 onwards.

11.50am – 12.20pm

9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 181 - 202)

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

12.20pm – 12.40pm

10 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

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

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Councillor Joan Butterfield (Chair)

Councillor Pauline Edwards (Vice-Chair)

Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones
Kelly Clewett
Bobby Feeley
Brian Jones
Terry Mendies

Raj Metri
Arwel Roberts
David Williams
Elfed Williams

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information
Press and Libraries
Town and Community Councils

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, (<i>name</i>)	<input type="text"/>
a *member/co-opted member of <i>(*please delete as appropriate)</i>	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:- <i>(*please delete as appropriate)</i>	
Date of Disclosure:	<input type="text"/>
Committee (<i>please specify</i>):	<input type="text"/>
Agenda Item No.	<input type="text"/>
Subject Matter:	<input type="text"/>
Nature of Interest: <i>(See the note below)*</i>	<input type="text"/>
Signed	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>

*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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PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by Video Conference on Thursday, 16 May 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Joan Butterfield (Chair), Kelly Clewett, Pauline Edwards (Vice-Chair), Bobby Feeley, Terry Mendies, Raj Metri, Arwel Roberts and Elfed Williams

Education Co-opted members for business item 6: Colette Owen and Neil Roberts

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Gill German, Councillor Jon Harland, Councillor Merfyn Parry and Councillor Mark Young

Observer: Councillor Jon Harland

Corporate Director – Social Services and Education (NS), Corporate Director - Governance and Business (GW), Head of Education (GD), Head of Finance and Audit (ET), Development Manager, Planning and Public Protection (PM), Principal Manager – School Support (JC), Principal Planning Officer (LG), Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Manager (MJ), Scrutiny Co-ordinators (RhE & KE) and Committee Administrator – Webcaster (RhT-J).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Brian Jones and David Williams.

The Committee requested that its best wishes for a full and speedy recovery be conveyed to Councillor Williams who had recently undergone surgery.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Arwel Roberts declared a personal interest in business item 6 as a Local Education Authority (LEA) Governor at Ysgol y Castell, Rhuddlan.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

As the Chair was unable to attend the meeting in person at County Hall she had requested that the Vice-Chair upon election chair the meeting. Therefore, the Scrutiny Co-ordinator sought nominations for the post of Committee Vice-Chair for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Councillor Bobby Feeley nominated Councillor Pauline Edwards for the position of Committee Vice-Chair. Councillor Edwards' nomination for the role was seconded by Councillor Elfed Williams. No other nominations were received and the Committee:

Resolved: that Councillor Pauline Edwards be elected as Vice-Chair of Partnerships Scrutiny Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Following her election Councillor Edwards thanked members for their continued support prior to assuming the chair for the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Chair's request.

4 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No matters of an urgent nature had been drawn to the attention of the Chair prior to the commencement of the meeting.

5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 21 March 2024 were submitted. The Committee:

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2024 be received and approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

Matters arising: page 12, 'North Denbighshire Community Hospital Project' – Committee members were advised that a copy of the Chair's letter to the newly appointed First Minister in respect of this project, along with the Minister for Health and Social Care's letter of response, had been circulated to Committee members for information as part of the 'Information Brief' document earlier in the week. The Corporate Director: Social Services and Education updated the Committee advising members that the business case for the project had been accepted by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) at its meeting in March 2024 and had subsequently been submitted to Welsh Government (WG). The Director undertook, in conjunction with Health Board representatives, to continue updating the Committee on the business case's progress as things developed.

6 REVIEW OF CABINET DECISION RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING - ROLLING PROGRAMME

Prior to the commencement of this business item the Chair welcomed the Lead Member for Education, Children and Families; Corporate Director: Social Services and Education; Head of Education; Principal Manager: School Support along with a number of other officers from various Council services to the meeting for the

discussion on the Cabinet decision called-in for review under the Council's Call-in Procedure Rules. She also welcomed the lead signatory to the 'Notice of Call-in' and his co-signatories to the meeting to present their case.

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator introduced the report and appendices (previously circulated) which outlined the Cabinet decision called-in for review, the reasons given for seeking a review of the decision and the process that would be followed at the meeting. She also advised that as the decision called-in for review related to statutory education provision in the county the Education Co-opted Members on the Council's Scrutiny Committees were in attendance and were members of the Committee with full voting rights for this particular business item.

Prior to the commencement of the discussion the Committee was advised by the Monitoring Officer of the importance of focussing on the decision taken by Cabinet on 23 April 2024, relating to the draft Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) for the 'Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme', which was the subject of the Notice of Call-in and not on any past or potential future decisions which may be taken in relation to proposed programme.

Councillor Mark Young, as the lead signatory to the Notice of Call-in, introduced and summarised the call-in request on behalf of himself and his co-signatories, explaining that the rationale for calling-in the decision was based on the need for good governance, evidence based decision-making, along with extensive and effective consultation with all stakeholders in relation to the 'disposal' of a green-space playing field in accordance with Regulations and Guidance referred to in the 'Notice of Call-In of Decision' submitted. During his introduction Councillor Young referred to the need to consult with bodies such as Sport Wales, local schools in Denbigh, local elected members, local community, and sports organisations, which both he and his co-signatories felt had not been widely consulted with in relation to the 'disposal/change of use' of the playing field in order to accommodate the new building for Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn. The signatories were firmly of the view that under the Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) sports fields were protected from development unless they were designated as surplus to requirement. Co-signatories Councillors Merfyn Parry, Pauline Edwards and Elfed Williams outlined their reasons for consenting to the calling-in of the decision stating that an assessment should be undertaken on the availability of green space provision in Denbigh and made available to local members and residents. Provision of an assessment of all known risks associated with the proposals along with evidence of the extensive consultation undertaken with all stakeholders should also have been made available. Councillor Geraint Lloyd-Williams was not in attendance to present his reasons for agreeing to be a signatory to the 'Notice of Call-In'.

Responding to the points raised in calling-in the decision the Lead Member advised that the Monitoring Officer was of the view that the issues of affordability, loss, and

reinstatement/replacement of playing fields would be issues to be addressed as part of developing the full business case for the project prior to submission to the Capital Scrutiny Group (CSG) for consideration. The playing fields element would feature as part of the planning application process. None of these factors had any bearing on the Cabinet decision of 23 April 2024. That decision related to the SOP which outlined the Council's proposed programme of projects to submit to Welsh Government (WG) with a view to bidding for investment available under the WG's 'Sustainable Communities for Learning' Programme (formerly known as 21st Century Schools Programme) to improve and enhance educational facilities in the county over the forthcoming years. The 'Sustainable Communities for Learning' Programme' was a nine-year investment programme available to local authorities to apply for funding to improve and enhance their schools' estate.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the 'Notice of Call-in' referred to legislation and statutory guidance that were applicable in Wales. However, under the law, neither of these were relevant to the decision called-in for review, as the term 'disposal' was defined in law as 'the grant of estate or an interest in land' i.e., sale. The statutory guidance document provided various examples of where the guidance was applicable, all of which related to the sale of playing fields. The decision called-in for review did not contain proposals to sell any of the land which had been earmarked for the development of Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, which the signatories to the call-in confirmed was the playing fields referred to in their 'Notice of Call-in'. This land was currently in the ownership of the Council and would remain so under the proposed programme of investment contained in the SOP.

The Lead Member advised the Committee that the WG had changed its approach to future capital investment in school estates in Wales from the five-year investment bands under the 21st Century Schools Programme to a more flexible nine-year investment programme, divided into three blocks of three-years each, under the 'Sustainable Communities for Learning - Rolling Programme'. As a result of this change in approach WG had asked local authorities to identify projects which were essentially ready for business cases to be progressed within the next three years, those currently under development and likely to be undergoing statutory consultation in the second three-year block, along with projects which were likely to be in the pipeline during the final three-year block, for inclusion in a SOP for submission to WG to bid for funding under the Programme. The decision taken by Cabinet on 23 April related to submitting a bid to WG for funding under the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme to further develop these projects with a view to delivering them in due course. Business cases, planning permission etc. would follow at a later stage. In compiling the SOP the Council had reviewed all 21st Century Schools Band B projects, developed and agreed by the previous administration, which had been impacted by various delays and recommended their inclusion in the SOP for the new Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. In addition, it had included the project for Ysgol y Castell, Rhuddlan

with the former Band B projects for delivery under the new Programme. The Lead Member gave an overview of each Band B school's current position in relation to the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) design and development stages. Reference was included in the Cabinet report (Annex B to the report to the Committee) to other projects which may require investment in later years, subject to the availability of funding.

A proposed £60m investment programme in the county's school estate portfolio was welcomed by the Council's Head of Education, particularly given the austere financial times within which public services were currently operating.

Responding to the points raised by the signatories to the call-in both the Head of Education and the Principal Manager – School Support confirmed that:

- Sport Wales had been consulted on the proposals prior, during and following the pre-planning stage and they continued to regularly correspond with the Council on the matter of the proposed new site for Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, as did Denbighshire Leisure Limited (DLL) and third-party clubs/organisations which currently utilised the land and facilities
- all these stakeholders were in continual two-way dialogue with the Council with regards to the proposals
- the pre-planning consultation events during September and October 2022 had attracted a high number and diverse range of consultees, which included residents, community groups etc. including Denbigh Town Football Club and the local running club both of whom continued to be in positive dialogue with the Council in relation to their future facilities, which would be of a superior quality to what they had at present. A second pre-planning consultation was currently being planned with a view to communicating to all stakeholders the amendments to the plans resulting from the initial pre-planning consultation and to provide an opportunity for all to submit further comments on the proposed scheme. This second pre-planning consultation would be undertaken over a four-week period.
- the local Member Area Group (MAG) had been involved in discussions on these projects at least ten times since 2020
- the team involved with the work in compiling, developing, and consulting with stakeholders was far wider than just the Education Service. It included officers from the Planning Service, Highways and Environmental Services, Safer Routes to Schools etc. A 'One Council' approach had been adopted in order to support the delivery of the projects in the SOP
- the Council when proposing the development of a new school or re-organising its education provision was required to undertake a statutory consultation process, which entailed engaging with a large number of statutory consultees.

The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that Cabinet in September 2023, when approving the preferred site for Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, explicitly stated “that the planning application must clearly demonstrate that the loss of recreational space through the development on the school playing field will be replaced by alternative outdoor provision which would be of equivalent or greater community benefit”.

In response to questions raised by Committee members and non-Committee members, the Lead Member, Corporate Directors, and officers from various Council Services advised that:

- the report submitted to Cabinet on 23 April 2024 outlined the Council’s high level strategic vision for capital investment in its schools’ estate. The financial details and risks identified for each individual project would be contained in the business cases that would be presented to the CSG prior to submission to Cabinet for approval. Each one of these business cases could be examined by scrutiny at the pre-decision stage or called-in for scrutiny following approval by Cabinet under the Council’s Call-In Procedure Rules
- the processes followed for submitting the SOP and later individual business cases for these types of projects were quite prescriptive and set out by the WG. The Authority was therefore required to adhere with the process if it wished to bid for government funding to deliver the projects
- whilst the athletics field was protected from development under policy BSC 11 within the current LDP, that protection only extended insofar as development could be permitted through the planning process if the Authority could demonstrate that it could provide alternative provision for recreational/sports purposes which was of at least as good or of an enhanced quality
- that whilst DLL had raised questions in relation to the proposed new site for Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn it had never indicated that it opposed the proposals. The land on which the proposed school facility would be built was owned by the Education Service. This was separate to the land that was currently leased by the Council to DLL for use by the leisure centre, parking, and as an astroturf facility only. The land earmarked for the new school if it proceeded did not form part of the lease agreement. The Council and DLL worked closely together to manage and maintain the site.
- details of the pre-planning consultations and needs assessment already undertaken were already in the public domain and assurances were given that details of future consultation exercises would also be communicated to the public, with the results and comments fed into the planning application process in due course
- planning considerations did not form any part of the Cabinet decision called-in for review. However, specialist legal advice on planning matters relating to the playing field site had already been shared with local elected members

- officers from the Education and Planning Services were currently working closely together to develop alternative green space proposals, and in conjunction with Denbigh Town Football Club and the Athletics Club they were attempting to design alternative, better quality provision for the future which would also make the facilities available for public use for greater periods of time than they were at present
- delivery of none of the projects listed in the SOP could be guaranteed one hundred per cent as they required to progress through various stages of business case development before they could be realised. However, the SOP represented the Council's vision, based on work undertaken to date, on what it wanted and wished to see delivered within the nine-year timeframe, subject to the required permissions being granted via the relevant decision-making processes

Councillor Arwel Roberts declared a personal interest in his capacity as a local education authority (LEA) governor at Ysgol y Castell, Rhuddlan and thanked the Lead Member and officers for including the Ysgol y Castell scheme within the SOP. In his view the Lead Member and officers had demonstrated that they had, and were continuing, to extensively consult on the proposals that affected the Denbigh area.

Councillor Kelly Clewett was of the view that the arguments put forward during the meeting were not relevant to the decision taken by Cabinet on 23 April, as a number of them related to potential future decisions, not the one called-in for scrutiny at the current meeting. She was therefore confident that the decision taken by Cabinet on the SOP was the correct decision. Nevertheless, she emphasised the need for the Council to continue to effectively consult with the wider community as the projects progressed.

Councillor Elfed Williams requested that copies of the consultation timetable to date and the reports produced following the various consultations which had already taken place be circulated to county councillors.

Prior to drawing the discussion to a close both sides were given an opportunity to summarise their viewpoints.

At the conclusion of a comprehensive discussion Councillor Elfed Williams proposed that the Committee refer the decision back to Cabinet with a recommendation that Cabinet when reconsidering its decision should be content that the full consultation process had followed the Welsh Government guidelines on removing a well-used sports field out of use and that Cabinet also be requested to re-assess the needs and well-being assessment on available green space/open space areas in Denbigh to ensure that they matched the Council's own expectations as stated in its Local Development Plan (LDP).

Councillor Williams' proposal was seconded by Councillor Bobby Feeley.

On being put to the vote the proposal was defeated and therefore the Committee:

Resolved: that Cabinet's decision of 23 April 2024 relating to the 'Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme' be upheld.

BREAK 11.50am until 11.55am

7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator introduced the report and appendices (previously circulated) which sought members to review the Committee's forward work programme and provided an update on Scrutiny related matters.

Members' attention was drawn the Committee's forward work programme attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Its next meeting, scheduled for 4 July, had three substantial business items listed to date. Attached at Appendix 2 was a copy of the 'member proposal form' which members were encouraged to complete if they felt a matter or topic merited being scrutinised. They were reminded that the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) would be meeting on 20 May to consider any scrutiny requests received. Appendix 3 set out the Cabinet's forward work programme for members' information and help them identify any matters they may wish to request be presented to Scrutiny for pre-decision scrutiny. Appendix 4 summarised the progress made in relation to the Committee's recommendations at its previous meeting.

Councillor Elfed Williams suggested that Scrutiny may wish to examine the consultation undertaken with the schools referred to under the earlier business item. Councillor Williams was advised to complete a 'member proposal form' (attached at Appendix 2) outlining the aspects he wished Scrutiny to examine in detail, the anticipated outcomes of the scrutiny process and then submit the completed form to either of the Scrutiny Co-ordinators who would present the request to the SCVCG for consideration. Councillor Arwel Roberts enquired whether the green space element of the consultation undertaken on the proposals relating to the Sustainable Communities for Learning item discussed earlier had been made widely available and whether that element required to be scrutinised. The Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised Councillors Roberts and Williams to liaise with one another with respect of submitting a member proposal form on this specific topic.

Responding to an enquiry from Councillor Roberts on whether sufficient numbers of scrutiny requests were being submitted to the SCVCG for consideration to enable scrutiny forward work programmes to filled, the Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised that

eight requests had been received for the Group's consideration at its meeting the following week. In addition, the SCVCG would be considering Scrutiny's role in the budget setting process and monitoring the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy & Plan, as well as Scrutiny's future involvement the Council's Transformation Programme, at that meeting. Dependent upon the outcome of those discussions all scrutiny committee forward work programmes may well be more evenly populated in future. Proposed scrutiny arrangements for the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) were also due to be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the SCVCG. Whilst there were proposals for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) to eventually form part of the CJC, no date had yet been agreed for this to take place. Therefore, until those arrangements were in place and standalone scrutiny arrangements had been agreed for the CJC, Partnerships Scrutiny Committee would continue to be Denbighshire's designated scrutiny committee for scrutinising the NWEAB.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was:

Resolved: to confirm the Committee's forward work programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Bwthyn y Ddôl Sub Regional Children's Assessment Unit: Councillor Bobby Feeley, Scrutiny's representative on the Project Board for this specialist unit, reported that the new state of the art facility for this Assessment Unit was nearing completion. The Corporate Director: Social Services and Education confirmed that once the facility was ready for use an official launch would be arranged and a newsletter would be circulated to all members.

The Committee:

Resolved: to receive the information provided.

The meeting concluded at 12.10pm

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Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	12th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Rhys Thomas (Lead Member for Housing and Communities) / Helen Vaughan- Evans (Head of Corporate Support Services- Performance, Digital and Assets)
Head of Service	Helen Vaughan- Evans (Head of Corporate Support Services- Performance, Digital and Assets)
Report author	Sian Taylor (Community Safety Manager)
Title	Community Safety Partnership Annual Update for April 2023 - March 2024

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The Conwy and Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) activity and performance report is based on the joint partnership priorities as identified in the North Wales audit of crime that is conducted annually. The Police and Crime Commissioner agrees the priorities and then draws up an action plan to be delivered locally that is monitored by the Safer North Wales Partnership Board. Locally we deliver this action plan by analysing what is happening in our local area and implementing local solutions.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee of the activity of the Joint Conwy and Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) from April 2023- March 2024, and the work that will be ongoing in 2024/25 and to also provide detail on how the CSP is funded.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 That Partnerships Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the contents of the attached performance and statistical update for April 2023 - March 2024.

4. Report details

- 4.1 CSP's were created in 1998 to develop and implement strategies and action plans to reduce crime and disorder. Each Authority had its own CSP. Some 16 years ago Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) and Denbighshire County Council (DCC) merged their Community Safety teams into a single team, with CCBC being the main employer. Corporate Support Service - Performance, Digital and Assets take the lead for managing the Community Safety Partnership activity in Denbighshire.
- 4.2 The Local Community Safety Partnership meeting regime consists of:
- Strategic Steering Group – held quarterly.
 - Anti-social Behaviour Tasking Group – held monthly.
 - Organised Crime Prevention Group - held monthly (this now includes a Clear-Hold -Build section).
 - Rhyl Community Safety Forum- held quarterly.
 - Emerging issues Task and Finish groups established as and when required.
- 4.3 The three priority areas for 2023-2024 were as follows:

Priority area 1 - Work in Partnership to Reduce Crime and Disorder

- Reduce victim-based crime.
- Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
- Support vulnerable people to prevent them becoming victims of crime.
- Reduce repeat incidents of victim-based crime and ASB for victims and perpetrators.
- Work with the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to manage the levels of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse.
- Deal effectively with high-risk cases of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.
- Increase the confidence in reporting Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.
- Increase awareness amongst young people of sexual violence.

Priority area 2 - Work in Partnership to Reduce reoffending - National/ Regional Priority

- Reduce Adult reoffending/Youth reoffending.

Priority area 3- Local priorities

- Reduce crime linked to licensed premises and taxis.
- Improve confidence in reporting ASB to the Local Authority.
- Deal with any ASB hotspot areas in partnership with others.
- Raise awareness locally of emerging crime issues.

4.4 Each Priority area has a number of performance indicators assigned to it to monitor progress and crime trends. We review all of the statistics on a quarterly and monthly basis at a local area and act on any emerging issues.

4.5 Please see attached the Community Safety Partnership performance and statistical report for 2023-2024 (Appendix 1).

4.6 Please see attached the Community Safety Partnership work ongoing/ planned in Denbighshire 2024-2025 (Appendix 2).

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022-2027: The Denbighshire we want?

5.1 Where relevant, the work of the Community Safety Partnership is aligned to the Healthier and Happier, Caring Denbighshire Theme of the Council's Corporate Plan.

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

6.1 The partnership projects within the Action Plan are fully grant funded. Each 'Responsible Authority' can allocate a certain amount of funding which will directly support the outcomes for reducing crime in Denbighshire. See Appendix 3 for more detail on funding.

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

7.1 Not required.

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

- 8.1 The Community Safety Partnership was consulted on the 2023-2024 Activity Plans via all Responsible Authorities (Local Authority, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, North Wales Police, Wales Probation and BCUHB).
- 8.2 The Lead Member and Head of Service in Denbighshire will be briefed on the content of the report and have been involved in the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Meetings,
- 8.3 The CSP report annually to the Council's Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 It is important that the cost of delivering the Community Safety Action Plan continues to be contained within the external funding and budgets available.

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

- 10.1 That information coming into and out of the Local Authority is appropriately shared and actioned. This is now managed via a quarterly written community safety newsletter sent to all Denbighshire County Council Councillors, Lead Member and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and by the established quarterly internal meeting of senior officers who attend the Regional Community Safety and Safeguarding Boards.

11. Power to make the decision

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Police Reform Act 2002
- Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000
- Section 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act
- Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009
- Serious Violence Duty- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
- Section 7.15.2 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that Partnerships Scrutiny Committee as the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee has a duty to ensure that the Council's interests, resources and priorities are reflected

in the work of the CSP, in accordance with ss19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006

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Appendix 1

Community Safety Partnership Performance report for April 2023- March 2024 for Denbighshire

1. Overall Community Safety Partnership activity Performance summary

1.1. Of the three main priority areas of work for the Community Safety Partnership at the end of March 2024 two were classified as **Good** and one was **Acceptable**. We have seen an increase in the numbers of Theft and handling and adult reoffending rates which means priority 2 has remained acceptable when compared to last year but we have seen reductions in all of the other types of crimes we are required to monitor when compared to the year before.

1.2. Here is a summary position for each Partnership Priority from April 2023- March 2024.

What each of the colours mean are as follows:

Colour	Measure Status
Green	Excellent Progress
Yellow	Good Progress
Orange	Acceptable Progress
Red	Priority for improvement

Priority	Activity Description	Performance Status 2023-2024	Project/ activity Progress
<u>Priority 1</u> Reduce Crime and Disorder in the area by working in partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collectively to reduce victim based crime • Manage repeat locations Antisocial Behaviour in partnership with others (ASB) • Support vulnerable people to prevent them becoming victims of crime • Reduce repeat incidents of victim based crime and Antisocial Behaviour for victims and perpetrators 	Good	Good

Priority	Activity Description	Performance Status 2023-2024	Project/ activity Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the confidence in reporting of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence • Increase awareness amongst young people of sexual violence 		
Priority2 Work collectively to Reduce Reoffending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working collectively to prevent Adult reoffending • Work to prevent Children and young people becoming victims of crime or committing crime as a result of exploitation • Work collectively in preventing Organised crime/County Lines 	Acceptable	Good
Priority 3 Local and Regional priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collectively to manage antisocial behaviour and the response to antisocial behaviour locally. • Work collectively to share information on organised crime, County lines and exploitation. • Work collectively to raise awareness of Domestic abuse and sexual violence locally • Implement the Serious violence strategy agreed in January 2024 	Good	Good

2. Detailed performance and project/activity progress per Priority Area

2.1. Priority 1- Reduce Crime and Disorder in Denbighshire by working in partnership

Priority 1 Performance status- Good

Overall, the performance for the priority is **Good** due to the decrease in the overall victim based crime category of 13.5%. We still have a high rate of Theft and handling specifically from shops and supermarkets. The status has improved when compared to last year given the reduction in the overall Victim based crime and the continued reduction in theft and handling this year although work in this area is still ongoing.

Work of the partnership included;

- Promotion of the Police 'We don't buy crime' initiative primarily aimed at prevention of acquisitive crimes.

- Raising awareness of victim-based crimes via social media, attending events and making sure information is available on our websites.
- Supporting the Home and business surveys carried out by crime reduction advisors and Police Community Support Officers to help prevent burglaries.
- We participated in the monthly Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference meeting called MARAC's online where victims of domestic abuse are discussed and where action plans for assistance are put in place.
- Denbighshire sent out numerous press releases on domestic abuse throughout the year led by our Lead Member and we changed the colour of the Pont y Ddraig Bridge to signify the support of the Local Authority on White Ribbon day on the 25th of November 2023. The International day is dedicated to raising awareness of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.
- We continued to promote the 'Live fear free All Wales helpline' we have been promoting the helpline number at every opportunity. This is a one stop shop for victims to get support and advice.
- We participated in the monthly Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference meeting called MARAC's online where victims of domestic abuse are discussed and where action plans for assistance are put in place.
- We provided homes with target hardening equipment and crime prevention advice (Locks/door bars etc.) when victims of burglary were identified or when there was a safeguarding issue identified.

Priority 1 Project/activity update – Good

We, as a Partnership continued with delivering the projects/initiates in our work plan for 2023-2024.

We continued to increase our partnership work on the disruption of organised crime by utilising our individual powers in each organisation. This group helps to provide the police with a rich picture of what's going on with individuals identified as being involved with organised crime and has assisted in the planning for Project renew in West Rhyl.

We also helped to coordinate the start of Project Renew Rhyl- Clear Hold Build tactical group and have continued to support police colleagues since the project began prior to the April launch.



Promoting the we don't buy crime initiative has resulted in a downward trajectory (a reduction) of theft and handling now being seen in the quarter 1 statistics for April-June 2024

Regional meetings continued discussing Modern Day Slavery and what we can do to help prevent incidents, County Lines awareness raising, supporting Integrated Offender Management by signposting to appropriate services based on criminogenic needs, Serious Violence strategy and implementation meetings, Domestic abuse regional meetings and substance misuse meetings via the Area Planning Board. There have also been a number of regional operational groups established again this year to help carry forward specific pieces of work. For example preventing terrorism operational group, modern day slavery provider's forum and multiple serious violence regional task and finish group.

2.2. Priority 2- Reducing reoffending

Priority 2 performance status- Acceptable

Overall the performance for the priority is Acceptable due to the small increase in adult reoffending and the decrease seen in youth reoffending when compared to the previous year.

Adult Repeat Offender data

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Percentage change	Number of crimes
Denbighshire	224	118	128	8.5%	10 more offenders reoffending
Conwy	234	119	172	44.5%	53 more offenders reoffending

Youth Reoffending data

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Percentage change	Number of crimes
Denbighshire	17	38	36	-5.3%	2 fewer repeat offenders
Conwy	23	48	43	-10.4%	5 fewer repeat offenders

In 2023-2024 we have seen reductions in youth reoffending in both Denbighshire and Conwy when compared to the previous year. A great deal of focus has been given to prevention and young people in Denbighshire and Conwy over the last 12 months. When compared to 2021-2022 there have been large reductions seen and this can be attributed towards the increased focus on early intervention and prevention via yellow card interventions and a refocussing of the youth justice management board.

In 2023-2024 we have seen slight increases in Denbighshire in adult reoffending rates.

The work of the partnership is as follows:

- Local Integrated offender management programmes continues and have managed adult offenders and those young people transitioning between childhood and adulthood.
- We continued to promote community resolutions and restorative justice when solving minor issues, some of this work was online
- We have attended restorative justice conferences where we have acted as the independent critical friend in the process.
- We are currently working in partnership to identify repeat antisocial behaviour (ASB) locations and offenders and include them when appropriate in the offender management programme.
- We continue to work closely with the Youth Justice Service and the Youth services in Denbighshire to access some deterrents for young people and some diversionary activities when youth antisocial behaviour issues have been raised with us as a partnership as well as sharing intelligence with the police so that repeat offenders are encouraged to deter form the behaviour.
- We have continued with the forum in Rhyl to look at crime and disorder matters. This group is now well established as there are a number of issues in the area that require a single coordination point. This is proving to be very successful during the Public Space Protection Order process and has also taken on the role of analysing the Clear Hold Build activity.
- The Youth Justice Board for Conwy and Denbighshire have established an operational management partnership board to help work with young people at risk of exploitation and as a result get embroiled in criminality.

Priority 2 Project /activity update- Good

The Community Safety Partnership continued to support the multiagency attendance at the Integrated Offender Management programme and assisting with the actions of that programme. We will continue to assist with the programme, which will also address Organised Crime Groups (OCG's) and County Lines work.

We are still using targeted work with young offenders as the numbers are relatively small and we think we have had an impact in diverting the offending behaviour when compared to the previous year. The strengthening of the wider youth justice partnership management board and the establishment of the operational management board will enable all partners to play their part in the prevention of exploitation and criminality involving young people.

Additional projects and focus on diversionary activities have been in focus for youth services and youth justice services in Denbighshire. Additional funding has been approved for the partnership from the police and crime commissioner aimed at preventing serious violence and young people in Denbighshire and Conwy which supports the stamen above.

The issuing of Yellow Cards and the management of repeat young offenders have been used in trying to managing the young people without criminalising them which means that early intervention is in place even after the first yellow card. The yellow cards are monitored by a police officer working within the youth justice service team.

2.3. Priority 3- Local Priorities

Priority 3 performance status- Good

Overall performance of the priority is **Good**

In 2023-2024 we continue to see a reduction in the number of reports of antisocial behaviour and repeat victims of ASB reported to the police. The work of the partnership was as follows:

- Identifying repeat locations so that there can be a targeted approach by police teams
- Promoting the use of community resolutions to resolve repeat incidents of antisocial behaviour
- Using, when appropriate community protection notices / Public Space Protection Orders. In Rhyl the PSPO was renewed to help manage ASB
- Control of licenced premises and enforcement and monitoring of taxi licences undertaken by the licensing department in Denbighshire.

- We have established local multiagency groups in Denbighshire to manage repeat incidents of Antisocial Behaviour as and when required.
- Sharing information about online fraud utilising National campaigns especially given the reliance on online platforms for everything.
- Community Tension Monitoring this included hate crime monitoring with the assistance of the Regional cohesion team
- Monitoring of protests and reported race hate crimes
- Regionally applying for additional third sector funding for additional domestic abuse services locally specifically family accommodation.

Priority 3 Project/activity update- Good

We have continued to promote awareness campaigns from the Welsh Government and Home Office internally and externally on domestic abuse, training and early intervention. This work complimented the work of the Regional Vulnerabilities Board and the regional domestic abuse team.

New projects approved by the Police and crime commissioner aimed at domestic abuse and serious violence prevention providing appropriate information to young people about what is a safe relationship and warning of the perils of the internet and sharing images.

We will continue to support the Joint Denbighshire/Conwy monthly Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) tasking meeting which monitors repeat incidents of ASB and provides a multi-agency response to issues raised as well as taking part in restorative justice conferences and promoting community resolutions and mediation when accepted.

We participated in raising awareness of Domestic Abuse, Modern Slavery and County Lines locally, the direction for this work comes from the Regional Vulnerability and Exploitation board and the operational subgroups.

Additional police activity was carried out in the area of the Night Time economy in Denbighshire specifically looking at violence against women and girls and increasing safety. Increased investment in CCTV and software from the safer streets fund and the shared prosperity fund will help with this piece of worked aimed at reducing violence in the night time economy and support our work on the priorities identified in the Serious Violence Strategy.

2023-2024 saw a continued increase of referrals to the specialist domestic violence sector, as victims and survivors found the confidence to seek support. Local and regional services still see increases across the board and waiting list are still high for some specialist and therapeutic services.

However, we have maintained the additional resource in North Wales, not just from Welsh Government, but funders such as the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office.

3. Crime Statistics from April - March 2023

3.1. The tables below highlight the year-to-date (YTD) volumes of each crime category for the fiscal years 2022/23 and 2023/24. Also included on the chart is the current YTD change in volumes for 2023/24 in comparison to 2022/23:

3.2 Conwy statistics table included in this report as Denbighshire Scrutiny requested the comparison data some years ago.

3.3.1 In **12** of the **13** crime and incident categories in 2023/24 recorded the lowest YTD volumes in Denbighshire in comparison to the previous year. In 2023/24, only *Theft & Handling* volumes were higher than the previous year.

Community Safety General Crime statistics (Denbighshire) - Statistics shown from

April 2022- Year end April 2024

Colour coding has been used to show which year has recorded the highest Year to Date (YTD) volume (Red = Highest, Green =Lowest, Amber= recent reduction)

Denbighshire

Denbighshire - Crime & Incident Data: Q4 2023/24	Fiscal Year (YTD)		Change (YTD)
	2022/23	2023/24	
All Victim Based Crime	9,958	8,612	-13.5%
Violence with injury (VAP)	1,332	1,313	-1.4%
Violence without injury (VAP)	2,173	1,961	-9.8%
Stalking & Harassment	1,712	1,433	-16.3%
Sexual offences	511	422	-17.4%
Burglary Residential	230	195	-15.2%
Burglary - Business and Community	95	90	-5.3%
Robbery	36	31	-13.9%
Vehicle Crime	222	177	-20.3%
Theft and Handling	1,522	1,583	4.0%
Criminal Damage & Arson	1,078	913	-15.3%
Domestic Crime	2,360	2,157	-8.6%
Anti-Social Behaviour	2,517	2,245	-10.8%

Conwy Statistics for comparison

Conwy - Crime & Incident Data: Quarter 4 23-24	Fiscal Year (YTD)		Change (YTD)
	2021/22	2022/23	
All Victim Based Crime	10,861	10,228	-5.8%
Violence with injury (VAP)	1,363	1,408	3.3%
Violence without injury (VAP)	2,343	2,241	-4.4%
Stalking & Harassment	2,075	1,804	-13.1%
Sexual offences	480	506	5.4%
Burglary Residential	239	287	20.1%
Burglary - Business and Community	119	137	15.1%
Robbery	30	22	-26.7%
Vehicle Crime	232	148	-36.2%
Theft and Handling	1,289	1,520	17.9%
Criminal Damage & Arson	1,358	1,277	-6.0%
Domestic Crime	2,666	2,560	-4.0%
Anti-Social Behaviour	3,369	3,093	-8.2%

In 8 of the 13 crime and incident categories, 2022/23 saw decreases in volumes in Conwy. Increases were seen in the remaining 5 categories.

3.3.2 Full Denbighshire Breakdown of the statistics

Violence Offences

Violence against the person (VAP) offences decreased in Denbighshire we compared to 2022/23 (See *category split below*).

Violence without Injury offences fell quite significantly in terms of volumes. **-9.8% 212 fewer crimes recorded**

Violence with Injury offences decreased marginally in Denbighshire- **-1.4% 19 fewer crimes recorded**

Stalking & Harassment

Denbighshire saw decreases of 16.3% in the volumes of Stalking & Harassment offences in 2023/24 in comparison to 2022/23. **-16.3% 279 fewer crimes recorded**

Sexual Offences

Sexual Offences decreased in Denbighshire when compared to last year. There can be significant fluctuations in reported offences from week to week, partly due to reporting of historic offences. **-17.4% 89 fewer crime recorded**

Acquisitive Crime

Acquisitive crime includes the categories ***Burglary Residential, Burglary Business & Community, Robbery, Vehicle Crime and Theft & Handling.***

Burglary Residential offence volumes fell in Denbighshire in 2023/24 in comparison to last year. Burglary **-15.2% 35 fewer crimes recorded**

Business and Community offences have also fallen in Denbighshire. **-5.3% 5 fewer crimes recorded**

Robbery volumes, although small, decreased in Denbighshire 2023/24 compared to last year, **-3.9% 5 fewer crimes recorded**

Vehicle crime has decreased in Denbighshire **-20.3% 45 fewer crimes recorded**

Unfortunately, we are still seeing increases in the volumes of Theft & Handling. This category contains Shoplifting, where the bulk of the increases are coming from. Retail Crime is now a priority and a significant amount of work is being done to address the ongoing issues. **+4% an increase of 61 crimes recorded**

Criminal Damage & Arson

Criminal damage and Arson offences in Denbighshire decreased significantly in 2023/24 in comparison to the same period last year. **-15.3% 165 fewer crimes recorded**

Domestic Crime

There have been decreases in the volume of domestic crimes in Denbighshire in 2023/24 in comparison to the previous year. Large reductions in terms of the volumes of occurrences. **-8.6% 203 fewer crimes recorded**

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Denbighshire saw decreases in ASB volumes in 2023/24 in comparison to 2022/23. Repeat victims and suspects of ASB along with repeat locations of where ASB is occurring are referred for review to monthly multi-agency tasking groups. -**10.8% 272 fewer crimes record**

The above ASB statistics are North Wales Police recorded ASB crimes only and don't include all of the statutory work done in various departments within Denbighshire on ASB. We are attempting to gather information internally and have made a request via the Internal Senior Community safety and safeguarding group in Denbighshire.

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Appendix 2

Community Safety Partnership work ongoing in Denbighshire 2024-2025

Summary

2.1 We will develop and monitor the serious violence projects we have received funding from the Police and crime commissioner for. The projects approved in June and are as follows;

- The first project is a Joint Youth Justice Service Project (Denbighshire and Conwy) is The creation of a Denbighshire and Conwy Targeted youth worker post in partnership with the Youth Service to work with children and young people who are open to Denbighshire and Conwy Youth Justice Service and whom are at an increased risk of involvement in County lines Child Criminal Exploitation /Child sexual exploitation, Serious violence and knife Crime. This role will allow for a bespoke package of intervention to be provided to support engagement and to deliver services to the most hard to reach children and young people through a child first and trauma informed approach. This approach will serve to support engagement and to enable the delivery of a responsive, timely and bespoke package of support which in turn will reduce risks for the young people and the wider community. This projects covers three of the four identified serious violence strategy priorities areas around the prevention of violence and young people.
- The second project is an educational campaign, raising awareness of the widespread prevalence of sexual violence in society, and most importantly, how we can begin to change attitudes and behaviours particularly towards Women and girls who make up the large proportion of the population affected by these crimes.
- The Third sector organisation Rape and Sexual Abuse support centre have Developed a tried and tested project called '**Don't Steal My Future**' the programme is Approximately 2-3 hours long, and has been designed to educate young people on the reality of sexual violence, particularly against women and girls, Although the training addresses sexual violence against all. It is the only Program being delivered of this type which is offender focused and addresses Perpetrator behaviour and the impact of offending on the offender and their Family. Delivery of Don't Steal my future programme to schools and colleges in Denbighshire and Conwy, and will aim to inform pupils in year 6. This funding will complement the current programme, referral pathways, resources and additional bespoke training will be delivered to staff on sexual violence awareness and how facilitate disclosures

- 2.2 We will continue with our problem solving approach to antisocial behaviour. We will also work with North Wales Police as they have been allocated Home Office funding to help prevent ASB in communities and target hotspot areas in our communities.
- 2.3 ASB has been a focus over the last 12 months and will continue to be so. We are working collectively to identify those who are continuously causing issue in our communities.
- 2.4 We will continue to support the Clear Hold Build initiative in West Rhyl – Clear is now fully underway and also part of hold. Community input and support will be required for the build element. We are currently in the process of mapping what services and community groups exist with a view to getting support for this phase.
- 2.5 We will continue to promote the ‘We don’t buy crime’ initiative at every opportunity having now seen the reductions in the first quarter of this year in Theft and handling we hope would be achieved by working in partnership.
- As a reminder ‘We Don’t Buy Crime’ is an initiative partnering with communities and businesses to minimise crime specifically where we have seen our increases in Denbighshire. Focussing on;
 - Burglary
 - Robbery
 - Theft and handling
 - Vehicle crime

These are crimes where the offender profits from the crime. They’re collectively known as ‘acquisitive crime’



Appendix 3

Community Safety Partnership - Further information on funding.

1. Financial Sources of the Partnership

- 1.1. The Partnership receives no direct grant funding to manage/ allocate. The funding from the Home office and Welsh Government is all given directly to the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to commission crime and disorder services/and projects across North Wales.
- 1.2. We are able to access some of the funding allocated to the commissioner from the Home Office Safer Streets fund and Serious Violence fund for local projects by working with the office of the crime commissioner on local bids. We have just received some funding for serious violence projects via the commissioner. The bids we submitted were approved in June 2024
- 1.3. Regional Domestic Abuse funding from the Welsh Government and Ministry of Justice is also managed by the Office of the Crime Commissioner.

2. Community Safety Team and funding sources

- 2.1. Community Safety Manager- working across Denbighshire and Conwy. Half of the costs each funded by Denbighshire and Conwy via Local Authority revenue funding. Joint manager post created July 2008
- 2.2. 1/3 of a partnership statistical crime analyst (based within North Wales Police) – funded by revenue funding in both Local authorities- regional agreement began 2008 and is reviewed every three years by the Safer North Wales Partnership Board.
- 2.3. North Wales Substance Misuse Coordinator- based with the Community Safety Team fully Grant funded by The Area Planning Board substance misuse funding from the Welsh Government- Post in place since 2006 post classed as permanent.

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Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	12 September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Elen Heaton / Nicola Stubbins
Head of Service	Nicola Stubbins, Corporate Director
Report author	Gethin Morgan, Head of Regional Collaboration
Title	North Wales Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2023/24

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report is the Annual Report of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board for 2023/24 (Appendix 1). It is a requirement within the Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 that each Regional Partnership Board prepares, publishes and submits its annual report to Welsh Government.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. This report is to provide information to partners with regard to the North Wales Regional Partnership Board and its activities during 2023/24.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken into account the work that is required to be undertaken by the Regional Partnership Board.
- 3.2. That the Committee provides observations on the work and progress in 2023/24 on the work areas that are being taken forward through the North Wales Regional Partnership Board.

4. Report details

- 4.1. The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 requires that each Regional Partnership Board produces and publishes an annual report on its work and submits this to Welsh Government.
- 4.2. In March 2018 the Welsh Government issued Guidance for the completion of the Regional Partnership Board Annual reports and Boards were to use this guidance for the completion of its report. The attached report contains all the information which was required to be included within that Guidance. The North Wales Regional Partnership Board report is written in a format that captures all information required. The report also includes views of a number of members of the Board.
- 4.3. The Regional Partnership Board is the Board which has been set up to meet the requirements of Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. The Act requires that local authorities make arrangements to promote co-operation with their relevant partners and others, in relation to adults with needs for care and support, carers and children. It places a duty on relevant partners to co-operate with, and provide information to, the local authorities for the purposes of their social services functions.
- 4.4. Part 9 of the Act also provides for partnership arrangements between local authorities and Local Health Boards for the discharge of their functions. The Act also provides Welsh Government Ministers with regulation making powers in relation to formal partnership arrangements, resources for partnership arrangements (including pooled funds) and partnership boards.
- 4.5. The purpose of Part 9 of the Act is to improve outcomes and well-being of people, as well as improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. The key aims of co-operation, partnership and integration can therefore be described as:
 1. To improve care and support, ensuring people have more say and control
 2. To improve outcomes and health and wellbeing
 3. Provide co-ordinated, person centred care and support
 4. Make more effective use of resources, skills and expertise.

- 4.6. The purpose of the Annual Report is to set out the progress that Regional Partnership Boards have made and reflect on how boards are achieving the principles of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.

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

- 5.1. Working in partnership across health and social care services will help support a healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire and also ensure a seamless service for individuals that require care and support.

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

- 6.1. The 6 Local Authorities and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) in North Wales pool funding to support regional working across the region, this also funds the Regional Collaboration Team and there is a formal partnership agreement to underpin this.
- 6.2. Through the Regional Partnership Boards, Welsh Government is channelling grant funding streams such as the Regional Integration Fund for Health and Social Care and the Housing with Care and Integrating and Rebalancing capital funds. Where it is possible to charge regional partnership activity to these grants this is being actioned.

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

- 7.1. An overall Well-being Impact Assessment has not been completed for the Annual Report but Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) will have been completed for the individual elements contained within.

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

- 8.1. Members will be aware of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 and will have received information about Part 9 of the Act and the development of Regional Partnership Boards. There has been no formal consultation, other than with members of the Regional Partnership Board which includes a wide range of membership and includes Lead Members, citizens and carers.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. There is no direct financial impact to this report.

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

10.1. There is a risk ensuring compliance with the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 and with the Guidance on regional partnership board annual reports issued in March 2018 in producing the annual report. The main risk is that the North Wales Regional Partnership Board is able to progress the various requirements as required in the Part 9 Guidance and that the partnership develops to enable further partnership working and integration of services in the future.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014, Part 9

11.2. Scrutiny's powers in relation to this matter are set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7 of the Council's Constitution



BWRDD PARTNERIAETH RHANBARTHOL
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

North Wales Regional Partnership Board

Annual report

2023 - 2024



This report has been produced to meet the requirements set out by the Welsh Government in the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014

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1. Foreword by the chair of North Wales Regional Partnership Board (NWRPB)

Cllr Dilwyn Morgan,
Chair NWRPB

Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing,
Cyngor Gwynedd



I am delighted to present the 2023-24 Annual Report which is my first as the current Chair of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board. Together, we continue to work together to improve our service and enable people in North Wales live the best lives they can.

This report highlights just some of the work that the Regional Partnership Board has delivered to improve the lives of people living in North Wales. I would like to thank everyone involved in our work for their commitment to working together to deliver seamless services that focus on the needs of local communities.

There is so much for the Board and all its members to be proud of this year and sometimes we can lose sight of the good that has been done. This report is therefore a good reminder to us all of what we achieved together during the last 12 months.

It does continue to be challenging for the health and social care sector with no indication that there will be any significant change as we go into the 2024/25. It is even more imperative that we continue to work together to address these issues and to build on the excellent work that has already been achieved.

In addition to our Annual Report, further information can be found by visiting our website <https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/regional-partnership-board/>

One of my key priorities as Chair is striving to raise awareness of the work of the Board by hearing and sharing stories in health and social care directly to the people of North Wales. I know only too well that stories are moving and powerful, but I believe it is important to go beyond being emotionally moved, to moving into action through learning and development. This I believe is best achieved through collective talking and thinking together and by ensuring that our work is known by the people of North Wales who, with far greater input into service co-design will eventually enable us to achieve the outcomes that matter to them.






Finally, on behalf of my RPB colleagues, I would like to thank everyone who has supported the RPB's work over the last year. Together we can deliver outcomes that far outweigh what we can do alone.

Best wishes,
Cllr Dilwyn Morgan.

2. Highlights and achievements within the year

The North Wales Regional Partnership Board (NWRPB) published their Regional Area Plan in April 2023. This set out how partners worked together during the year to deliver health and social care services and respond to the findings of the North Wales Population Needs Assessment and Market Stability Report. The board also published an update to the Market Stability Report.

The plan focused on how the Regional Partnership Board delivers priorities for integrated working between health and social care on a regional basis, for the population groups:

-  Children and young people with complex needs
-  Older people including people with dementia
-  People with learning disabilities and neurodevelopmental conditions
-  Unpaid carers
-  People with emotional and mental health wellbeing needs

Progress against the plan was shared throughout the year in RPB meetings and a revised plan is tabled under point 8 of this report.

Regional Integration Fund

The Health and Social Care Regional Integration Fund (the RIF) is a five-year fund (April 2022 to March 2027) to support integration and partnership working for the priority population groups identified above.

The NWRPB has led on the development and implementation of the RIF.

The 2023/24 RIF programme comprises 35 schemes across the 6 national Models of Care.

The total investment into schemes and services (excluding infrastructure and programme management costs) for the year is £57,169,751

This is made up of £29,705,054 Welsh Government funding and £27,464,697 of partner core funding.









£5,413,163 is invested in schemes which directly support unpaid carers. £5,671,244 is invested in social value schemes.

All schemes report against a set of All Wales performance indicators (Appendix 2)

North Wales Together: Seamless services for people with learning disabilities

North Wales Together is a project funded through the RIF, to support people and organisations to make sure that people with learning disabilities are able to live a great life. The team are working with many different people and organisations to find out what is working well, and how we can support changes where they are needed.

Progress during 2023/24 includes:

-  development of a Regional Supported Employment strategy and, in central area, piloting a model that supports people with learning disabilities to access paid employment. This model will be rolled out across the region in 24/25;
-  1 to 1, hub support and accessible training designed to raise awareness of technology for those with a learning disabilities and the workforce who support them;
-  working with colleagues in Health and Social care on an integrated Positive Behaviour Support implementation plan;
-  funding a project management post within the BCUHB Mental Health and Learning Disability division to take forward the redesign of existing residential nursing services to enable care closer to home for people with complex needs. Accommodation developed East and West of the region with placements coming on stream 24/25;
-  commissioning of activities for Adults, Children with learning disabilities and their families;
-  development of a Direct Payment toolkit and promotion of Direct Payments
-  commissioning of a third sector based Information Advice and Assistance service for young people and their families experienceing transition to adult services.
-  Commissioning and joint funding a peer led health checks and screening project.

Children's RPB

Being one of the priority population groupings, a Childrens sub-group was formed in January 2022 with the intention to review and revise the associated governance structure adopted to develop and implement workstreams to meet the needs of Children and Young People with complex needs across the region.


A revised governance structure was agreed during the year and the newly named Childrens Regional Partnership Board (CRPB) was implemented in January 2024. The structure includes a Childrens Regional Transformation Board, to give transparency on what programmes are delivering, avoid any duplication and working to the principles in the NYTH/NEST framework.

The governance review was a reflective phase for partners, allowing them to review their priorities as part of the right door implementation. As such, each sub-regional area, whilst having a common themes also now has a slightly different focus for their next stage in delivery. In all three areas there is a particular focus on providing support for those who are neuro-diverse (ND) and are either on the waiting list for a diagnosis or have a diagnosis.

The East area has agreed to focus on those children and young people who are transitioning between primary school and secondary.

Central have a focus on 0-7 years.

In the West, Gwynedd and Anglesey are working on different cohorts, prioritising ND too.

-  Anglesey's focus is early intervention and prevention and is rolling out Teulu Mon to deliver a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) approach based around the 5 secondary schools and primary schools in each catchment areas.

- 🌈 Gwynedd is focusing on complex cases and have established an MDT with a preventative ethos to support the children and young people with an aim to prevent them entering into care, where possible.

The different focus will enable the work to identify the challenges and opportunities faced by these cohorts and share good practice across the region.

In addition to the review, during the year coproduction and storytelling workshops were held and through a series of creative and participatory exercises a vibrant and rich period of discussion emanated where:

- It was established that guiding values and principles should underpin and inform all aspects of the work going forward.
- The boards mission was co-defined.
- dialogue learning methods were introduced to provide an engaging and practical way of putting stories into action.
- the priority areas for a 2-year work programme were reviewed and confirmed.

Regional Innovation Coordination Hub

The hubs' role is to coordinate health and social care research, innovation, and improvement activity in North Wales to support the work of the Regional Partnership Board and its partners.

Highlights for 2023-24 include the following -

- 🌈 Gathering evidence and bringing people together to find solutions to complex problems, including: a RITA User Network to talk about using reminiscence technology for people living with dementia; ways to use co-production and storytelling techniques to improve services and partnership working; and improving support for children and young people with neurodevelopmental conditions.
- 🌈 Improving access to evidence by providing insight into statistics and research for dozens of topics ranging from neurodiversity and dementia to AI and virtual wards.
- 🌈 Getting work underway for the Digital, Data and Technology Board under the themes of –
 - 🌈 getting the basics right
 - 🌈 innovation
 - 🌈 digital inclusion
 - 🌈 integrated health and care records.

This included mapping digital projects across the region.

- 🌈 Providing research support including case study hints and tips sessions and a consent and ethics framework for the Regional Integration Fund; designing a dashboard to measure regional progress against the Autism Code of Practice; and analysing hundreds of thoughtful responses to a Dementia Listening Campaign across six North Wales towns.

For more information, follow the hub on Twitter/X @_NW_RICH, sign up to our newsletter and visit the RIC hub webpages.

Strategic Capital Plan & Development Fund

The NWRPB developed during the year a 10-year Strategic Capital Plan (SCP) which brings together –

-  Health
-  social care
-  housing
-  third sector
-  education
-  regeneration partners

to develop integrated service delivery facilities and integrated accommodation-based solutions for the future.

As part of the development of the SCP, the regional team developed a prioritisation tool accessible to partners to assist with the process, allowing partners to submit schemes each quarter to seek endorsement from the RPB.







Each project goes through a 5-stage process which includes scheme prioritisation, if endorsed will then progress through to business case and application development and project delivery if awarded funding.

The regions SCP was completed in July 2023, with 35 prioritised schemes receiving RPB endorsement with projects being developed across health and social care.

These prioritised schemes have a total value estimated at £440m with £303m anticipated to be required from WG funding.

In addition, a further £3m of funding was awarded during the year to support schemes at varying stages, from continuation of business case development to acquisition, refurbishments and construction of new facilities.

The projects awarded funding included –

-  The development of Integrated hub in Conwy west (progression to the next business case stage),
-  care closer to home development across the region
-  extra care refurbishment in Denbighshire
-  dementia centres across the region
-  supported living for people with learning disabilities in Conwy and Flintshire and
-  children's care homes across the region.

These schemes will assist people to live independently for longer, free up hospital beds and provide improved service provision across the North Wales region.

Radical thinking with the Regional Partnership Board

“To be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing”
Raymond Williams

The exploration of radical ideas which could help address future challenges facing health and social care was undertaken during the year. After binging TED talks, inspirational books, and articles it became clear that the best place to start was by bringing people together.

The workshop began with defining radical thinking – it’s about disruption, innovation, risk-taking, passion and impact. We talked about how being ‘radical’ should not be an end in itself as it can harm as well as benefit people. To mitigate, we came up with a set of guiding principles for how and where we could be purposefully radical for good. This includes **gathering stories** from those with lived experience to inform service design and delivery, **convening conversations** to connect all partners with a shared stake in collective challenges, exploring new ways to do more with available **finances and resources**, giving people **permission to act**, and **sharing responsibility** between members of the board.

Dementia Friendly Communities

The Regional North Wales Dementia Friendly Communities (DFC) recognition and accreditation scheme commenced on 1st January 2024 following the Alzheimer’s Society scheme ending on the 31 December 2023.

The 6 County Voluntary Councils, 6 Local Authorities and the Health Board are working together with support from the RPB Business Support Team and Regional Dementia Project Manager to deliver the North Wales Dementia Friendly Communities Scheme.

The Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC) are the lead County Voluntary Council partner due to their wealth of knowledge and experience. The DVSC are providing advice and support to partners and will be part of the accreditation assessment panel. Nevertheless, all 6 County Voluntary Councils (CVC) will provide advice and guidance for newly established DFCs including running consultation events, meetings, and support with how to set up a constitution and establishing DFC networks.

In addition, the Local Authority partners will also provide information and support to existing and newly established DFCs. As well as provide support for countywide DFC networks and will be part of the accreditation assessment panel.

The Health Board have agreed to be part of the accreditation assessment panel. The RPB Support team are providing project management and administrative support for the application and assessment documentation process and are also part of the accreditation assessment panels and regional DFC networks and forums.

The DFC initiative is on track to commence phase 2 in June 2024, which will further develop the North Wales scheme by identifying any gaps and barriers to preventing the new scheme from expanding. A consultation group will be set up, along with events will be held with people living with dementia to review the regional scheme’s progress and co-produce an enhanced scheme.

3. Role, purpose and membership of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board

Vision statement

Together improving the health and well-being of people and communities.

Guiding principles

The NWRPB agreed its guiding principles in November 2016 and these remain fit for purpose:

- Whole system change and reinvestment of resources to a preventative model that promotes good health and well-being and draws effectively on evidence of what works best
- Care is delivered in joined up ways centred around the needs, preferences and social assets of people (service users, carers and communities)
- People are enabled to use their confidence and skills to live independently, supported by a range of high quality community based options
- Embedded co-production in decision making so that citizens and their communities shape services
- We recognise the broad range of factors that influence health and well-being and the importance of the links to these areas (including education, housing, welfare, reduced homelessness, economic growth, regeneration, leisure and the environment).

Role of the NWRPB

Our Regional Partnership Board (RPB) includes representatives from Conwy County Borough Council, Cyngor Gwynedd, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council, Isle of Anglesey Council, Wrexham County Borough Council, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Welsh Ambulance Service Trust, housing, Third & Independent sectors, carer and service user representatives.

We work with our population, recognising its diversity, and colleagues from across our region to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone living in North Wales.

We share resources, skills and services to ensure people can access the right service, in the right place, at the right time so, you can do the things that matter most to you, at all times of life.

The NWRPB's Terms of Reference is reviewed annually however, the role of the Board remains the same and is to:

- Ensure that there is an agreed shared vision and a clear direction of travel for service development and integration of health, care and well-being
- Ensure that there are shared plans and strategies in place (supported by appropriate business cases) for delivering on the vision
- Ensure that the strategic plans are evaluated and reviewed against agreed and understood outcomes and performance indicators

- Lead a strategic approach to communicating and publicising the direction of travel and the progress made
- Ensure that the principles of the Board are upheld
- Maintain an effective overview of the resources allocated
- Report to the Regional Leadership Board on progress, key issues and exceptions, escalating any barriers to progress within the NWRPB for resolution
- Ensure that an annual report on progress is prepared and delivered as required by the Welsh Government.






The membership of the NWRPB (as at end of March 2024) is attached in Appendix 1.

The NWRPB's business and the business of the regional sub-groups is managed by the Head of Regional Collaboration and members of the North Wales Regional Collaboration Team.

4. Legal requirements and strategic direction

The requirements for the Regional Partnership Boards is set out in the Part 9 Statutory Guidance (Partnership Arrangements); this annual report also includes the specific elements required by Welsh Government to be included in its Annual report.

In line with the requirements of the Act, during 2023-24 the NWRPB continued to develop its approaches to integrated services for the following priority areas:

-  Older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia
-  People with learning disabilities
-  Carers, including young carers
-  Integrated Family Support Services
-  Children with complex needs due to disability or illness.

North Wales Area Plan

The Area Plan sets out the priority areas for integration of services between health and social care and this sets out the direction of travel for the Board. The Area Plan sets out how the region will address the priority areas identified in the Population Needs Assessment, this remains the golden thread to specific areas of work within the region. We add value when we bring partners together to address issues or deliver change which no one organisation can address alone.

Older People with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 includes a legal duty for Regional Partnership Boards to prioritise the integration of services in relation to older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia. Support for people living with dementia is a priority in the NWRPB Regional Plan.

The North Wales Dementia Strategy provides such direction. It sets out how we will deliver the Dementia Action Plan (DAP) through development of integrated dementia services. The strategy was developed jointly by the six North Wales Local Authorities and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and supported by Public Health Wales, Bangor University and dementia service users and carers as well as other partners.

There are 31 actions within the North Wales strategy.

Dementia Action Plan (DAP)

In 2018 Welsh Government introduced the All-Wales Dementia Action Plan (DAP) and North Wales receives just over £2.1m DAP funding to support integrated partnership working for people living with dementia. The DAP funding is recurrent, and ring fenced.

All Wales Dementia Care Pathway Standards (AWDCPS)

In 2020, Welsh Government introduced the All-Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards (AWDCPS) to support delivery of the Dementia Action Plan (DAP). The standards were developed in consultation with people living with dementia, third sector and voluntary organisations and health care professionals, to identify what people living with dementia believe will make a positive difference to dementia care.

There are 20 standards and Improvement Cymru lead on this work nationally.

Memory Support Pathway (MSP) Improvement

In 2021, Welsh Government recognised there were significant waiting times for memory clinics across Wales due to capacity and process issues and so Memory Assessment Service (MAS) funding was made available to improve the Memory Support Pathway. North Wales receives £678k funding. The pathway includes provision of pre-assessment support and advice, improved clinical assessment and diagnosis times and provision of post diagnosis advice and support. The vision of the pathway is equity and ease of access for all residents of North Wales. The funding is recurrent, and ring fenced.

Dementia Friendly Communities

In 2023 Alzheimer's Society announced that they were ending the UK wide Dementia Friendly Communities scheme in December 2023. The NWRPB worked to develop a regional recognition and accreditation scheme to ensure Dementia Friendly Communities (DFC) could continue in North Wales. The NWRPB scheme commenced in January 2024.

The regional dementia work is managed through effective partnership decision making and delivery via the regional operational and strategic groups. The work is led by the Regional Dementia Project Manager funded from DAP and the Regional MAS Improvement Manager funded from MAS.

North Wales Learning Disability Strategy

The foundation of the programme is the North Wales Learning Disability Strategy. The strategy is being implemented by the team through 6 workstreams: Integrated structures, Workforce development, Commissioning and procurement, Community and culture change, Assistive technology and Employment



<p>TREAT ME WELL</p>  <p>Everyone is an individual and should be treated with dignity and respect.</p> <p>"respecting me includes respecting my space, my things, my decisions and my relationships"</p> <p>"listen to me and take the time to get to know me!"</p> <p>"Be kind"</p> <p>TOP TIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate in an open, accurate and straightforward way • Don't use jargon • Protect and respect peoples confidential and personal information • Use humour appropriately • Check how people want to be addressed • Be on time and do what you say you will do 	<p>LET ME BE IN CHARGE OF MY OWN LIFE</p>  <p>Voice, choice, control and independence is at the heart of everything we do</p> <p>We embrace coproduction</p> <p>"I want to have choice about where I live and who I live with"</p> <p>"support me to do what I want to do and listen to me"</p> <p>"I want to feel important and be able to make my own decisions"</p> <p>TOP TIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower, encourage and enable people who need care and support to do things for themselves and to make their own decisions. • Support individuals to maximise their decision making and have control over their own lives. 	<p>HELP ME BE THE BEST I CAN BE</p>  <p>We deliver person centred care, putting the person at the heart of everything we do and helping them achieve their potential</p> <p>"learn from me and recognize what I am good at"</p> <p>"help me learn new things"</p> <p>"give me just enough support"</p> <p>TOP TIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to take positive risks, clearly explaining the consequences to others • Look at tackling new and emerging problems creatively. • Don't see mistakes as a bad thing, see them as an opportunity to learn and grow. • Be warm, kind, empathetic, reliable and compassionate in your actions 	<p>ALWAYS BE HONEST</p>  <p>We are always honest and transparent and not afraid to say when something goes wrong</p> <p>We are self-aware and regularly reflect on the work we do, how we do it and the impact we have on those being supported.</p> <p>"I want people to just be honest with me and tell the truth"</p> <p>TOP TIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We learn from others and share knowledge and best practice • Seek, reflect on and learn from feedback from colleagues, individuals and families • Have the courage to speak up and challenge others when you have concerns about the quality or safety of care being provided
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NORTH WALES TOGETHER ACCOMMODATION WORKSTREAM

Positive Behaviour Support is about working in partnership with people, treating them with dignity and respect and enabling them have a better life. We give the right support at the right time so people can thrive to their potential.

Positive Behaviour Support: Not only has C's confidence grown, her quality of life has improved and there has been a significant decrease in behaviours of concerns. Within this growth she is now participating in lots of activities

Seeing the people you work with become so much happier, having positive relationships, becoming part of society and having fulfilled lives is an incredible feeling and experience.

Commissioning

The North Wales Regional Commissioning Board supports and underpins the development and practice of strategic commissioning across Social Services and Health in both Adults and Children's services in North Wales identifying best practice and providing a consistent strategic approach across the region.

Regional Care Fees

Regional Care Fees is an ongoing piece of work for the Regional Commissioning Board, and although there was a recommended regional fee signed off for 2023/24, local amendments were inevitable, but it was vital that the group were able to report back to the Regional Commissioning Board as to the business reasons why some LA's were deviating to be able to gain an accurate picture of how much it costs for the provision of care in a care home in North Wales.

North Wales local authorities and BCUHB are all under significant financial pressures. Moving forward, discussions have been ongoing about future fee setting and to understand the appetite for a regional fee methodology. This has been positive, and discussions are in their early stages of the methodology used and the support for providers in gaining a full and comprehensive 'let's agree' exercise.

North Wales Domiciliary Care Agreement

The current NWDCA was established in 2019 and runs to 31st March 2025.

For the renewal of the NWDCA (effective from 1st April 2025) the scope of services being tendered is now being extended to include standard and complex / enhanced domiciliary care for children and young people, which the current agreement does not have in scope.

These services will be tendered for through an 'Open' tendering Invitation to Tender (ITT) in the summer of 2024.

Market Stability Report

Our first Market Stability Report was published in 2022, which included information about the availability of care and support across the region.

The MSR Code of Practice requires local authorities to work with RPB partners to keep the report under regular review at least annually and to publish any significant changes as a revised report or an addendum.

The Regional Partnership Board agreed to the light-touch review in July 2023, and since this time steering group members have reviewed their relevant sections and highlighted any major changes since the first report was published.

This was published in December 2023

<https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/commissioning/msr2022/>

Workforce

The Regional Workforce Board leads on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board on any strategic matters related to workforce planning, transformation and sustainability.

As an integrated Board, the Regional Workforce Board will take forward joint planning and development of the social care and community health workforce, maintaining strategic oversight on the delivery of the regional workforce strategy.

The regional workforce strategy has recently been reviewed and refreshed. The three main priorities were agreed from a stakeholder workshop held in June 2023 where new partners were invited to attend, and provided an opportunity to discuss what partners thought the priorities should be for the region moving forward. The work on the strategy has been undertaken within the context of the national strategy developed jointly between Social Care Wales (SCW) and Health Education in Wales (HEIW).

The [North Wales Workforce Board Annual Report 2023/24](#), This report includes the achievements which the board has had in 2023/24 and also detail the strategy for 2023-25.

North Wales Social Value Steering Group






The North Wales Social Value Forum (NWSVF) has grown since it was formed in 2016, with new members joining the group. Membership consists of partners from BCUHB, local authorities and third/voluntary sector. This group will continue their support to the delivery of the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

The NWSVF will also continue to work with the North Wales Social Value Network to promote the development of not for private profit organisations (including social enterprises, co-operative organisations, co-operative arrangements, user led service and third sector) to provide care and support and support for carers, and preventative services.

The group will continue to promote collaboration, partnership and networking opportunities across sectors with an aim of maximising social value and co-production across all providers delivering health, social care and /or wellbeing services in North Wales.

With the development of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 the group identified an opportunity to explore the implementation and delivery of this act in North Wales. Therefore, in 2024 (working in partnership with the North Wales Insight and Research Partnership) the group is developing a Social Value conference. The purpose of this event is to bring together providers, Procurement and Commissioning Officers and Managers from across North Wales to ensure a shared understanding about how best to maximise the well-being of citizens and communities through commissioning activities. The focus is on delivering “what matters” to the people of North Wales and how we can address the social, environmental, economic and cultural needs through procurement and commissioning activities.

Over the next 3 years, the group will focus on:

-  A learning and development programme
-  Annual Social Value Conference
-  Working with the North Wales Social Value Network.
-  Measuring the impact of social value and how it is being delivered in North Wales.
-  Working with the Voluntary Services Councils (the Forum will focus on Third Sector projects particularly utilising RIF funding to maximum benefit.)

North Wales Carers Groups

The North Wales Carers & Young Carers Operational Group (NW(Y)COG) has continued to deliver on the North Wales Regional Carers Strategy. It has been agreed by the group that the action plan which supports the Welsh Government's Strategy for Unpaid Carers and the national priorities will be reviewed and refreshed for the year ahead by the operational group.

Our GP & Hospital Facilitation Service, funded through Welsh Government's Annual Carers Grant, have continued to support unpaid carers in primary and secondary care. There has been a particular focus on the Hospital Carers Facilitators with support provided during hospital discharge. This focus will continue for the next year, with the Welsh Government's Annual Carers Grant stipulating that the focus should be on the supporting unpaid carers when the person they care for is admitted to or discharged from hospital. This change is intended to aid timely discharge of patients from hospital by supporting and involving their unpaid carers in the process.

Working in partnership with Carers Trust short breaks for unpaid carers continue to be delivered utilising the Amser funding across the region. There has been a provision of traditional services along with more flexible and creative breaks tailored to the carer in order to provide a meaningful break, relief from their caring responsibilities and improve or maintain their wellbeing, helping the carer sustain their caring role. Available funding is used to try and ensure that those who most need a break are able to do so.

North Wales Young Carers

The identified number of young carers in North Wales has grown in the last few years due to an increase in referrals through successful awareness raising and positive relationships with partner agencies. As of November 2021, when the data was collected for the Population Needs Assessment, 1,752 young carers were being supported across North Wales.

The young carers app AIDI piloted by Ynys Môn and Gwynedd which includes a digital identity card as well as a communication feature "Ping My School" if they are experiencing any problems and need support with their schoolwork due to their caring role at home goes from strength to strength. AIDI is accessible to all young carers across the two counties, and it featured in a newsletter that goes out to 4,000 local businesses to raise awareness and provide an opportunity to access discounts for carers. WCD and NEWCIS are working on a North East Wales young leaders project focussing on the ID cards and getting the young people to lead on it so that they go out to local businesses and 'fly the flag'. A magazine went out in the last quarter of 2024 to all households so that every young carer will receive information.

Work is ongoing across the region to raise awareness in education settings. The latest census data shows 4,411 young carers in North Wales and this work aims to find 'hidden' young carers in addition to supporting known young carers. Where possible partners are working together to attend assemblies and link with schools across their areas to discuss what young carers are and raise awareness (these discussions are supported with a film and booklet), and a new workshop resource for key stage 2&3 has been trialled with the intention of also empowering teachers to be able to deliver these resources. Young carers were also able to experience a taste of University Life on a residential trip organised by Bangor University and the Reaching Wider team as well as attend open days which has opened up aspirations.

RPB Engagement

NWRPB continues to engage with people through different platforms e.g. social media; online; via Teams/Zoom etc. and face to face engagement work was undertaken in earnest during 2023/24. Local events were attended to promote the work of the RPB at Sioe Môn, Denbigh & Flint Show as well as engagement work on the all-Wales Dementia Listening Campaign at the 2023 Royal Welsh Show. Various Dementia Listening Campaign Events were held throughout the region.

Excellent working relationships have been forged allowing for engaging with seldom heard groups, minority ethnic groups and protected characteristic groups. Continual engagement with our people, partners, stakeholders is pivotal to the work of the RPB.

North Wales Social Value Steering Group

The North Wales Social Value Forum (NWSVF) has grown since it was formed in 2016, with new members joining the group. These new members consist of partners from BCUHB, local authorities and third/voluntary sector, however, now is a good time to re-look at the membership and the terms of reference for this group. This work will be undertaken in May at a face-to-face meeting. This group will continue their support to the delivery of the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

The NWSVF will continue to work with the North Wales Social Value Network to promote the development of not for private profit organisations (including social enterprises, co-operative organisations, co-operative arrangements, user led service and third sector) to provide care and support and support for carers, and preventative services.

The group will continue to promote collaboration, partnership, and networking opportunities across sectors with an aim of maximising social value and co-production across all providers delivering health, social care and /or wellbeing services in North Wales.

Mwy na Geiriau (More Than Just Words) North Wales Forum




Picture the scene, an old lady who has lived in a close-knit Welsh language community all her life suffers increasingly with dementia and is suddenly admitted to a hospital or a care home where the predominant language is English.

If she is unable to understand fully what is happening to her as her carers cannot speak her language – she is likely to become more frustrated which could impact on her clinical outcomes. When it comes to discussing our health and care needs, we aim to give the option of delivering these provisions increasingly through the medium of Welsh. That is why following the first five

years of Mwy na Geiriau of delivering the WG vision on providing health and care services through the medium of Welsh the need to offer more and faster is apparent.

The challenge of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050 calls for far-reaching changes.

But boundaries must be pushed and we're taking ambitious action to inspire and enable more people to learn and use Welsh. The Forum is currently building on existing foundations and moving onto the next stages in our language journey, identifying three strategic aims to achieve this vision:

-  Increasing the number of Welsh speakers.
-  Increasing the use of Welsh.
-  Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context.





The actions set out in the 'Active Offer' plan will assist the Health Board, Local Authorities, Third Sector and Private providers to deliver on these aims including embedding a cultural change, that supports an increase in the use of Welsh in health and social care services over the next five years. Together, all partners will create an infrastructure and approach to enable this as we strive to create a culture where Cymraeg belongs to us all; where there's a pride in working in a bilingual health and social care system that's centred on the individual, providing a pro-active Welsh language offer.

A task and finish group was established in the Autumn with membership from Local Authorities, Grwp Llandrillo Menai, BCUHB and the regional Team to discuss different ideas on how to utilise funding of £10K to promote MNG across the region.

Research, Innovation and Coordination Hub

The hub aims to coordinate health and social care research, innovation, and improvement activity to support the work of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board.

Highlights for 2023-24

-  Gathering evidence and bringing people together to find solutions to complex problems, including: a [RITA User Network](#) to talk about using reminiscence technology for people living with dementia; ways to use co-production and storytelling techniques to improve services and partnership working; and improving support for children and young people with neurodevelopmental conditions.
-  Improving access to evidence by providing insight into statistics and research for dozens of topics ranging from neurodiversity and dementia to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and virtual wards.
-  Getting work underway for the Digital, Data and Technology Board under the themes of getting the basics right, innovation, digital inclusion and integrated health and care records. This included identifying digital projects across the region and helped facilitate a successful SBRI bid for £200,000 to test a new, modernised home care delivery model in Torfaen, Gwynedd, and Denbighshire, underpinned by a purpose-built IT system.
-  Providing research support including case study hints and tips sessions and a consent and ethics framework for the Regional Integration Fund; designing a dashboard to measure regional progress against the Autism Code of Practice; and analysing hundreds of thoughtful responses to a Dementia Listening Campaign across six North Wales towns.

Working closely with the other regional hubs and national organisations, we shared, promoted, and developed new ideas, including as part of the North Wales Innovation Network. By the end of the year, we had increased our Twitter/X followers to 450 and now have over 200 subscribers to the RIC hub mailing list.

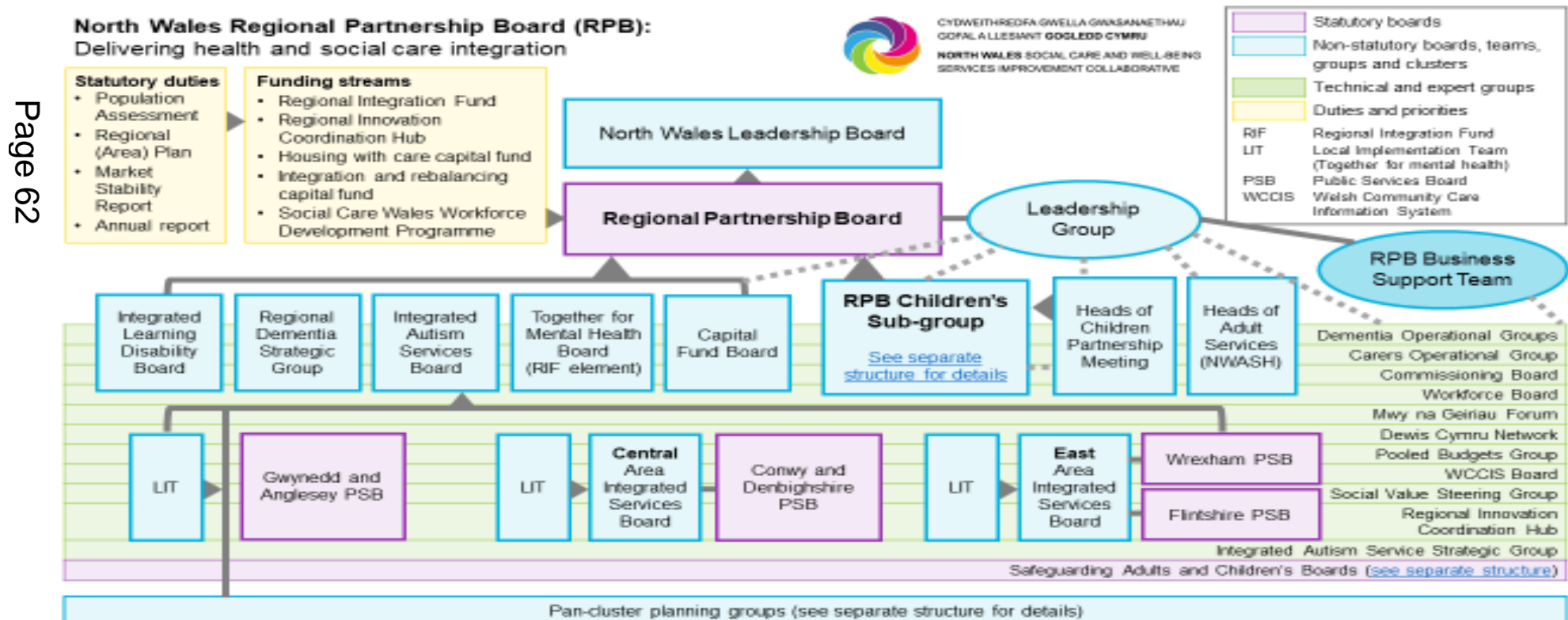
Please follow us on [Twitter/X](#) @_NW_RICH, [sign up to our newsletter](#) and visit the [RIC hub webpages](#) for more information.

5. Governance and partnership arrangements

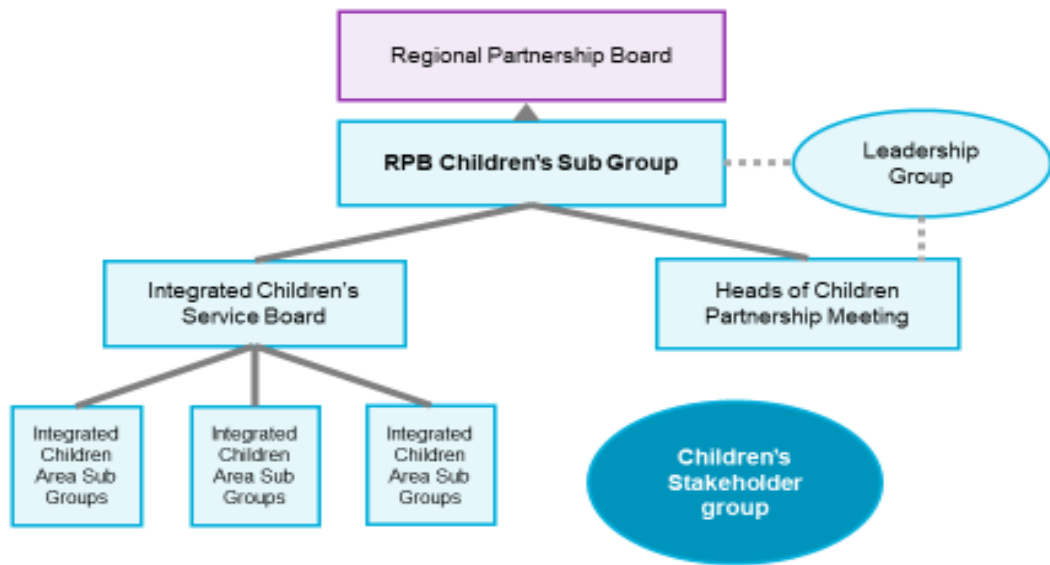
The NWRPB formally reports to the North Wales Leadership Board. The NWRPB's business and the business of the regional sub-groups is managed by the Head of Regional Collaboration and members of the Regional Collaboration Team.

In February 2024, a survey was shared with NWRPB members to gather feedback on governance and partnership arrangements. In response, it was suggested that the governance structure and priorities needed reviewing. Most participants said that the board works strategically and know and understand the board's priorities together with the direction of travel. This is an on-going piece of work that will be progressed throughout 2024/25.

Below is the Governance Structure for the NWRPB:



North Wales Regional Partnership Board (RPB):
Children's governance structure



6. Integrated partnerships and contributing to improved outcomes

Partnership outcomes for the 6 models of care

In all 146,073 people accessed one of the services within the programme at least once during the year. 26,571 people accessed one of the services who had not previously had access and 4,055 people attended at least one of 405 training sessions provided.

29,026 people received Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) in the year, with 10,921 receiving early help & support, both of which aim to reduce impact on local services. 4,299 people received Intensive Support and 5,263 Specialist Intervention from services supported by RIF funding.

Forward Thinking Forward Planning - instilled her with positivity and confidence regarding her future.

DEMENTIA COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Dementia Support Worker (DSW) has been really helpful at the most stressful times for myself. She has helped signpost me to groups for my mum and other useful resources to help support us.

DSW - It is vital to have a DSW who has understanding and training in dementia. The DSW recognised my mum's needs and supported her with this.

Notable improvement in overall well-being and communication skills. The Positive Behaviour Support programme has positively influenced daily routines, leading to increased satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment.

Community Based Care – Prevention and Co-ordination Model of Care

This Model of Care has £9,309,043 investment which is 17% of the programme total.

There are 13 regional (tier 2) programmes supported by RIF funding within the CBC PC model of care. There are 60 local (tier 3) projects within the 13 regional programmes.

Community Based Care – Complex Care closer to home Model of Care

This model of care has £23,975,899 investment which is 42% of the programme total.

There are 6 regional (tier 2) programmes supported by RIF funding within the CBC CC model of care. There are 20 local (tier 3) projects within the 6 regional programmes.

COMPLEX AND INTENSE SUPPORT SERVICES

A positive response to the personalised Positive Behaviour Support strategies. Increased engagement in meaningful activities and reduced incidents of concerning behaviour indicate a favourable reaction to the project.

Increased participation in social activities and a reduction in self-harming behaviours demonstrate the positive impact of the project. Improved quality of life is evident through observable changes in behaviour and emotional well-being.

Home from Hospital Model of Care

The Home from Hospital Model of Care has £4,635,868 investment which is 8% of the programme total. There are 3 regional (tier 2) programmes supported by RIF funding within the HfH model of care. There are 10 local (tier 3) projects within the 3 regional programmes.

D2RA THERAPIES

Timely discharge – appropriate short term admission and length of stay under two days.

Fine service, pleased with what was done, provision of the temporary equipment for around the toilet has really helped, made a difference- and remained in place- as only one drop rail has been able to be fitted due to the structure of the property. The follow up services starting afterwards

It really helped having access to physiotherapy and occupational therapy early on in the emergency department.

Supporting Families & Children to stay together safely Model of Care

This Model of Care has £15,740,956 investment which is 28% of the programme total.

There are 6 regional (tier 2) programmes supported by RIF funding within the SF&C model of care.

There are 39 local (tier 3) projects within the 6 regional programmes.

REPATRIATION & PREVENTION

This type of session is just what we needed. I feel like we can all share our experiences of 'E' and draw strength from one another. We feel very supported .

It was good that someone outside of our family could help us focus on what was important. I was impressed by how you were able to tune in to all of our needs during the session.

I like it when you come to see me, I can tell you the truth and know that it's okay...I look forward to your visits.

Accommodation based Solutions Model of Care

The Accommodation Based Solution Model of Care has £1,100,977 investment which is 2% of the programme total.

There are 3 regional (tier 2) programmes supported by RIF funding within the ABS model of care.

There are 5 local (tier 3) projects within the 3 regional programmes.

We started by taking ST for visits to his home to assess if he had the life skills needed to take care of himself. We worked on skills he needed refreshing on - cooking /cleaning / washing etc.

PROGRESSION & ENABLEMENT TEAM

After our input ST was able to leave the care home and return home.
We called in every day for 3 weeks making sure that ST was managing.
He now lives totally independent with and saving the cost of care home fees.

ST is so happy to be in his own home and not dependent on other people to supply meals. He can now watch his own TV in his own chair. He is also looking forward to becoming stronger in the hope of going out places.

Just wanted to say thank you for all the work you have done since joining us in Hergest regularly. What you do, makes a huge difference to our discharge planning and the wellbeing of our patients in the community.

COMMUNITY WELLBING OFFICERS

The most significant impact it has for me, is my self-esteem has improved and my confidence.

I found it really interesting learning about things I didn't realise was happening to people (with LD) years ago, the way people were treated and learning about what different people are doing now to make sure these things don't happen again.

Promoting Good Emotional Health and Well-Being Model of Care

This Model of Care has £2,539,416 investment which is 4% of the programme total.

There are 4 regional (tier 2) programmes supported by RIF funding within the EH&WB model of care.

There are 11 local (tier 3) projects within the 4 regional programmes.

7. Statutory provisions

The partners of the NWRPB have entered into an 'Integration Agreement which is a legal agreement which enshrines their commitment to working together on key identified projects that lend themselves to integrated services and pooled budget arrangements.

The following statutory provisions are permitted to be used to underpin the NWRPB's work:

Part 9 of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 – in particular sections 166 and 167 and associated regulations (the Partnership Arrangements (Wales) Regulations 2015).

Other legal powers relied upon in support of regional partnerships entered into include:

The National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 – in particular sections 1, 2, 10, 33 and 38, 82.

S9 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 powers in respect of collaboration with other local authorities.

Local Government Act 1972 - in particular s2 which gives local authorities powers to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve any one or more of the following benefits: the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area and section 113 which enables one local authority to place its staff at the disposal of another or health authority or Health Board.

S111 Local Government Act 1982 provides for a local authority to have the power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of their functions.

8. Board priorities moving forward:

North Wales Regional Plan 2023 to 2028

Annual Delivery Plan April 2024/25

Each workstream considers the cross-cutting themes: Welsh language - 'Active Offer', equality and human rights, socio-economic disadvantage, housing, homelessness, loneliness and isolation, social value, co-production and citizen voice, prevention, safeguarding, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and Covid-19.

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Regional Integration Fund	Delivery of the RIF Programme of Schemes for each Model of Care. RIF webpages	On-going	Q4 performance draft report submitted 30 th April 2024 (updated 03/05/24)
Regional Integration Fund	To establish an outcomes framework which enables consistent reporting of performance measures across all projects and Models of Care so that difference made and distance travelled can be monitored.	On-going	All Wales Outcome Framework developed by RPB leads now agreed by WG. Regional performance outcomes reporting framework developed which will support the All-Wales framework. Full year performance data included in 2023/24 Q4 performance report (updated 06/05/24)
Regional Integration Fund	To develop an evaluation framework to enable regular robust evaluation of schemes to inform future programme planning	On-going	Evaluation framework and plan under development with 2 approaches being piloted. 'Ripple Effect Mapping' being piloted for MoC evaluation with first workshop in June 2024. 'Most Significant Change' panels being piloted for C&YP schemes (updated 06/05/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Children and young people	Implementation of The Right Door approach (in response to the No Wrong Door Strategy)	On-going	Draft Implementation plan developed and will now be shared within the governance structure. (updated 03/05/24)
Children and young people	Development of priorities for children and young people, considering the different needs of different age groups. RPB Children's sub-group webpages	On-going	Revised governance structure implemented in January 2024, two year work plan agreed, quarterly development workshops commenced. (updated 03/05/24)
Children and young people	NYTH/NEST framework : whole system approach for mental health	On-going	Approach for completing self-assessments across the region, is for each of the Regional Transformation Programmes individually, aggregated up to a regional one and submitted to WG by 14 th October 2024. Partners across the region to begin rolling out the Nyth/Nest training commencing May 2024. (updated 03/05/24)
Dementia	Dementia accommodation needs into the Strategic Capital Plan	On-going	This has been incorporated into the Strategic Capital Plan which has been agreed by RPB and submitted to Welsh Government. A number of schemes including dementia centres and extra support housing are in the 10 year plan (updated 06/05/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Learning disabilities	Implementation of North Wales Together Programme, underpinned by co-production focussing on communities and cultural change, accommodation, assistive technology, employment and children and young people.	On-going	Progress report scheduled (updated 7/05/24)
Autism	Implementation of the statutory code of practice on the delivery of the Autism Services Delivery Plan 2021-22	On-going	End of year Autism workstream report for 2023/24 details achievements and progress with Autism CoP and Neurodivergence Improvement Plan. Due to go to June 2024 RPB (updated 06/05/24)
Mental Health	Review and implementation of T4MH strategy for North Wales	On-going	Preparing strategy to go on RPB website (updated 7/5/24)
'Further, Faster' – Our mission to build an Integrated Community Care Service for Wales	To support the development of a Community Care Service for Wales	On-going	Regional plan for 2023/24 funding approved by Welsh Government. Funding fully spent. Regional plan for 2024/25 has been drafted through a process of 4 integrated workshops held Feb – April. Plan meets WG expectations, has been signed off by the Leadership, currently awaiting BCU Exec sign off (updated 06/05/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Strategic Capital	To develop a 10 year Strategic Capital Plan in line with Welsh Government guidance	On-going	Strategic Capital Plan (SCP) has been developed and approved by Welsh Government. End of year Capital report for 2023/24 details achievements and progress with 31 schemes prioritised for funding cycle 1. Report due to go to June 2024 RPB. Work commenced on phase 2 of the SCP (updated 06/05/24)
Commissioning	Market Stability Report annual reviews	On-going	Light-touch review completed for 2023, signed off and published on RPB website with a copy sent to WG. Working group to plan and scope 2024 review. (updated 24/04/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Commissioning	Implementation of a Pre Placement Agreement for Service Providers to include the co-ordination of the Workshops and setting up a process for collating the completed PPA.	On-going	Implementation delayed. Initial negotiations with Care Forum Wales took place around the outstanding issues and amendments suggested. Legal discussions are continuing between commissioners and legal reps for HB and LA's and will be negotiating with CFW legal as soon as agreement by all 7 partners is reached in relation to process for IPA with suggested wording changes to accompanying clauses. Will remain as high risk because there is no live contract. (updated 24/04/24)
Commissioning	To review the True Cost of Care arrangements for the region	On-going	Steering Group and Working Group has been established to look at the true cost of care, with work to look at the evidence gathering. However, this was halted in December. Options appraisal document and workshop planned for Leadership Group and NASH in April, with presentations from Laing Buisson and CareCubed as well as learning from Conwy and Gwynedd. Further discussion and decision will be had about the way forward regionally and whether a regional approach to a fees methodology is adopted. (updated 24/04/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Mwy Na Geiriau	<p>Drive progress under the overarching theme of culture and leadership and the three themes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welsh language planning and policies including data 2. Supporting and developing the Welsh language skills of the current and future workforce 3. Sharing best practice and an enabling approach <p>Mwy na geiriau: 5 year plan 2022 to 2027</p>	On-going	<p>With financial assistance from the RPB in 2023, resources produced in conjunction with BCUHB for non-Welsh speaking social care and health care staff. Currently distributing the materials across the region.</p> <p>Moving forward in 2024/25 – three meetings a year to be held to continue momentum along with data capturing from SCW of increase/decrease in Welsh speaking staff within Social Care environments.</p>
Safeguarding	To respond effectively to the learning identified from Regional Adult / Child Practice reviews, Regional Multi-agency professional’s forum and the National and UK reviews.	On-going	This comes under the remit of the Regional Safeguarding Board. Plans being developed to bring the 2 Safeguarding Boards together as one all age Board in 2024. Going forward from May 2024 we have one joint board. In relation to learning from reviews, the NWSB have an action plan for the findings from thematic APR/CPR which is updated on a quarterly basis (updated 28/4/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Safeguarding	Effective engagement and communication: To improve engagement and consultation with children and adults at risk, vulnerable groups, professionals and partnerships	On-going	This comes under the remit of the Regional Safeguarding Board. At the Joint Board meetings, we will include a focus on personal safeguarding stories to evidence effective change (updated 28/4/24)
Safeguarding	To support the implementation of new and existing legalisation including End Physical Punishment and Liberty of Protection Safeguards alongside responding to national action plans on Child Sexual Abuse and preventing abuse of Older People.	On-going	Work has taken across the region on the implementation of new legislation. An updated action plan on CSA will be launched in 24/25 and we are responding to the action plan on the prevention of abuse of Older people (updated 28/4/24)
Safeguarding	To continue to ensure a robust, resilient and consistent approach to safeguarding practice.	On-going	Board partner agency annual reports will be presented to the NWSB in June 24. A referral audit will be undertaken in July – Sept 24 in response to CIW inspection report and also a thematic audit of self - neglect cases in the region (updated 28/4/24)
Regional Partnership	To develop a partner agreement to cover the regional partnership work to include financial strategy.	On-going	
Regional Partnership	Links with PSBs	On-going	Comparing plans and initial discussions begun with PSBs (updated 25/04/2024)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Digital, Data Transformation	Develop a North Wales approach to using digital, data and technology to enable seamless, integrated services	On-going	Report scheduled for RPB May 2024 <small>(updated 25/04/2024)</small>
Unpaid carers	Update North Wales Carers Strategy, deliver North Wales Carers and Young Carers Operational Group Action Plan. Carers strategy and action plan updates	On-going	Action plan updates have been brought together and with events happening throughout Carers Week in June this will be an opportunity to ensure the voice of the carers is contained in the plans and strategy. This is due to be presented to RPB no later than September 2024 for sign off. <small>(updated 24/04/24)</small>
Social Value Forum	Scope and develop the way forward to develop section 16 forums as per the new statutory requirements.	On-going	Current North Wales Social Value Forum is continuing. However, some discussions are being had locally to set up or include s16 organisations to current meetings, e.g. DCC Integrated Services Forum. Further local and regional discussions to be had to ensure we support the new s16 forum requirements and how we can best support to promote local initiatives and to ensure the changes in the statutory requirement under Part 2 of the Act. <small>(updated 24/04/24)</small>
Equality, human rights and socioeconomic disadvantage	Continue to embed within work processes including equality impact assessments completed on new and amended strategies and projects.	On-going	

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Housing and homelessness	Write additional housing and homelessness section for the PNA.	On-going	Planned for 31 March 2024 but delayed due to other work taking priority. Work is underway. (updated 24/04/2024)
Loneliness and isolation	Link with PSB priorities.	On-going	
Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence	Support the work of the North Wales Vulnerability and Exploitation Board and North Wales North Wales Safeguarding Board	On-going	Regional Childrens Safeguarding lead is now a member of the CRPB and continue discussions to explore further links. (updated 03/05/24)
Covid-19	Continue to support the Covid-19 Recovery Process.	On-going	(updated 7/05/24)
Regional Innovation Coordination Hub	Coordinate research, innovation and improvement activity Population needs assessment updates. RIC hub webpages	On-going	Annual report scheduled for May 2024 (updated 25/04/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Engagement	To review the Regional Partnership Board's current engagement, voice and coproduction arrangements. Engagement and communication strategy	NEW	RPB Engagement & Communication Strategy to be updated in 2024 to reflect changes since its publication during Covid in 2021 The RPB Engagement & Voice Charter was adopted by the Board giving all partners around the table a voice and equality.
Accelerated Cluster Development (ACD)	Support the development and implementation of the ACD to include governance. Develop relationship between PCPG (Primary Care Planning Group).	NEW	RIC hub presented Population Needs Assessment findings to Conwy and Denbighshire Clusters to inform joint planning. Further discussion is required on the ACD proposals with a report submitted to a future RPB. (updated 21/12/23)
Commissioning	Successful renewal of the North Wales Domiciliary Care Agreement tender. To commence April 2025.	NEW	Work progressing on this work, with meet the buyer sessions completed and it is likely that the tender will be live in early summer 2024. (updated 24/04/24)
Workforce	Implementation of the revised North Wales Workforce Strategy.	NEW	Action plan for strategic priority 1 is being developed, and work is underway. Other priorities are ongoing and will be captured by various sub-groups of the Workforce Board (updated 24/04/24)
Social Prescribing	To implement the National Framework for Social Prescribing.	NEW	Social prescribing champions have been identified and have met with WG. WG collecting baseline information which will determine the scope of work. (updated 24/04/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
Dementia	Implementation of the North Wales Dementia Strategy	Complete	End of year Dementia workstream report for 2023/24 details achievements and progress with all Dementia workstreams. Due to go to June 2024 RPB (updated 06/05/24)
Commissioning	Complete the Escalating Concerns Policy and implement	Complete	COMPLETED. (updated 24/04/24)
Regional Partnership	Implement the revised Part 2 and Part 9 Guidance.	Complete	A presentation was delivered to the RPB from Welsh Government on the 10 th July 2023. Response submitted on the consultation exercise which closed on 14 th August. (updated 29/11/23)
Commissioning	Completion of the Older People Audit Wales Action Plan to include drafting, agreeing and implementing a Regional Commissioning Strategy	Complete	COMPLETED Regional Commissioning Board agreed in March that there was duplication in producing Commissioning Strategy when the MSR would have the same information. It was agreed that regional team should seek permission from Audit Wales as to their agreement in amending this recommendation and whether the MSR would suffice. (updated 24/04/24)
Workforce	Taster to Care programme: provides an insight into the care sector for people interested in a new career	Complete	COMPLETED (updated 24/04/24)
Workforce	Scope out the programme of work for the workforce workstream. To include: recruitment and retention, WeCare Campaign.	Complete	COMPLETED. (updated 24/04/24)

Workstream	Action	Status	Update or date report scheduled for RPB
'Further, Faster' – Our mission to build an Integrated Community Care Service for Wales	To review the RIF Programme to identify any opportunities to further increase community capacity as part of the Further Faster work	Complete	COMPLETE Regional plan for 2024/25 includes expansion of / building on existing RIF schemes to increase community capacity. All schemes within 2024/25 increase community capacity. (updated 06/05/24)

KEY –

Yellow - continuation of workstream into 2024/25

Blue – new workstream for 2024/25

Green – completed workstream for 23/24

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Appendix 1 – Membership of the NWRPB

As at 31 March 2024

Alwyn Jones

Prif Swyddog Gofal Cymdeithasol, Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Wrescam
Chief Officer Social Care, Wrexham County Borough Council

Ann Woods

Prif Swyddog, Cyngor Gwirfoddol Lleol Sir y Fflint
Chief Officer, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council

Carol Shillabeer

Cyfarwyddwr Gweithredol, BIPBC
BCUHB, Executive Director

Caroline Tudor James

Prif Swyddog Gweithredol, The Rainbow Foundation
Chief Executive Officer, The Rainbow Foundation

Cyng/Cllr Alun Roberts,

Cyngor Sir Ynys Mon
Isle of Anglesey County Council

Cyng / Cllr Christine Jones

Cyngor Sir y Fflint
Flintshire County Council

Cyng/Cllr John Pritchard

Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Wrescam
Wrexham County Borough Council

Cyng/Cllr Liz Roberts

Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Conwy
Conwy County Borough Council

Cyng/Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

Cyngor Gwynedd

Cyng/Cllr Elen Heaton

Cyngor Sir Ddinbych
Denbighshire County Council

Dr Lowri Brown

Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Addysg, Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Conwy
Head of Education Services, Conwy County Borough Council

Darren Murray

Pennaeth Gweithrediadau Cymunedol, Ambiwllans Sant Ioan
St John's Head of Community Operations

Dylan Owen

Cyfarwyddwr Statudol Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol, Cyngor Gwynedd
Statutory Director of Social Services, Cyngor Gwynedd

Estelle Hitchon

Cyfarwyddwr Partneriaethau ac Ymgysylltu, WAST
WAST (Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust), Director of Partnerships and Engagement

Ffion Johnstone

Cyfarwyddwr Cymunedau Iechyd Integredig (y Gorllewin) BIPBC
BCUHB Integrated Health Community Director (West)

Fôn Roberts

Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol, Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn
Director of Social Services, Isle of Anglesey County Council

Gethin Morgan

Pennaeth Cydweithio Rhanbarthol
Head of Regional Collaboration

Helen Douglas

Uwcharolygydd Diogelwch Cymunedol, Heddlu Gogledd Cymru
Superintendent Community Safety, North Wales Police

Jenny Williams

Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol, Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Conwy
Director of Social Services, Conwy County Borough Council

Karen Higgins

Cyfarwyddwr Gofal Sylfaenol, Gofal Iliniarol a Gwasanaethau Plant, BIPBC
BCUHB, Director of Primary Care, Palliative Care & Children's Services

Libby Ryan-Davies

Cyfarwyddwr Cymunedol Iechyd Integredig (Canolog) BIPBC
BCUHB Integrated Health Community Director (Central)

Liz Grieve

Pennaeth Tai a Gwasanaeth Cymunedol, Cyngor Sir Ddinbych
Head of Housing & Communities Service, Denbighshire County Council

Liz Thomas

Pennaeth Cyllid ac Archwilio, Cyngor Sir Ddinbych
Head of Finance and Audit, Denbighshire County Council

Mary Wimbury

Prif Swyddog Gweithredol ac Uwch Gyngorydd Polisi, Fforwm Gofal Cymru
Chief Executive Officer and Senior Policy Advisor, Care Forum Wales

Michelle Green

Cyfarwyddwr Cymunedol Iechyd Integredig (Dwyrain) BIPBC
BCUHB Integrated Health Community Director (East)

Neil Ayling

Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol, Cyngor Sir y Fflint
Director of Social Services, Flintshire County Council

Nicola Stubbins

Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol: Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol ac Addysg, Cyngor Sir Ddinbych
Corporate Director: Social Services & Education, Denbighshire County Council

Paul Kay

Pennaeth Diogelwch Tan, Gwasanaeth Tan Gogledd Cymru
Head of Fire Safety, North Wales Fire Service

Rhun ap Gareth,

Prif Weithredwr, Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Conwy
Chief Executive, Conwy County Borough Council

Roger Seddon

Cynrychiolydd Defnyddwyr Gwasanaeth
Service User Representative

Sue Last

Cynrychiolydd Gofalwyr
Carer Representative

Teresa Owen

Cyfarwyddwr Gweithredol Iechyd Cyhoeddus BIPBC
BCUPB Executive Director of Public Health

Appendix 2: All Wales RIF Framework Performance Measures

How Much?	Definition
1. Number of referrals received	The number of individuals referred to the project.
2. Number of new people accessing the service	The number of individuals who access the project for the first time.
3. Number of people accessing the service (total per quarter)	The total number of individuals who access the project during a quarter.
4. Number of contacts (count multiple contacts per individual)	The number of times individuals have contact with the project.
5. Number of people receiving IAA (universal)	The number of individuals receiving Information, Advice, and Assistance (IAA) services.
6. Number of people receiving Early Help and Support (Targeted)	The number of individuals receiving early help and support services that target specific needs and issues. This could include groups and events.
7. Number of people receiving Intensive Support (Targeted)	The number of individuals receiving intensive support services that are tailored to meet their specific and more complex needs.
8. Number of people receiving Specialist Intervention (Specialist)	The number of individuals receiving specialist interventions that require advanced knowledge and expertise to deliver.
9. Number of people accessing training	The number of individuals accessing training sessions offered by the project.
10. Number of training sessions delivered	The number of training sessions delivered by the project.
How Well?	Definition
11. Number of referrals accepted	The number of referrals accepted by the project.
12. Number of people satisfied with the information provided	The number of individuals who report being satisfied with the information they received from the project.
13. Number of people completing targeted training	The number of individuals who complete the targeted training provided by the project.
14. Number of people reporting a good experience with the support they received	The number of individuals who report having a positive experience with the support they received from the project.
Difference Made	Definition
15. Number of people achieving personal outcomes	The number of individuals who have achieved personal outcomes as a result of the project.
15a. Number of people who were asked this question	The number of individuals who were asked to feedback on whether they had achieved personal outcomes as a result of the project.

16. Number of people feeling less isolated	The number of individuals who report feeling less isolated after receiving support from the project.
16a. Number of people who were asked this question	The number of individuals who were asked to feedback on whether they were feeling less isolated as a result of the project.
17. Number of people maintaining or improving their emotional health and well-being	The number of individuals who report maintaining or improving their emotional health and well-being after receiving support from the project.
17a. Number of people who were asked this question	The number of individuals who were asked to feedback on whether they had maintained or improved their emotional health and well-being as a result of the project.
18. Number of people receiving aids and adaptations	The number of individuals who receive aids and adaptations that help them.
19. Number of people starting an Assistive Technology Package	The number of individuals who start an assistive technology package provided by the project.
20. Number of people who feel they have influenced the decisions that affect them	The number of individuals who report feeling that they have influenced the decisions that affect them.
20a. Number of people who were asked this question	The number of individuals who were asked to feedback on whether they felt that they had been able to influence the decisions that affect them as a result of the project.
21. Number of people with increased knowledge of services/support available to them	The number of individuals who report having increased knowledge of the services and support available to them.
21a. Number of people who were asked this question	The number of individuals who were asked to feedback on whether they felt that they had increased knowledge of the services and support available to them as a result of the project.
Dementia Specific Measures	Definition
22. Number of carers supported by the service (total per Qt)	The total number of carers who access the service during a quarter
23. Number of PLwD receiving what matters discussions	The number of individuals who received what matters discussions
24. Number of PLwD attending activities /groups / centres	The number of individuals who attend activities /groups / dementia centres
25. Number and % of PLwD who achieved what matters to them	The number and % of individuals who report they achieved what matters to them

26. Number and % of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role

The number and % of carers who report they feel supported to continue in their caring role

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Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	12th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis (Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets) / Helen Vaughan-Evans (Head of Corporate Support Services- Performance, Digital and Assets)
Head of Service	Helen Vaughan-Evans (Head of Corporate Support Services- Performance, Digital and Assets)
Report author	Bryn Williams (Asset Manager)
Title	Asset Management Strategy 2024 - 2029

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 The report outlines the proposed Asset Management Strategy 2024 – 2029 (Appendix 1).

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To present the reviewed and updated Asset Management Strategy document for Scrutiny consideration prior to taking it to Cabinet for a decision to be made on its adoption.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 That Committee consider the proposed Asset Management Strategy 2024 – 2029 (Appendix 1) and provide any feedback.
- 3.2 That Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

4.1 The existing Asset Management Strategy was adopted by the Council in July 2017 with a review due after 5 years – 2021. As such, a revised Asset Management Strategy is now overdue and the impact of the pandemic on priorities and work programmes has led to some delay.

4.2 The proposed Asset Management Strategy 2024-2029 is attached as Appendix 1.

4.3 The new Asset Management Strategy has sought to align asset plans and the outcomes being sought by the Strategy with the Council's Strategic Themes as outlined in the Corporate Plan, making sure that our property assets play a key role in delivering on these priorities. For this strategy, we are proposing that a slightly amended first outcome from the 2017-2021 strategy document becomes an underlying principle with regard to decisions we make about our property portfolio. That is as follows: ***We will provide the right assets, in the right place, and in the right condition to meet current and projected future service delivery needs, considering who best to own and operate each asset and opportunities for collaboration.***

4.4 The following four priority outcomes have been identified in the Asset Management Strategy 2024-2029 aligning with the Council's Corporate Plan:

- **Climate Action & Natures Recovery** – which would include improving energy performance of buildings, reducing the overall building footprint, facilitating reduced travel, increasing carbon sequestration from existing and new properties, improving biodiversity on our sites, etc. In addition to increasing the understanding of, and improving, our assets resilience to climate impacts.
- **Modernising Education** – delivered primarily by Education but will involve significant investment in our school buildings over the next five years.
- **Regeneration** – where the council is directly intervening in the property market to promote regeneration and economic development, particularly in town centres.
- **New Ways of Working (NWOW) and Collaboration** – looking specifically at our office portfolio and how this needs to change considering significant increase in home working (post-COVID), along with progressing collaboration

opportunities to create an asset ownership and operation model that is sustainable.

- 4.5 Delivery of the outcomes outlined in this strategy will be dependent on securing the necessary funding, through leveraging opportunities to bring in external funding and prioritising the limited resource we hold as a Council.

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

- 5.1. This strategy supports the Greener Denbighshire Theme of the Corporate Plan, as better energy management and the potential for the further introduction of renewable energy generation within the entire portfolio will help the council reach its target of becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically positive by 2030.
- 5.2. The strategy also supports the Prosperous Denbighshire Theme as our asset portfolios have the potential to improve economic prosperity if surplus office space can be used as accommodation for small businesses or disposed of for example.
- 5.3. The strategy supports the Learning and Growing Denbighshire Theme by supporting the creation of sustainable communities for learning by support new build and major refurbishment of the school estate.
- 5.4. The underpinning principal of 'right buildings, in the right place' also supports the Well run, high performing Council Theme of the Corporate Plan- using assets to support agile and partnership working.

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

- 6.1. Development of the strategy has been undertaken in-house and has not incurred any additional costs for the Council. Clearly, decisions made about property usually have a cost associated with them. Delivery of the outcomes outlined in this strategy will be dependent on securing the necessary funding, through leveraging opportunities to bring in external funding and prioritising the limited resource we hold as a Council.
- 6.2. All property decisions are made through existing mechanisms, including Asset Management Group (AMG), Capital Scrutiny Group (CSG), Cabinet, etc., to ensure they are properly considered and scrutinised.

- 6.3. All services will be affected, as all services use and occupy property. Services will always be consulted in relation to any property decisions that will affect them or the way they deliver their services.

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

- 7.1 The overall conclusion of the Well-being Impact Assessment is positive (appendix 2). Score for the sustainability of the approach is 3 out of 4 stars. Contribution to 6 out of 7 wellbeing goals was assessed as positive and 1 assessed as neutral (a More Equal Denbighshire). The Wellbeing Impact Assessment can be further reviewed in light of any feedback received at Scrutiny.

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

- 8.1. Consultation has been carried out at officer level through the various Portfolio Plans, which group land and buildings with similar types of property, rather than along services lines. These Portfolio Plans have been developed through a series of meetings and discussions with several council officers who either occupy or manage land or buildings in the portfolio, and through an analysis of a few performance measures relating to the properties.
- 8.2. The Strategy was tabled at the Corporate Executive Team (CET) in April where it was accepted with amendments. The Strategy has been circulated to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for wider comment. The Strategy was considered at the Asset Management Group (AMG) on 1st May where it was accepted with amendments. The Lead Member has been briefed and had input into the draft strategy along with wider Cabinet via briefing.
- 8.3. The Corporate Landlord has been consulted and provided the following statement:
Property represents a high expenditure and carbon production liabilities for the Council going forward. It is a strategic resource for Denbighshire County Council and the Asset Management Strategy is therefore a core strategic document that will play a vital role in the delivery of services to the people of Denbighshire now and in the future. The Asset Management Strategy will ensure that the Council is utilising its assets efficiently and sustainably and will need to be and scrutinised and updated on a regular basis as relevant information becomes available via the Portfolio Plans.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 Given the financial constraints upon the Council now and in the medium term it is crucial that the council maximises the value and efficiency from the assets it owns and has the use of. The Asset Management Strategy sets out the need, prioritise limited resources, leverage opportunities to bring in external funding where possible, consider the impact of new ways of working on our asset base and progress opportunities for collaboration where possible.

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

10.1 There are no significant risks associated with the development and adoption of an Asset Management Strategy.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Local Government Act 1972.

11.2 Section 21 of the Local Government Act, 2000 and Section 7.4.1 of the Council's Constitution outline Scrutiny's powers with respect of policy development and review.

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APPENDIX 1

Asset Management Strategy 2024 - 2029



FOREWORD

Like all Councils across Wales, the Council is dealing with significant financial pressures resulting from insufficient government funding, inflation and growing demand for the services the Council provides. Our physical assets are critical to our financial resources, and to delivering our corporate objectives, without which our corporate objectives could not be successfully delivered. We need to make savings, and a fundamental part of this will be ensuring that we utilise our assets wisely and strategically. In this context, our Asset Management Strategy is more important than ever. It is imperative that we manage our assets responsibly to ensure we obtain value for money for our residents and support our wider corporate objectives.

The strategy has set out four key outcomes which are there to help guide all our asset management activity and ensure that it is undertaken legally, transparently and with a proper understanding of the impact on our local communities – now and into the future. The strategy also has a specific outcome around reducing the environmental impact of our assets and outlines how we will reduce our energy consumption/carbon emissions by improved insulation, energy reduction initiatives and pro-active facilities management. We will also reduce our carbon footprint through the investigation of and investment in renewable energy.

We acknowledge that delivering the four key outcomes will require some significant changes in the way we currently manage our assets, and will result in new ways of working and, in some cases, changing responsibilities. The Council is committed to making this change and will provide the clear leadership and support that will be needed to ensure success.

This integrated approach will enable us to make informed choices regarding the utilisation of our property holdings and acquisitions to deliver national policies, including the 'Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015'. The Act has set out the parameters whereby we must ensure our actions meet the needs of today and do not compromise the needs of future generations. We must take account of the long-term implications and benefits that can result from our asset management, investment and delivery, as part of our ongoing drive to deliver more for less.

Asset management is a key part of business planning and an important tool in meeting the current and future fiscal challenges. Through this unified approach we will ensure the value and importance of our assets is clearly recognised within all our future delivery plans and programmes.

Councillor Gwyneth Ellis
Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets

1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 Along with Finance, People and ICT, Property is one of the four principle corporate resources that support the delivery of all services. As such, how that resource is utilised can have a significant impact on the Council's delivery of services and financial standing. The effective and efficient management of the Council's property portfolio will help ensure that the Council is not wasting money on assets that are not required to meet service needs or are unnecessarily costly to run but are providing buildings that are of good physical quality and make services easy for the public to access.
- 1.2 The strategy is underpinned by a series of Portfolio Plans, which will group land and buildings with similar types of property, rather than along services lines. These Portfolio Plans have been developed through a series of meetings and discussions with several council officers who either occupy or manage land or buildings in the portfolio, and through an analysis of a few performance measures relating to the properties. In developing the Portfolio Plans, the review of properties in each portfolio are tested against the following high-level outcomes which underpin the Asset Management Strategy.

2. OUR LAND AND BUILDINGS

- 2.1 Like all local authorities, Denbighshire County Council owns and operates a significant property estate, with 669 buildings distributed across 519 sites. This figure excludes our housing portfolio and highways infrastructure, but does include schools, libraries, offices, depots, care facilities and heritage buildings. The value of this estate, with those exclusions of housing and highways infrastructure, was estimated to be £426,884,849 in March 2023. In total, the estate covers an area of 2,274.58 hectares and provides 295,756m² of gross internal area (GIA).
- 2.2 To help manage our land and buildings, our assets have been organised into the following portfolios:
 1. **Corporate Support** – those properties held to support mainstream service delivery, including offices and corporate stores.
 2. **Education** – those properties held to support the provision of education services, including Primary Schools, High Schools, Special Schools and Integrated Centres.
 3. **Community** – those properties from which services to the community are delivered, including Town Halls, Community Centres, Libraries/one-stop-shops, Youth Centres, Public toilets and car parks.

4. **Countryside, Parks & Open Space** – those properties which are characterised by land rather than buildings, including parks, playing fields, open spaces, cemeteries and countryside properties.
5. **Commercial** – those properties that generate rent or income, and often have important local economic impact, including agricultural estate, economic development estate and Coastal properties.
6. **Care** – those properties that provide specialist care to vulnerable residents, including Residential & Care Homes, Supported Businesses and Equipment Stores.
7. **Maintenance** – those properties held to ensure the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the county, including Main/Sub Highways Depots and Waste Facilities
8. **Denbighshire Leisure Limited** – those properties leased to the council’s arm’s length company for the delivery of sports and recreation services
9. **Surplus/Other** – miscellaneous properties that do not fit neatly into any of the above, including quarries and surplus/vacant land & property.

Excluded from this approach are:

10. **Council Housing** – those properties and land held specifically to support and provide public housing, which have separate management arrangements to other Council land and building assets; and.
11. **Highways infrastructure** - that held specifically to support and provide the highway infrastructure and covered for management purposes by the Local Transport Plan.

3. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2017

3.1 During the last Asset Management Strategy period – 2017 to 2023, several key property projects were delivered, including:

- Continued investment in our school estate, including a new school building in Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, funded 50% through the Welsh Government 21st Century Schools Band A grant funding programme.
- Continued investment in improving the energy efficiency of our buildings, reducing energy costs and carbon emissions.
- The development of SC2 – an indoor water park operated by Denbighshire Leisure Limited – as part of the wider regeneration programme for Rhyl funded in part through external Town Council contribution and Welsh Government grants and loans.
- The acquisition and demolition of Queens Buildings – a significant complex of dilapidated and predominantly vacant buildings in Rhyl town centre – which have been replaced with the recently completed major mixed-use development ‘Queens Market’ to drive the regeneration of the town centre. The demolition and construction phases were funded in part by Welsh Government grants.

- Establishment of Community Resource Team in County Hall – a shared space for Health and Social Care staff to help deliver more joined up, client focussed services.
- Improved utilisation of County Hall through the development of a dedicated Coroners Court which was funded by all of North Wales’s Local Authorities, new accommodation for Y Bont (a supported enterprise run by Community Support Services) which was funded in part by Welsh Government Integrated Care Fund, and the relocation of Registrars from Ruthin Town Hall into County Hall.
- Ongoing delivery of our Agricultural Estates Strategy – selling our farms to existing tenants – which has raised significant capital receipts.
- Establishment of a county tree nursery to produce trees of local provenance, funded by a combination of Welsh Government – Local Places for Nature Funding and UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund.

3.2 It is also worth noting that the Asset Management Team have played an important role during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping to facilitate accommodation for COVID testing and vaccination centres.

4. CORE UNDERLYING PRINCIPAL

4.1 All decisions made in relation to council properties are guided by the following underlying principle:

We will provide the right assets, in the right place, and in the right condition to meet current and projected future service delivery needs, considering who best to own and operate each asset and opportunities for collaboration.

4.2 The Council has a Portfolio Plan Review and Challenge process as the core mechanism to deliver upon this underlying principle and the priority areas identified in Section 5. For further information on our Portfolio Plan Review and Challenge process please see appendix 1.

5. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

5.1 The Corporate Plan for 2022 – 2027 was officially adopted in October 2022 and include several new priorities. In relation to our land and building portfolio, the following four priorities have been identified:

1. **Climate Action & Nature Recovery** – which would include improving energy performance of buildings, reducing the overall building footprint, facilitating reduced travel, increasing carbon sequestration from existing and new properties, improving biodiversity on our sites,

etc. In addition to increasing the understanding of, and improving, our assets resilience to climate impacts.

2. **Modernising Education** – delivered primarily by Education but will involve significant investment in our school buildings over the next five years.
3. **Regeneration** – where the council is directly intervening in the property market to promote regeneration and economic development, particularly in town centres.
4. **New Ways of Working (NWOW) and Collaboration** – looking specifically at our office portfolio and how this needs to change considering significant increase in home working (post-COVID), along with progressing collaboration opportunities to create an asset ownership and operation model that is sustainable.

5.2 In property terms these are corporately the most important priorities to be addressed in the next 5 years. More detailed information on each of these priorities is contained in the following sections, but we also recognise that there are some links and inter-dependencies between these priorities. For example, reducing the office footprint as part of NWOW also serves to reduce carbon emissions.

5.3 Delivery of the outcomes outlined in this strategy will be dependent on securing the necessary funding, through leveraging opportunities to bring in external funding and prioritising the limited resource we hold as a Council.

6. PRIORITY 1: CLIMATE ACTION AND NATURE RECOVERY

6.1 Why is this a priority?

6.1.1 As the amount of carbon dioxide human society has emitted into the earth's atmosphere has increased so to 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. These 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.

6.1.2 At the same time, nature is in decline with a reported 68% decline in the world's wildlife population between 1970 and 2020. Human activity is reducing the quality and the amount of habitat available for wildlife and habitats are increasingly fragmented reducing the ability of species to migrate to stay in their required climate to sustain life. As temperatures continue to rise, and habitats extent and connectivity continue to decline, climate change will become an increasing driver for species losses.

- 6.1.3 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. 354 of species known to be present in Wales are at risk of extinction.
- 6.1.4 The realisation that time is fast running out has resulted in a climate emergency being declared by many organisations including Denbighshire County Council in July 2019, and we have subsequently developed the Carbon and Ecological Change Strategy which was adopted by the council in February 2021. The two goals set out in this strategy are:
- For the total carbon emitted by the Council minus the total carbon absorbed from Council owned and operated land to equal zero by 31st March 2030. This is our net carbon zero ambition; and
 - To protect, manage and restore our land as well as create new spaces for nature so that the ecosystems in Denbighshire are diverse, connected, big in scale and extent, in a healthy condition and adaptable and thus not only maintains biodiversity but enhances it. This is our Ecologically Positive Council goal.
- 6.1.5 In 2023/24 the Council completed the Year 3 update of the Strategy which is being tabled at Council in July 2024 for adoption. A new area of focus for the Council in the Year 3 Updated version of its Climate and Ecological Change Strategy is increasing climate risk resilience as a Council and across the County. This is in recognition that 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 are now already 'baked in'. This second iterative of the strategy includes actions on the Council to increase the understanding of the Council's climate risk resilience and putting plans and actions in place to increase its resilience to climate impacts.
- 6.1.6 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, and our property portfolio has a major contribution to make to both these goals, given that emissions from our buildings currently represent 60% of the councils total emissions (excluding the supply chain), and more land will be required to offset the carbon we still expect to be emitting by our 2030 target date. Efforts to reduce energy use and carbon emissions also save the Council money in our utility bills. Based on delivered and modelled projects the financial benefit appears to consistently be - £2 of financial benefit for every £1 invested.
- 6.1.7 Similarly, property will play a fundamental role in helping to achieve our Ecologically Positive goal, as we will need to restore and change how we manage land that we currently own and operate to increase species diversity, and increase our land ownership to creating new spaces (ecological niches) for nature.

6.2 What outcomes are we trying to achieve?

6.2.1 The Carbon & Ecological Change Strategy is broad in scope and ambition, but from a property perspective we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

1. **Reducing Carbon Emissions** - By the end of March 2030, we will have reduced carbon emissions from the electricity, gas, LPG, oil, biomass and water we use in council owned buildings by 60% (from 2019/20 baseline).
2. **Increasing Carbon Sequestration** - By the end of March 2030, we will have increased the amount of carbon sequestered from property the council owns and operates by 575% (from 2019/20 baseline) through additional planting to existing property and the acquisition of new sites.
3. **Improving Biodiversity** - By the end of March 2030, we will have used the land and property we own and operate – both existing and new sites – to create diverse, connected, and large ecosystems which enhance biodiversity in the county.
4. **Increasing Our Resilience to the Impacts of Climate Change** - Build on exploratory work conducted in 2023/24, we will have increased our knowledge of the climate impact on property and the subsequent resilience of services utilising those assets. We will have capitalised on opportunities to utilise our land across the county for multiple objectives e.g. natural flood risk management via tree planting.

6.3 How will we measure progress towards these outcomes?

6.3.1 We will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators:

- i. Net Tonnes CO² of emissions and absorption from council buildings and operations.
- ii. Tonnes CO² of emissions through staff commuting.
- iii. Tonnes CO² of emissions through business travel.
- iv. Tonnes CO² of emissions through supply chains.
- v. Percentage of council owned and operated land categorised as “Highest Species Richness”.

6.3.2 Appendix 2 outlines the base data for the above performance measures. A report will be taken annually to the ‘Asset Management Group’ to report and monitor the above data.

6.4 What are we going to do to achieve the outcome?

6.4.1 The outcomes will be achieved through a combination of activities which may include:

- Improving the energy efficiency of our buildings.
- Converting buildings to low carbon heat solutions like ground and air source heat pumps.

- Designing and constructing all new buildings to be low carbon in their operation.
- Increasing the amount of on-site renewable energy generation.
- Disposing of redundant buildings which are no longer required.
- Increase tree cover in sites already owned by the council.
- Acquire additional sites to achieve our carbon absorption target and help achieve our net carbon zero and ecologically positive target.
- Undertake works to improve the biodiversity of sites already owned by the council.
- Review and change how we design new buildings to maximise the biodiversity potential (e.g. hedging rather than fencing, hedgehog tunnels, bat/bird boxes, etc.)
- Support the reintroduction of indigenous species on council owned sites where suitable habitats exist.
- Build on exploratory work conducted in 2023/24 around social care climate resilience to increase knowledge and implement improvements to resilience of services.

7. PRIORITY 2: MODERNISING EDUCATION

7.1 Why is this a priority?

7.1.1 After decades of under-investment, the Modernising Education programme has started to reverse the decline in the condition and suitability of our school buildings. With significant financial contributions from both the Welsh Government and the council, the first phase of this programme – Band A – delivered £95 million of investment in improving our school estate. This investment included new primary schools in Ruthin and Clocaenog, a new extension and major refurbishment of Ysgol Glan Clwyd in St Asaph, and a brand new High School building in Rhyl.

7.1.2 The next stage of investment in the school estate has seen Welsh Government move away from 5 year bands of investment to a more flexible approach over a longer 9 - year time period with the 9 years divided into 3 blocks of 3 years each. All local authorities have been requested to create a Rolling Programme. Denbighshire's approach for the Rolling Programme is focused on providing high quality buildings and facilities that meet the needs of pupils, families, and their wider community, including working with the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. The broader strategy also reflects wider targets such as the role education can play in delivering the national target for Cymraeg 2050 and delivering Net Carbon Zero.

7.2 What outcomes are we trying to achieve?

7.2.1 Creating Sustainable Communities for Learning is multi-faceted, but from a property perspective we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

1. **Surplus Spaces** – by the end of March 2029, we will have ensured that the overall level of surplus places is reduced by 25% (from 2019/20 baseline).

2. **Building Condition** - by the end of March 2029, we will have improved condition of school buildings with a 35% reduction in the number of buildings considered poor (from 2019/20 baseline).
3. **Reducing Carbon Emissions** - By the end of March 2030, we will have reduced carbon emissions from the electricity, gas, LPG, oil, biomass and water we use in school buildings by 60% (from 2019/20 baseline).

7.3 How will we measure progress towards these outcomes?

7.3.1 We will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators:

- i. Number of surplus school places across the school portfolio
- ii. Number of surplus Primary school places
- iii. Number of surplus Secondary school places
- iv. Number of school buildings categorised as poor in physical condition terms (Grade C or D)
- v. Tonnes CO₂ of emissions from school buildings

7.3.2 Appendix 2 outlines the base data for the above performance measures. A report will be taken annually to the 'Asset Management Group' to report and monitor the above data.

7.4 What are we going to do to achieve the outcomes?

7.4.1 The outcomes will be achieved through a combination of activities which may include:

- Physical improvements to school buildings, including extensions and refurbishments, to accommodate forecast school numbers and improve learning environments.
- Construction of new school buildings.
- Works to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions from school buildings.

8. PRIORITY 3: REGENERATION

8.1 Why is this a priority?

8.1.1 The decline in the fortunes of town centres across the UK is well documented, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problems in many places. Denbighshire has a number of town centres, all of which are feeling the impact of changing retail patterns to some degree. Some, like Prestatyn and Ruthin – which came first and second in a “vitality index” of Welsh town centres in 2021 – seem to be faring relatively well in the circumstances. Others, like Rhyl, are faring less well, with high vacancy rates and poorly maintained buildings combining to create a poor shopping environment and deterring people from visiting.

8.1.2 The private sector has lost confidence in these areas and is not investing in property, either in terms of new builds or refurbishment of existing buildings. In order to restore private sector confidence, the council may wish to proactively intervene in the property market, dependent

on funding being available, to improve the visual appearance of our towns, create new opportunities for businesses and more generally deliver our regeneration objectives. We already have a track record in doing this with our acquisition of Queens Building and other High Street properties in Rhyl, maximising on the draw down of external funding, but other interventions may be needed going forward in order to create new, high quality public realm spaces, upgrade buildings to set a new benchmark for quality design in our town centres and introduce a better mix of uses.

8.2 What outcomes are we trying to achieve?

8.2.1 Regeneration is wide-ranging and multi-faceted, but from a property perspective we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

1. **Physical Appearance** – by the end of March 2029 we will have significantly improved the physical appearance of some of our town centres as a result of intervening in key properties and either refurbishing them for new uses or demolishing and redeveloping them with new buildings or public spaces.
2. **New businesses and jobs** – by the end of March 2029, through refurbishment or redevelopment, we will have created quality commercial spaces in some town centres that will be occupied by new businesses creating new jobs.
3. **New Homes** – by the end of March 2029, through refurbishment or redevelopment, we will have created quality new homes, attracting new residents to come and live in some of our town centres.

8.2.2 Note that in relation to outcome 3 we will be working closely with the private sector, Registered Social Landlords and the council's own housing department to create a balanced mix of housing types and tenures, but with a real focus on trying to attract young professional singles/couples into our town centres.

8.3 How will we measure progress towards these outcomes?

8.3.1 In terms of the property elements of our regeneration efforts, we will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators in relation to properties where we have been directly involved as a council:

- i. m² of unused/dilapidated floorspace demolished
- ii. m² of commercial floorspace created
- iii. number of businesses accommodated
- iv. m² of residential floorspace created
- v. Number of residential units created

8.3.2 Appendix 2 outlines the base data for the above performance measures. A report will be taken annually to the 'Asset Management Group' to report and monitor the above data.

8.4 What are we going to do to achieve the outcomes?

8.4.1 The outcomes will be achieved through a combination of activities which may include:

- Reviewing the future uses for the Queens Market with the aim of starting in 2024.
- Refurbishing town centre properties acquired for the "Contemporary Living" project.
- Refurbishing 26 Wellington Road.
- Identifying and acquiring other town centre properties in either poor condition or in key locations, and subsequently refurbishing or redeveloping them.
- Identifying and acquiring any properties that may be required to improve traffic circulation in town centres.

9. NEW WAYS OF WORKING AND COLLABORATION

9.1 Why is this a priority?

9.1.1 The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that the majority of Denbighshire County Council office-based staff can work very successfully from home. For the whole of the lockdown periods very few office-based staff attended the workplace. This has demonstrated that the council can operate the majority of its office-based functions with officers working from home. As such, the expectation is that home working will remain an integral part of working life going forward for many office-based staff.

9.1.2 Having established that the majority of office functions can be undertaken successfully at home, there are opportunities to rethink the office environment to suit a more "blended" approach to working – with some time being spent in the office but a much greater incidence of home working than pre-COVID levels, with perhaps between 30% to 50% of staff attending the workplace on any working day. Furthermore, the reasons people attend the workplace is more likely to be driven by the need to meet and collaborate with others rather than to undertake day to day transactional operations which can be undertaken at home.

9.1.3 This change in ways of working is being experienced across business and the public sector in North Wales. Opportunities to collectively rationalise estates in localities and across sectors are likely in the next 5 years with the establishment of multi-use / multi agency assets releasing surplus sites to be repurposed for other requirements and priorities (e.g., Housing, Community Resilience etc).

9.1.4 To consider and deliver a broad range of benefits that could derive from an increase in staff working from home, the council undertook a New Ways of Working (NWOW) review and

from a property perspective we need to reconsider what we provide in terms of office accommodation, specifically:

- Changing the layout and organisation of our offices to improve utilisation;
- Considering the number and type of meeting spaces we provide, if one of the prime reasons for people attending the office is to meet others and collaborate; and
- Reducing the overall amount of space dedicated to office uses.

Delivery upon these conclusions and proactively seeking opportunities to collaborate will continue to feature for the coming 5 years.

9.2 What outcomes are we trying to achieve?

9.2.1 The New Ways of Working in the Council is broad in its scope, but from a property perspective we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

1. **Workplace Design** – By the end of March 2029 we will have reduced the amount of floorspace dedicated for office use and redesigned those spaces to meet the needs of a workforce which will spend a significant proportion of time working from home.
2. **Property Utilisation** – By the end of March 2029 we will have rationalised our property portfolio and achieved revenue savings through the improved utilisation of our office buildings facilitated by an increase in home working by office-based staff and collaborative working with other public bodies.

9.2.2 Collaboration in assets can take many forms, but from an asset management perspective we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

3. **Sustainable Asset Ownership and Operation** – By the end of March 2029 we will have a completed a review of our assets utilising the Portfolio Plan and Challenge process to question who best to own and operate each asset and how the ownership and operation model can best service residents and corporate priorities, along with working collaboratively across the public and third sector and within localities to explore opportunities for multi-use/ multi- agency asset collaboration.

9.3 How will we measure progress towards these outcomes?

9.3.1 We will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators:

- i. m² of space allocated for office use and associated (storage, meetings, reception, etc.) across our portfolio
- ii. £ income achieved through shared costs, rented out space and/or specific revenue grant funding (e.g. for establishment of Remote Working Hubs) facilitated by improved utilisation of offices

- iii. £ revenue savings achieved through property disposals facilitated by improved utilisation of offices
- iv. m² of Gross Internal Area (GIA) in the overall DCC corporate property portfolio

9.3.2 Appendix 2 outlines the base data for the above performance measures. A report will be taken annually to the 'Asset Management Group' to report and monitor the above data.

9.4 What are we going to do to achieve the outcomes?

9.4.1 The outcomes will be achieved through a combination of activities which may include:

- Considering the number and location of DCC buildings office-based staff will be able to operate from, and making changes to those buildings where required to enable remote working.
- Liaising with public sector partners in the North Wales region to agree reciprocal / collaborative arrangements for staff to work in partners' office buildings.
- Agree the basis on which a reduced number of desks will be allocated going forward (i.e. team rotas or hot-desking) and implement required system for allocating space accordingly.
- Re-allocating space in our offices to reduce the number (and possibly size) of desks.
- Reviewing dedicated single or double occupancy office spaces where they currently exist and consider the establishment "management suites" as an alternative to improve space utilisation.
- Reviewing the requirement for formal meeting spaces (and associated video conferencing facilities and booking systems) and implementing any agreed changes.
- Designing and providing more informal meeting/collaboration spaces.
- Consider scope for improving staff welfare facilities (e.g. more showers to encourage cycling to work, improved kitchen/dining areas, etc.).
- Consider opportunities to bring some service functions into the Administration portfolio (e.g. libraries, Registrars, etc.) and implement where feasible.
- Consider options for sharing or leasing out space in our office buildings to other public sector partners, and collaborative working, where feasible.
- Consider options for leasing out space in our office portfolio commercially, and implement where feasible.
- Consider the use of some of DCC's buildings for the establishment of WG's "Remote Working Hubs" concept of shared space, and implement where feasible.
- Identify and implement opportunities to dispose of buildings in DCC ownership reduce the number of buildings DCC own and operate.

10. DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT

10.1 Over and above the strategic elements outlined above, there are a number of “day to day” activities where there is scope for improvement which need to be addressed over this next Asset Management Strategy period, including:

1. More robust and programmed process for condition surveys and ensuring they have value for maintenance teams;
2. Better information and knowledge of listed buildings in our ownership;
3. Ensure all properties have clear and understood managing service;
4. Review properties in Environmental Services – currently outside property maintenance regimes and thus inconsistent with Corporate Landlord model;
5. Improve compliance monitoring and processes;
6. Continue EDRMS programme for lease information;
7. Review Acquisition /Disposal process;
8. Review and communicate Community Asset Transfer process;
9. Review Asset Management Group (AMG) Terms of Reference (and ensure consistency with Capital Strategy Group [CSG]);
10. As part of the Asset Challenge Process proactively explore collaboration opportunities with other Public Sectors.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Portfolio Plan Review and Challenge Process

A1.1 Portfolio Plans will have been established for all portfolio areas by the end of 2024. Following this, a property review process will be instigated using these plans for the basis of initial challenge at service level, escalating to area asset reviews once portfolios and service need are established.

A1.2 Portfolio plans will

- Be completed in conjunction with the relevant services
- Identify links between our buildings
- Scrutinise building utilisation, performance and condition
- Give services an opportunity to highlight their challenges
- Trigger the Asset challenge process

A1.3 Portfolio plans will be categorised as follows:

- **Corporate Support** – those properties held to support mainstream service delivery, including offices and corporate stores.
- **Education** – those properties held to support the provision of education services.
- **Community** – those properties from which services to the community are delivered, including Leisure Centres, Town Halls, Libraries/one-stop-shops, Youth Centres, public toilets and car parks.
- **Countryside, Parks & Open Space** – those properties which are characterised by land rather than buildings, including parks, playing fields, open spaces, cemeteries and countryside properties.

- **Commercial** – those properties that generate rent or income including agricultural estate, economic development estate, Coastal & Maritime properties.
- **Care** – those properties that provide specialist care to vulnerable residents, including Residential & Care Homes, Supported Businesses and Equipment Stores.
- **Maintenance** – those properties held to ensure the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the county, including Main/Sub Highways Depots, Roadside Highways Depots, Street Scene Depots and Waste Facilities
- **Surplus/Other** – miscellaneous properties that do not fit neatly into any of the above, including quarries and surplus/vacant land & property.

A1.4 Initial review at the Council's Asset Management Group will form the basis of more in depth challenge at service level which will be largely based on Sufficiency, Suitability and Condition/Performance. It is unlikely that every asset will be subject to challenge, with some being obviously required to deliver essential/statutory services.

A1.5 Where potential alternative/shared use or vacation and disposal are identified, the established policies, consultation and approval processes will be implemented to bring proposals forward. This will include presenting findings and proposals to the relevant Member Area Groups for consideration and comment.

DRAFT

Appendix 2 – Performance Indicators

Priority 1: Climate Action and Nature Recovery

We will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators:

- i. Net Tonnes CO² of emissions and absorption from council buildings and operations.
- ii. Tonnes CO² of emissions through staff commuting.
- iii. Tonnes CO² of emissions through business travel.
- iv. Tonnes CO² of emissions through supply chains.
- v. Percentage of council owned and operated land categorised as “Highest Species Richness”.

Measure	2019-2020 Baseline	2022–2023 Data	2023–2024 Data	2024–2025 Data	2025–2026 Data	2026–2027 Data	2027–2028 Data	2028-2029 Data	2029-2030 Data	2030 Target
Net Carbon Zero – Total carbon tonnage emitted and absorbed by the council (excluding supply chain) – Benchmarked Locally	14,030	12,062								0
Total carbon tonnage emitted through staff commuting. – Benchmarked Locally	1,848	2,860								1,478
Total carbon tonnage emitted through business travel. – Benchmarked Locally	550	251								110
Total carbon tonnage emitted through supply chains. – Benchmarked Locally	25,125	36,912								16,311
Percentage of council owned and operated land in the highest categories of species richness. – Benchmarked Locally	37.6	42.0								51

Priority 2: Modernising Education

We will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators:

- i. Number of surplus school places across the school portfolio
- ii. Number of surplus Primary school places
- iii. Number of surplus Secondary school places
- iv. Number of school buildings categorised as poor in physical condition terms (Grade c or D)
- v. Tonnes CO2 of emissions from school buildings

Measure	2024 Baseline	2025 Data	2026 Data	2027 Data	2028 Data	2029 Data
Number of surplus school places across the school portfolio– Benchmarked Locally	2,492					
Number of surplus Primary schools – Benchmarked Locally	1,170					
Number of surplus Secondary schools – Benchmarked Locally	1,322					
Number of school buildings categorised as poor in physical condition terms (Grade c or D)– Benchmarked Locally	0					
Tonnes CO2 of emissions from school buildings– Benchmarked Locally	3,362					

Priority 3: Regeneration

In terms of the property elements of our regeneration efforts, we will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators in relation to properties where we have been directly involved as a council:

- i. m² of unused/dilapidated floorspace demolished
- ii. m² of commercial floorspace created
- iii. number of businesses accommodated
- iv. m² of residential floorspace created
- v. Number of residential units created

Measure	2023-2024 Baseline	2024-2025 Data	2025-2026 Data	2026-2027 Data	2027-2028 Data	2028-2029 Data
m ² of unused/dilapidated floorspace demolished – Benchmarked Locally	0					
m ² of commercial floorspace created – Benchmarked Locally	1,500					
Number of businesses accommodated – Benchmarked Locally	0					
m ² of residential floorspace created – Benchmarked Locally	0					
Number of residential units created – Benchmarked Locally	0					

Priority 4: New Ways of Working and Collaboration

We will measure progress through the following set of performance indicators:

- i. m² of space allocated for office use and associated (storage, meetings, reception, etc.) across our portfolio
- ii. £ income achieved through shared costs, rented out space and/or specific revenue grant funding (e.g. for establishment of Remote Working Hubs) facilitated by improved utilisation of offices
- iii. £ revenue savings achieved through property disposals facilitated by improved utilisation of offices
- iv. m² of Gross Internal Area (GIA) in the overall DCC corporate property portfolio

Measure	2023-2024 Baseline	2024-2025 Data	2025-2026 Data	2026-2027 Data	2027-2028 Data	2028-2029 Data
m ² of space allocated for office use and associated (storage, meetings, reception, etc.) across our portfolio	8,132					
£ income achieved through shared costs, rented out space and/or specific revenue grant funding (e.g. for establishment of Remote Working Hubs) facilitated by improved utilisation of offices	TBC					
£ revenue savings achieved through property disposals facilitated by improved utilisation of offices	0					
m ² of Gross Internal Area (GIA) in the overall DCC corporate property portfolio	11,165					



Asset Management Strategy 2024-2029: 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: 1358

Brief description: Asset Management Strategy

Date Completed: 02/09/2024 08:32:03 Version: 2

Completed by: Bryn Williams

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

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? All DCC Services

Was this impact assessment completed as a group? No

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

All decisions made in relation to council properties are guided by the following underlying principle: We will provide the right buildings, in the right place, and in the right condition to meet current and projected future service delivery needs To this end, the new Asset Management Strategy has sought to align asset plans with the council's strategic priorities, making sure that our property assets play a key role in delivering on these priorities.

Prevention

Climate & Ecological Change Strategy – which would include improving energy performance of buildings, reducing the overall building footprint, facilitating reduced travel, increasing carbon sequestration from existing and new properties, improving biodiversity on our sites, etc.

Integration

Regeneration – where the council is directly intervening in the property market to promote regeneration and economic development, particularly in town centres. Modernising Education – delivered primarily by Education, but will involve significant investment in our school buildings over the next five years.

Collaboration

This Asset Management Strategy has sought to align various asset plans with the council's strategic priorities, making sure that our property assets play a key role in delivering on these priorities.

Involvement

2. Encourage and enable everyone affected to be involved, if they so choose. 3. Engagement is planned and delivered in a timely and appropriate way. 5. The information provided will be jargon free, appropriate and understandable. 6. Make it easier for people to take part. 7. Enable people to take part effectively. 10. Learn and share lessons to improve the process of engagement.

Summary of impact

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

Main conclusions

Interaction and collaboration between services is key in identifying and addressing areas of success and opportunities for improvement. Periodic review of the report content will also ensure it remains relevant and applicable.

In order to manage any actions arising from this impact assessment, we may consider the establishment of a property officers forum to ensure there is regular and effective communication between key partner organisations and opportunities for joint working are identified and delivered.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

It should have a positive impact on collaboration across services and on the council's finances

Further actions required

Periodic review of the report to ensure up to date information and proactive reaction to the changing climate.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Identifying opportunities for green initiatives

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Identifying opportunities for improving infrastructure & ICT etc.

Economic development

Identifying areas for improvement e.g. investment in commercial opportunities

Quality skills for the long term

Opportunities for communities and joint working across services

Quality jobs for the long term

Close collaboration between services and external organisations

Childcare

Working with education and other services to create better environments

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Working directly with services should reduce any negative impacts

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Missed opportunities due to size of the project

Economic development

could possibly miss some opportunities

Quality skills for the long term

None anticipated

Quality jobs for the long term

None anticipated

Childcare

None anticipated

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Report provokes collaboration and interaction across various levels of the council as to ensure awareness of resilience. Following this, opportunities for improvement and potential challenges are explored as to maximise opportunities for improvement and reduce negative impacts.

Further actions required

Any negative impacts would be explored and reviewed as to ensure project feasibility

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Exploring opportunities for implementing green initiatives

Biodiversity in the built environment

Provokes discussion and collaboration between various departments and external groups

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Report scrutinizes the council's performance in regards to waste production as to identify opportunities for improvement

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Provokes discussion and collaboration between various departments and external groups to reduce energy and fuel consumption

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Report findings are accessible to and involve all levels, including Heads of service and CET. This is one the few opportunities where service managers etc. are able to see the detail of their building costs

Flood risk management

Provides service managers with an opportunity to discuss issues / potential issues around flooding and gives the Asset management team an opportunity to review and mitigate risk

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

None anticipated

Biodiversity in the built environment

Report may suggest redevelopment of sites to ensure suitability and sufficiency

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

This should only have positive impacts

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

None anticipated

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

None anticipated

Flood risk management

Potential lack of knowledge from individual services

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

A theme of the report is to identify opportunities for improvement within the community that puts our staff and citizens in the best position possible.

Further actions required

Collaboration with other departments and on going review of potential negative impacts as to reduce their impact.

Positive impacts identified:

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

The report identifies opportunities for improvement within the community that puts our staff and citizens in the best position possible

Access to good quality, healthy food

N/A

People's emotional and mental well-being

The report identifies opportunities for improvement within the community that puts our staff and citizens in the best position possible

Access to healthcare

N/A

Participation in leisure opportunities

Reports will assess accessibility to leisure opportunities, ensuring they are being maximised

Negative impacts identified:

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

None anticipated

Access to good quality, healthy food

N/A

People's emotional and mental well-being

None anticipated

Access to healthcare

N/A

Participation in leisure opportunities

None anticipated

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

N/A

Further actions required

N/A

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

N/A

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

N/A

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

N/A

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

N/A

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

N/A

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

N/A

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

N/A

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

N/A

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

A theme of the report is to identify opportunities for improvement within the community that puts our staff and citizens in the best position possible.

Further actions required

Continuous collaboration with all concerned parties and services

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

By providing the right buildings, in the right places for the right service delivery . The report identifies opportunities for community interaction and education.

Community participation and resilience

By providing the right buildings, in the right places for the right service delivery . The report identifies opportunities for community interaction and education.

The attractiveness of the area

By providing the right buildings, in the right places for the right service delivery . The report identifies opportunities for community interaction and education.

Connected communities

By providing the right buildings, in the right places for the right service delivery . The report identifies opportunities for community interaction and education.

Rural resilience

By providing the right buildings, in the right places for the right service delivery . The report identifies opportunities for community interaction and education.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

None anticipated

Community participation and resilience

None anticipated

The attractiveness of the area

None anticipated

Connected communities

None anticipated

Rural resilience

None anticipated

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Report involves interaction within the community and should only have a positive outcome in regards to the Welsh language and culture within Denbighshire

Further actions required

Maintain community interaction

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

It should encourage good practice around the use of the Welsh language through service collaboration

Promoting the Welsh language

Encourages a consistent and positive approach throughout the council

Culture and heritage

Encourages a consistent and positive approach throughout the council

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

None anticipated

Promoting the Welsh language

None anticipated

Culture and heritage

None anticipated

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The project involves and encourages interaction between all service professionals as reduce potential negative impacts and ensure improvement works are continued and capitalised on.

Further actions required

Interaction with service professionals as to minimise negative impacts.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

Current procurement systems already accommodate positive outcomes i.e. meets procurement regulation criteria

Human rights

Denbighshire are a responsible council and will only act in the interest of it's citizens

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

A theme of the plan is to provide the right buildings in the right places. Scrutiny of this is within the report and will identify further opportunities to do so.

Reducing climate change

As part of Denbighshire's council commitment to Net Carbon Zero, reducing our environmental impact is a priority.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

None anticipated

Human rights

None anticipated

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

None anticipated

Reducing climate change

Potential for building redevelopment / relocation

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Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	12th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Julie Matthews (Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities and Deputy Leader) / Markeus Woodworth (Interim Chief Digital Officer)
Head of Service	Helen Vaughan-Evans (Head of Corporate Support Performance, Digital and Assets)
Report author	Markeus Woodworth (Interim Chief Digital Officer)
Title	Update Report on Audit Wales “Digital Strategy Review”

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report relates to the Audit Wales report “Digital Strategy Review” which is based on fieldwork conducted during May to November 2023 and reported to us in February 2024. This report provides an update on the progress made against the recommendations contained within the Audit Wales report. A copy of the Audit Wales report is attached in Appendix 1. In addition to providing an update on the delivery of our existing Digital Strategy (Appendix 2) as we enter the final year of its life as it runs to the end of 2025.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To consider the progress made to date in addressing the four recommendations made by Audit Wales in its February 2024 report, the delivery of the existing Digital Strategy and considers the Council’s future plans for the development of new Digital Strategy which will be live 2026 onwards.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That the Committee considers the progress made against the four Audit Wales recommendations and note that this will help shape the approach taken to develop a new Digital Strategy for 2026 onwards.
- 3.2. That the Committee considers and comments on the progress made in the delivery of our existing Digital Strategy 2019 – 2025.

4. Report details

- 4.1. The Audit Wales review examined the Council's current Digital Strategy 2019 – 2025 (Appendix 2) along with conducting interviews with a sample of cabinet Members and senior officers and looked at the extent to which the Council's strategic approach to digital has been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle and that it will help to secure value for money in the use of the Council's resources.
- 4.2. The review found that:
 - The Council has a clearly articulated strategy which is understood by officers and Members. The strategy informs the development of digital projects within service areas. The strategy also aligns with the Council's other strategic plans.
 - The strategy was not informed by the views of residents or other data sources that could improve the Council's understanding of current and future issues that may impact on its strategic approach.
 - Whilst the Council works with some partners to deliver its strategic approach to digital, it has not considered all potential opportunities for partnership working.
 - The Council has not fully costed or identified all of the funding required to deliver its digital strategy.
 - The Council does not consistently assess the impact or value for money of digital projects or the digital strategy as a whole.
- 4.3. The Audit report made four recommendations. A copy of the Council's original Management Response is included in Appendix 3 which was considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on the 6th March 2024.
- 4.4. Recommendation 1 relates to the evidence base used to devise our current Digital Strategy. These recommendations will be acted upon in the development of the new

Digital Strategy for the Council running from 2026 onwards. The focus of this will be 'Digital for the Council' and with this in mind our customers will primarily be internal service areas. To understand their needs and barriers, a survey or workshop will be conducted.

- 4.5. Recommendation 2 relates to partnership working. The Council have identified and are already active in relevant and positive partnership arrangements. The Council will continue to be open to any new partnership opportunities and actively consider this when developing the new Digital Strategy once the existing comes to an end in 2025.
- 4.6. Recommendation 3 relates to the costing and resourcing of the strategy and recommends that the Council should fully cost the activity needed to deliver it. High level costings will be provided in next strategy with these costings finessed further as part of the business case development on a project-by-project basis during the delivery phase of the next strategy term.
- 4.7. Recommendation 4 relates to arrangements for monitoring value for money and impact including having a framework to support this in its digital projects. Actions around updating the relevant parts of our project management approach to include more specific documentation requirements around these points have been completed which further detail provided in Appendix 3.
- 4.8. The scope of Local Government Digital Strategies vary across Wales. The Council's current strategy is predominately inward looking and covers seven key areas. An update on the delivery of the strategy against the seven key areas is provided in appendix 4. As outlined in section 4.4 the next strategy will be similar in its focus, i.e. 'Digital in the Council'.
- 4.9. Please note any work being undertaken with regard to 'Digital in the Community' is now the responsibility area of the Community Resilience Team under Housing and Communities Service. An update on the work of that team with regard to internet connectivity across the County was provided to Performance Scrutiny Committee on 18th April 2024.

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

- 5.1. Having a strategy which sets out the strategic direction for Denbighshire County Council's ICT provision and concentrates further on the Digital aspirations of the Council contributes to the Council being a well-run, high performing Council by providing the technical infrastructure and direction for digital enabled change to continue to deliver well for our staff and residents. The current strategy has had a positive contribution to the Council becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030 in so much that it has supported the shift towards agile working and staff being able to work and connect remotely without need for commuting and/or business travel.

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

- 6.1 There are no cost implications associated with this report.

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

- 7.1. A Well-being impact assessment is not required as this report does not require a decision or proposal for change.

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

- 8.1. The Audit Wales review report has been considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on the 6th March 2024. As part of undertaking the audit, various officers of the Council would have inputted into the audit and agreed the final report, recommendations and actions.
- 8.2. An update on the work of the Community Resilience Team with regard to internet connectivity across the County was provided to Performance Scrutiny Committee on 18th April 2024.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 A Chief Finance Officer statement is not required.

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

10.1 There are no risks associated with the recommendations contained in point 3 above.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7 of the Council's Constitution.

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Digital Strategy Review – Denbighshire County Council

Audit year: 2022-23

Date issued: February 2024

Document reference: 4035A2024

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

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Report summary

Report summary

Exhibit 1: report summary

The exhibit below summarises the reason we undertook this audit, our key findings and recommendations for the Council.

Why a strategic approach to digital is important

- 1 Digital technology is key to delivering a wide range of council services in a more economic, efficient and effective way, is also an important means of councils delivering their wellbeing objectives and carrying out sustainable development.
- 2 Having a clearly articulated strategic approach to digital can bring several benefits such as:
 - establishing a common vision for use of digital and the intended outcomes for local communities linked to the council's strategic objectives;
 - helping to ensure that councils' use of digital technology is aligned with their key strategic objectives and other plans and strategies and is informed by a good understanding of current and future trends;
 - reducing the risk of duplication both within councils and with partners;
 - consideration of resourcing digital over the short, medium and longer term together; and
 - providing a framework against which to monitoring progress over the short, long and medium term.

The focus of our audit

- 3 We looked at the extent to which the Council's strategic approach to digital has been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle and that it will help to secure value for money in the use of the Council's resources.

Our key findings

- 4 The Council has a clearly articulated strategy which is understood by officers and Members. The strategy informs the development of digital projects within service areas. The strategy also aligns with the Council's other strategic plans.
- 5 The strategy was not informed by the views of residents or other data sources that could improve the Council's understanding of current and future issues that may impact on its strategic approach.
- 6 Whilst the Council works with some partners to deliver its strategic approach to digital, it has not considered all potential opportunities for partnership working.
- 7 The Council has not fully costed or identified all of the funding required to deliver its digital strategy.
- 8 The Council does not consistently assess the impact or value for money of digital projects or the digital strategy as a whole.

Our recommendations for the Council

Strengthening the evidence base

- R1 To help ensure that its next digital strategy is well informed, the Council should draw on a wider evidence base that includes:
- involving residents to understand their needs and the potential barriers they face accessing and using digital technology; and
 - using a range of external data sources:
 - the Council may find our audit criteria for **Questions 1.1** and **1.2** in **Appendix 1** helpful in considering this recommendation.
-

Partnership arrangements and collaboration

- R2 To help ensure the Council identifies all potential opportunities to improve the value for money and the impact of its strategic approach through partnership working, the Council should:
- identify potential organisations it could work in partnership with; and
 - where it enters into partnership arrangements, develop arrangements to assess and monitor their value for money.
-

Costing and resourcing the strategy

- R3 To help ensure that its digital strategy is deliverable and that the Council's ambitions are aligned with available resources, the Council should fully cost the activity needed to deliver it.
-

Arrangements for monitoring value for money and impact

- R4 To better understand the impact and value for money of digital projects and the digital strategy, the Council should develop a framework for assessing the value for money of digital projects and its overall strategic approach, including the extent to which planned savings are realised.

Detailed report

What we looked at and why – the scope of this audit

- 1 We reviewed the Council's strategic approach to digital, and specifically the extent to which this has been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle; and that it will help to secure value for money in the use of the Council's resources.
- 2 Our findings are based on document reviews and interviews with a sample of cabinet Members and senior officers. The evidence we have used to inform our findings is limited to these sources. We undertook this work during May to November 2023.
- 3 We set out to answer the question '**In developing its digital strategy has the Council acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle and put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of its resources?**' We did this by exploring the following questions:
 - Is the Council's digital strategy informed by a good understanding of current and future trends?
 - Does the Council have a clear vision of what it wants to achieve through the use of digital technology?
 - Is the Council working effectively with the right people and partners to design and deliver its digital strategy?
 - Has the Council resourced delivery of its digital strategy so it can deliver long-term/preventative benefits?
 - Is the Council monitoring and reviewing progress?
 - Is the Council learning lessons from how it works?
- 4 **Appendix 1** sets out the detailed questions we set out to answer along with the audit criteria we used to arrive at our findings.

Why we undertook this audit

- 5 This audit was undertaken to help fulfil the Auditor General's duties under section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 6 We sought to:
 - provide assurance that councils' digital strategies will help to deliver well-being objectives in a way that secures value for money in the use of resources;
 - provide assurance that councils are acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle in the design of their digital strategies;

- explain how councils are using/planning to use digital technology to meet people's needs and deliver better outcomes; and
- inspire and empower councils and other public sector bodies by identifying and sharing examples of notable practice/approaches where relevant.

The Council's digital strategy

- 7 The Council's digital strategy runs from 2019 to 2025. and covers eight key areas:
 - Aligning systems and technology to deliver online services
 - Corporate approach to ICT procurement
 - Reshaping how the Council works through technology
 - Addressing digital exclusion and supporting Denbighshire's digital economy
 - Resilience and Business continuity
 - Collaborative advantage
 - Prioritisation and managing expectations
- 8 Each key area includes actions that will contribute to delivering the strategy.

What we found: there are weaknesses in the evidence base the Council used to inform its digital strategy and its arrangements for monitoring its value for money and impact

The Council used a limited evidence base and did not engage directly with residents developing its digital strategy

- 9 The current digital strategy was informed by a range of activity, including:
 - an evaluation of the impact of the previous strategy;
 - workshops with the Chief Executive, senior officers and Members; and
 - a review of the digital strategies of local and national bodies to understand digital issues across the wider public sector.
- 10 The strategy also reflects the data and priorities included in other internal and external strategies, including the Council's Corporate Plan, the Public Services Board's Well-being Plan, and the North Wales Economic Ambition Forum.
- 11 The Council did not draw on other external data sources such as population and socio-economic data and, for example, the Welsh Government's Future Trends report. Use of wider data could help the Council better understand current and

future trends, and the underlying causes of current issues and how these might change over time.

- 12 During the development of its digital strategy, the Council did not engage directly with residents to allow their input into the strategy. The Council's view was that the strategy had an internal focus on changing systems and processes, and that service areas, which were consulted on the digital strategy, would be able to feed in the views of their service users. However, by not involving the full diversity of its communities in developing its strategic approach, the Council risks developing an approach that does not meet their needs, and therefore does not provide value for money.

The Council recognises the importance of partnership working and collaboration, but it has not considered all opportunities to maximise the potential of this activity

- 13 The Council has explored a range of opportunities to collaborate on digital activity, including:
- a new finance system, which was originally planned to be a collaboration with Conwy County Borough Council. Although this arrangement did not materialise.
 - the centralisation of schools' ICT provision, which included work with the Welsh Government and regional hubs, to ensure alignment with national strategies and guidance.
 - working with North Wales Tourism to make more tourist information available on the digital platforms of a range of partners.
- 14 The digital strategy also identifies a regional approach to improving digital infrastructure in North Wales and names the North Wales Economic Ambition Forum, the Welsh Government, and the Local Full Fibre Network as likely partners.
- 15 However, the Council has not sought to identify the full range of potential partners it could work with in developing and delivering its digital strategy. The Council also does not have systematic arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate the value for money of partnership arrangements it enters into. By not considering all potential opportunities for partnership working, the Council is potentially missing opportunities to improve the impact and value for money of its arrangements, how it formalises and monitors these arrangements, and how it identifies opportunities for collaboration.

The Council has not fully costed or identified resources to deliver its strategy

- 16 The Council has costed and allocated funding for some digital projects included in its digital strategy. For example:
- £300,000 from the Corporate Plan budget to develop a new website and online accessible services;
 - £200,000 from service reserves to replace the current core financial systems;
 - £250,000 to support the local implementation of a new social care information management system as part of the Welsh Government Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS) update; and
 - £220,000 from the Corporate Plan budget to facilitate community-based solutions for digital access.
- 17 The Council also funds a team of four Business Partners who work with service areas to promote the strategy and support service areas to develop digital projects to improve services.
- 18 However, the Council has not identified the cost or funding for the remaining activity identified in its digital strategy.
- 19 Identifying the cost and resources required to fund the digital strategy would help the Council to assess if its plans were deliverable and were able to deliver long-term benefits.

The Council has weaknesses in its arrangements to identify value for money and evaluate the impact of digital activity

- 20 The Council does not routinely apply its arrangements to evaluate the impact of digital projects. It also does not have a methodology to support service areas to calculate value for money in planned digital projects.
- 21 The Council monitors the progress of digital projects. The ICT Monitoring and Development group receives monthly updates from projects and manages a risk register to monitor projects. Medium and large-scale digital projects are also monitored by a Project Board and Project Sponsor. Cabinet Members are also invited to sit on the Project Board for projects in their portfolios.
- 22 However, there is no formal evaluation process to identify any efficiencies that are realised after a digital project is implemented. Service areas are asked to identify value for money opportunities as part of the development of digital projects, but there is no formal process to achieve this and no guidance to support service areas in this task. Additionally, there are no checks in place to identify if evaluation activity takes place in all digital projects and there is no mechanism for understanding the impact of the overall digital strategy.

- 23 As a result, the Council cannot identify the impact of its digital activity or assure itself that this activity is providing value for money.

The Council has arrangements to learn lessons from digital projects but does not review the overall effectiveness of its strategic approach or have systematic arrangements to share lessons learned from it

- 24 The Council's project management process for medium and large-scale projects includes a post-implementation evaluation of the project, which allows the Council to understand lessons learned.
- 25 The Council reviewed the success and impact of its previous digital strategy and used the findings of this activity to inform its current strategy. The Council has also reviewed the impact of COVID and used this learning to support the implementation of new flexible working procedures. This included recognising a need to improve its digital infrastructure to allow this change.
- 26 However, the Council does not have a process to ensure that lessons learned are systematically shared internally. This means that the Council is potentially missing opportunities to identify and share learning that could improve the value for money and impact of its strategic approach to digital.

Appendix 1

Audit questions and audit criteria

Below are the questions we sought to answer in carrying out this audit, along with the audit criteria we used to arrive at our findings.

Main audit question: **In developing its digital strategy has the Council acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle and put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of its resources?**

Exhibit 2: audit questions and audit criteria

Level 2 questions	Level 3 questions	Criteria
1. Is the Council's digital strategy informed by a good understanding of current and future trends?	1.1 Is there is a thorough understanding of the 'as is' (ie current demand/issues to be addressed) and the reasons why/underlying causes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has drawn on a broad range of information from internal and external sources to develop a thorough understanding of the 'as is' and how it is likely to change. This includes information (including data) relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – service sustainability/resilience and resourcing challenges. – the needs of citizens and communities. – the underlying causes of current demand/issues to be addressed. – analysis of future trends and how they might impact, eg social, economic/political, environmental, cultural or technological. They might include known trends eg ageing population, depleting natural resources and particularly technological advances. They might also include those with a higher level of uncertainty eg jobs and skills needed in the future. • The analysis of the 'as is' and how it is likely to change is well informed by involvement activity, as appropriate, that reflects recognised good practice (eg National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales advice and guidance).
	1.2 Is there a thorough understanding of the long-term factors that will impact and the challenges and opportunities that may result (eg risks and opportunities)?	

Level 2 questions	Level 3 questions	Criteria
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council uses its evidence base effectively to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identify actions in its strategic approach to digital that are likely to be most effective and why, including how they could address the root causes of problems; – inform decisions around its use of digital technology that seek to balance the need to meet short and longer-term objectives.
<p>2. Does the Council have a clear vision of what it wants to achieve through the use of digital technology?</p>	<p>2.1 Is the Council planning over an appropriate timescale?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has considered what long term means in planning its approach to digital – ie how far ahead it can/should plan and why (at least ten years with consideration of longer-term trends as appropriate). • The Council has considered how actions can deliver the best impact over that timeframe in terms of outcomes and most effective use of resources. This could include consideration of appropriate intervention points linked to the Commissioner’s definition of prevention. (More details can be found in: <u>Taking account of the Well-being of Future Generations Act in the budget process – The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales</u>). • The Council has set out measures for its digital strategy that reflect short and long-term impacts and value for money, with milestones that reflect progress as appropriate. • The Council has set out how its digital strategy will be resourced over the longer term as far as is practical (see also criteria relating to integration).
	<p>2.2 Has the Council thought about the wider impacts its digital strategy could have, including:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has considered how its digital strategy can make a contribution across the well-being goals. • Staff developing the digital strategy understand what colleagues and partners do and how their work relates, and have sought to integrate their

Level 2 questions	Level 3 questions	Criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how it could contribute to each of the seven national well-being goals? • how delivery will impact on the other things it is trying to achieve (ie its well-being objectives and wider priorities)? • how delivery will impact on other what other public bodies are trying to achieve (ie their well-being objectives)? 	<p>work with that of their colleagues from across the Council and with partner organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration is evident in the alignment of the digital strategy with other key corporate strategies and service plans. For example medium-term financial plan, workforce plan, asset management strategies, well-being statement and carbon reduction plans. • The digital strategy is aligned with other strategic intents such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – customer experience; – management of demand/reductions in demand failure and prevention; and – design and implementation of new service delivery models. • The Council's digital strategy aligns with the plans/strategies of local and national partners including the Welsh Government's Digital Strategy for Wales Digital strategy and well-being plans.
	<p>2.3 Is there a wide and common understanding of what the Council is trying to achieve?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors and senior officers responsible for implementing the digital strategy have a common and clear understanding of what the Council is trying to achieve and the intended impact on service delivery. • The Council's digital strategy is clearly communicated to staff and partners who may help deliver it.

Level 2 questions	Level 3 questions	Criteria
<p>3. Is the Council working effectively with the right people and partners to design and deliver its digital strategy</p>	<p>3.1 Has the Council identified who it needs to involve?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a good understanding of who will be directly and indirectly affected by its digital strategy and who it needs to involve. • The Council has effectively involved the full diversity of views in developing its digital strategy, including from non-traditional sources and from those it may have previously failed to reach.
	<p>3.2 Is the Council effectively involving the full diversity of people affected by its digital strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has provided genuine opportunities for people to influence the design and delivery of its digital strategy from an early stage, including representatives of groups who share protected characteristics. • The Council has used the results of involvement to shape the design and delivery of its digital strategy.
	<p>3.3 Is the Council collaborating effectively with the right partners?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is collaborating to ensure it delivers better outcomes and value for money through its digital strategy and has put appropriate arrangements in place to support this, for example for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – sharing or pooling expertise and resources; – sharing information; – ensuring effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability including consideration of value for money.

Level 2 questions	Level 3 questions	Criteria
<p>4. Has the Council resourced delivery of its digital strategy so it can deliver long-term/preventative benefits?</p>	<p>4.1 Does the Council understand long-term resource implications?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has assessed the costs and benefits of using digital technology to invest in long-term, preventative approaches and the cost (both financial and in terms of outcomes) of not doing so. • The Council has thought about the resources it will need to deliver its digital strategy over the medium and longer term (whole life costs) and how it could manage risks/meet those costs including, for example, planned 'invest to save' initiatives and managed reductions in technical debt. • The Council has calculated and set out any savings it intends to make through implementing its digital strategy.
	<p>4.2 Does the Council allocate resources to deliver better outcomes over the long-term?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action (including preventative action) that is likely to contribute to better outcomes and/or use of resources over the longer term is promoted and supported, even: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – where this may limit the ability to meet some short-term needs; – where the benefits are likely to be accrued by or attributed to another organisation.

Level 2 questions	Level 3 questions	Criteria
5. Is the Council monitoring and reviewing progress?	5.1 Is the Council monitoring and reviewing progress towards, short, medium and longer-term objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council monitors the costs and benefits of delivering its digital strategy from a value for money perspective. • The Council is measuring the wider contribution the digital strategy is making across its own/partnership objectives. • Progress is measured against short, medium and long-term objectives.
6. Is the Council learning lessons from how it works?	6.1 Does the Council review the effectiveness of its digital strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of its digital strategy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – effectiveness of its collaborative activity; – effectiveness of its involvement activity, including the impact of the strategy on service users including those who are digitally excluded; – the impact of the strategy on those who share protected characteristics; – the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the digital strategy overall in helping the Council to achieve its strategic objectives. • The Council has reviewed lessons learned from its response to the pandemic and is applying this learning to its digital strategy.
	6.2 Does the Council share lessons learned from its approach to its digital strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council shares and applies any lessons learned from the development and delivery of its digital strategy widely across the organisation, and with partners where relevant.



Audit Wales

Tel: 029 2032 0500

Fax: 029 2032 0600

Textphone: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: info@audit.wales

Website: www.audit.wales

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

Appendix 2

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

DIGITAL STRATEGY

2019-2025

Author: Barry Eaton, Chief Digital Officer

Business Improvement and Modernisation

Version 1.3

Content

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Introduction

This document replaces and builds on the core strategic aims and objectives set out in the County Council's last ICT Strategy which ran from 2015-2019 many of the key principles of that strategy remain valid. An Interim Review of the 2015-2019 Strategy was carried out in March 2018 and is attached to this document as an addendum. During the time frame of the last strategy local government has seen unprecedented change with extensive cuts to council budgets and it is important to note that Denbighshire's ICT function has reduced its staffing and overall budget by 20%. It is vital that when adopting this new Digital Strategy, the Council recognises the constraints past and future cuts will have on delivery and the need to prioritise according to the principals set out in the Council's Corporate Plan which runs 2017-2022.

In addition to setting out the strategic direction for Denbighshire's ICT provision, this document will concentrate further on the Digital aspirations of the Council for the period 2019-2025.

The key areas of this Strategy are:

- Aligning systems and technology to deliver truly online council services
- A corporate approach to ICT procurement
- Reshaping how the council works though technology
- Addressing digital exclusion and supporting Denbighshire's digital economy
- Resilience and Business Continuity
- Flexible use of assets by always on connectivity
- Collaborative advantage
- Prioritisation and managing expectations

Aligning systems and technology to deliver truly online council services



Much of the work undertaken in delivering the last strategy was done to bring the Council's ICT assets up to date and to make the very best use of recent investments and the Council's enterprise agreement.

Notable large-scale system implementations such as Open Housing, the C360 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Tascomi in Planning and Public Protection have demonstrated that the centralised approach to IT acquisitions, implementation and support has proved successful as previous implementations of Open Housing and CRM had failed. The implementations of Open Housing and CRM were particularly difficult as both systems had been procured prior to centralisation and the scale of the work needed both by ICT and within services was largely underestimated and this has provided valuable experience for the future.

During the lifecycle of this new Digital Strategy the Council will re-procure more large-scale technological solutions notably:

- A new website to ensure Council information and services are accessible online will be commissioned towards the end of 2019 and funded from the Corporate Plan Budget at a cost of £300k
- Replacement core financial systems will be procured, potentially in collaboration with neighbouring local authorities, acquisition costs projected to be £200k funded from service reserves and annual costs similar to current commitments.
- A pan Wales solution for the provision for social care information management (WCCIS Wales Community Care Information System) to facilitate cross sector working. Implementation of WCCIS is likely to begin in 2020 with an uplift in cost of £250k across the lifetime of this strategy.

The central ICT Service has established itself as the Technological Leader for the Council but there are still some areas of the Council where more work is

needed to fully embrace this and the current Centralised Support Services Review (CSSR) will no doubt aid to addressing this.

The majority of systems in use across the Council are now considered fit for purpose but a more centralised strategic approach to their use is needed. This will lead to further back office efficiencies, better supplier management and easier implementation of the Council's digital ambitions as further consolidation will lead to less systems to implement, support and integrate. This is particularly important as the Council itself gets smaller and the need for fully online services is fulfilled.

The provision of a single online sign on for citizens utilising a single corporate CRM should be a core requirement of any public facing IT acquisitions here on.

Key message:

By taking a fully corporate and customer centric approach to aligning systems across the Council consolidating where possible the council will be more able to deliver online services to customers as well as delivering efficiencies in back office processes to offset the impacts of reducing the size of the Council. This will be achieved by working with services earlier and treating acquisitions previously seen as departmental as corporate. HR and Payroll are good examples of this and during the lifetime of this Strategy the Council will move to a single provider encompassing both.

A corporate approach to ICT procurement



Considerable progress has been made in recent years whereby it is almost unheard of that a service would go out and procure a system in isolation. Changes to the Council's constitution requiring the Chief Digital Officers approval and stronger inter service relationships through the ICT Business

Partners have certainly created a far better environment although there is still much work to be done in gaining a complete picture of all the Council's ICT expenditure and contracts.

Although the central ICT function is much more aware of ICT procurements it still does not have sight of ALL contracts particularly those which still reside in services and are renewed perhaps annually without hitting the thresholds for re-procurement. A large reason for this is that the budget for the vast majority of ICT systems remain in services and this is a blockage to delivering contract efficiencies, the population of the Council's corporate ICT contracts register and contract alignment to facilitate consolidation and standardisation of systems which was one of the goals of the outgoing strategy. There is a need to centralise ALL ICT expenditure including annual contract costs and associated budgets should be centralises to underpin and achieve this.

Key Message:

The Council needs to manage its total investment in ICT more robustly to ensure that best value is achieved and other parts of this strategy are fundamentally linked to a corporate approach to procurement. As such a review of all spend on ICT related expenditure will be undertaken during the first year of this Strategy with recommendations taken to CET and SLT highlighting areas where budgets should to be centralised.

Reshaping how the Council works though technology



Council's cannot continue to deliver council services in the same way as they have done traditionally, to attempt to do so will risk their ability to provide core and statutory services. A fundamental shift to modern, device agnostic, integrated, technology led, efficient and consolidated solutions will help enable Denbighshire to maintain its provision of services against a backdrop

of uncertainty and the probable continuation of cuts to budget. Again, it is vitally important that the corporate centralised approach adopted in the past strategy is not only maintained but expanded to include systems, contracts and resources not yet realised.

Key Message:

During the first year of this strategy, work will be undertaken to capture the termination date of ALL ICT related contracts. This will enable a planned approach to re-procurement or contract extensions.

Requirements will be mapped against existing provision thereby removing duplication and lesser the need for multiple vendors, systems and integrations providing a more robust and efficient digital environment across the Council.

Addressing Digital Exclusion and Supporting Denbighshire's Digital Economy



As the Council strives to deliver services online wherever possible, for example for transactions, applications for jobs, planning, social housing, licensing etc it is important that the Council does not lose sight of those citizens and business' who may require assistance in accessing services online or indeed have no alternative but to converse with the Council in a more traditional way. Often it will be the most vulnerable and most at need who require assistance and the council needs to be innovative in its approach, by investigating further the potential to introduce or certainly sign post people to appropriate partners or agencies to assist, as well perhaps having a digital presence in communities with assistance available or indeed supplying using AI to support assisted living.

In collaboration regional partners thorough the NWEAB the Council sees a regional approach as being the best option for ensuring that Denbighshire along with the rest of the North Wales region gets the best provision of high-speed fibre and mobile coverage working in partnership to secure funding

either directly from Welsh Government or Westminster. On a more local level where these interventions are unlikely due to lack of critical mass or lack of commercial viability the council will seek to assist communities in developing innovative community-based solutions, either directly where able to do so or by signposting to other information sources or to cooperatives with similar goals. £220k has been allocated in the Corporate Plan budget to facilitate this.

Key Message:

A regional approach providing digital infrastructure is best option for achieving mobile and high-speed fibre this will be achieved during the lifecycle of this strategy in collaboration through the NWEAB and LLFN which will upgrade fibre provision to public buildings as well as completing new fibre builds to strategy commercial premises.

Resilience and Business Continuity



During the last strategies lifecycle, a more investment was made to improve Business Continuity and Resilience rather than to depend on Disaster Recovery (DR) arrangements when things go wrong. The rationale being that good business continuity arrangements would allow the Council's ICT function to continue to operate without instigating DR arrangements. This has proved invaluable where increased capacity and resilience has allowed the Council's ICT provision to meet increased demand during snowfall allowing staff to work remotely, utilising increased provision for internet bandwidths and remote working. As the Council's systems continue to be consolidated and accessed from anywhere staff have a broadband or mobile data connection the requirement for physical office space will continue to fall and this in turn allows staff to work from where they need to be or indeed if they are unable to access their usual place of working.

Maintaining and ensuring existing infrastructure and systems is fundamental to resilience and business continuity and by taking a more corporate approach to the management of the Council's entire ICT spend and budget means that high cost technology refreshes can be planned and budgeted for in advance. The following notably commitments will need to be considered for investment during this strategy:

- EDRMS (Electronic Document Management System): although only recently considered as business as usual the technology has been in use for here for nearly 10 years and will need revisiting and any upgrade or replacement needs to include the ability to share live working documents collaboratively with external partners as well as internally. Experience dictates that the likely cost of replacement being in the region of £300k.
- ICT Core Infrastructure: Towards the end of this strategy a technology refresh of the Council's physical ICT infrastructure will need to be scoped. The ICT infrastructure strategy will need to be reviewed in 2022-23 potentially placing more emphasis on Cloud infrastructure and fully adopting wireless as the default access method for connectivity. Although annual capital funding is likely to cover any acquisition costs this is on the premise that current capital budgets remain and there may be a requirement for additional funding on a case by case basis dictated by business need.

Key Message:

More emphasis on Business Continuity rather than to depend on Disaster Recovery arrangements when things go wrong. An offshoot of which being increased availability to support 24/7 ICT operations.

Flexible use of assets by always on connectivity



The decision taken previously to provide staff with laptops as standard as opposed to desktop PCs allows staff to work flexibly across the council's portfolio of offices and from home. More recently the investment in improved wireless provision across our buildings means that hot desking is now far easier and with early adoption of GovRoam staff will have seamless access to Denbighshire's and its partners ICT functions from across multiple public sector locations such as Health and other Local Authorities buildings.

In addition to taking strategic interventions to ensure Denbighshire's citizens and visitors have access to broadband and mobile data in turn these interventions will enable Denbighshire's workforce to become truly mobile using cellular data services and mobile devices such as phones and tablets to access integrated back office systems seamlessly. The use of such technologies has been and will continue to be a huge enabler in the reduction and consolidation of office space and the modernisation of the council.

Key Message:

During the lifetime of this strategy there will be a further shift towards flexible working is highly likely and ICT services will be expected to be available to staff 24/7 as well as the ability to work from almost anywhere moving away from CAG to a certificate-based authentication method during 2019/2020 and the roll out of WebEx will further enhance this capability.

Collaborative Advantage



The Council already has several ICT collaborations that include regional and national partnerships, (see addendum), and will continue to develop collaborations with partners be they hosted in Denbighshire, partner organisations, nationally or in the cloud. Collaborations should remain an option when procuring or re-procuring when it is advantageous to do so.

Key Message:

Collaborations should remain an option when procuring or re-procuring when its advantageous to do so.

Prioritisation and Managing Expectations



At the beginning of this document reference was made to the unprecedented change and extensive cuts to Council budgets. Some of the impact of this can be offset by capital investment at the beginning of projects for installation and commissioning of new acquisitions but capacity for change will affect the pace at which we can deliver new initiatives, so the Council will need to prioritise.

ADDENDUM:

ICT Strategy Interim Review 2015-19

The purpose of this addendum is to review progress against the 'Business Transformation & ICT Strategy 2015-2019' that the Council approved and adopted in September 2015.

Strategic Principles

1. Consolidation & Standardisation

A fundamental part of the Strategy is to make the very best use of the Council's Microsoft Enterprise Agreement, (EA), which licenses the Council's use of some core Microsoft products such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook as well as desktop and servers operating systems. Moreover, the EA now provides for disk encryption and device management across the Council's IT assets replacing the previous incumbent solutions and providing cost savings.

Significant progress has been made in replacing the old Lotus Notes corporate email system with Microsoft Exchange (Outlook), this brings the Council's email system up to date and allows it to integrate seamlessly with other applications and systems. One such system is the new corporate telephone system that includes Unified Communications and has been rolled out across the Council. The new system includes diary integration and presence awareness through Jabber as well as voice and video calls directly to officer's laptops regardless of their location, (including home working).

Support for core Housing and Social Care systems has been centralised and staff transferred from departments along with the systems they supported, in so doing reducing single points of failure and amalgamating support across multiple staff and facilitating knowledge transfer.

2. Systems Acquisition

The process for all IT acquisitions has been consolidated centrally and the Council's Constitution updated to underpin and ensure that the Business Transformation & ICT Manager signs off IT acquisitions across the Council.

Business Transformation & ICT, (BT&ICT), have led the Council's re-engagement with Civica for the new CRM system acquisition. The ICT Business Partners have developed good relationships with services, which means that BT&ICT is proactively involved in potential ICT acquisitions much sooner than had been the case previously. Examples of this include CRM, Tascomi in Planning & Public Protection and current work includes Finance and HR, but there has been progress across all services.

3. Use of Data

Some progress has been made with developing a Business intelligence capability but there is more to do in this area. Current emphasis is on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Retention issues. There is also need to review the Council's GIS provision to ascertain if the current software continues to meet the council's requirements and budget priorities.

Delivery Approach

1. Supplier Management

Progress has been made in amalgamating contracts and supplier information centrally by placing contract information onto Proactis. This will provide a clearer view of spend across the council as a whole and allow contracts to be negotiated centrally with suppliers who have previously had multiple contracts with a number of service areas. Coordinating contracts, spend and account management gives the Council more leverage when negotiating contracts. Although good progress made so far, more work is needed to align budgets and capture contract renewals as well as new procurements.

2. Working with partners

There are well over a dozen examples of collaborative working that include regional and national partnerships. Examples include regional working for Parking Enforcement hosted by Denbighshire, Capita One hosted by Flintshire regionally and national collaborations on IT Security and hardware purchases.

3. Data Retention

Work undertaken on GPDR and data retention. Out of date Id data has been removed as part of a pilot in Business Improvement & Modernisation. It is planned that this will be extended across the Council. Further work is required to embed the need to review continuously what data we retain, potentially by utilising further Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS) modules.

Technical Improvements

1. Scalable Infrastructure

Work complete on second internet feed in the north to enhance business continuity and resilience and has been successfully tested in a corporate exercise and recent bad weather. Live servers now operate in both the north and the south of the County with failover. Remote access (CAG) is now available from both sites, with an increase from 250 to 750 concurrent remote users.

2. Server Environment

Critical hardware for the PARIS Social Care system is now live and replacement hardware for legacy financial systems procured and on site in testing.

Virtual Servers renewal is underway, funded though the ICT Development Plan and next year's planned spend brought forward into this financial year.

3. Networking Environment

Firewalls in Ruthin replaced and cascaded to Rhyl.

Wireless infrastructure replacement underway. This will also be cascaded to schools

4. Systems and database support

Business Systems are changing the way in which we handle support calls. Instead of treating PARIS separately, we will be dealing with all requests in the same manner. We will also be implementing a new rota where all of our Business Support Officers share support between them. The aim is to standardise our support approach, to broaden knowledge of systems, to share learning and to share the PARIS support across the entire team, this is effective from April 2018, and support for Open Housing will follow the same approach.

What's changed?

1. External Environment

Efficiencies may mean we cannot do everything in the strategy. With Local Government Reorganisation potentially on the horizon there may be less emphasis on consolidating systems internally and more focus on a collaborative approach to amalgamating systems across Councils or regionally.

The growing expectations of customers and the need to keep up with the technology they use daily, such as social media, mobile apps and 24/7 services.

The advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) mean it is now something that we can use to help deliver services, particularly in areas such as social care helping people to live independently for longer.

2. Corporate Plan

There is a greater emphasis on enabling and engaging citizens and most transactional services need to be available online.

The trend for Flexible working is likely to continue. Technologies such as webex for video conferencing will perhaps become standard, not only for Council officers but also with partners and citizens.

BT&ICT has a key innovation and technical role in the delivery of the

Digital Futures programme.

Priorities

1. Growing expectations of customers

Support services to develop online transactional Services

Enabling communities to be digitally connected.

Improving Denbighshire's Digital Infrastructure

2. Managing efficiencies

There are some of the things in the Strategy we may not be able to do so prioritising work is required – halting the work to replace Lotus databases is one such example - we need to have a flexible approach.

Budget alignment across services will need to reflect the centralisation of systems and support.

Budget pressures mean that BT&ICT capacity will need to be reviewed.

Focusing on increasing self-help could mitigate the impact of budget pressures.

3. Consolidation

Review of Payroll and iTrent needs to be completed.

Revs & Bens (IT) contract needs to be reviewed.

4. Next Steps in flexible working

Consider successor applications to current remote access (CAG) solution, in order to simplify sign on without compromising security.

Promote the increased use of WebEx across the Council and with partners and citizens.

Organisational response

Report title: Digital Strategy Review

Council: Denbighshire County Council

Completion date: January 2024

Document reference:

Page 171

Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	Responsible officer (title)
R1	<p>Strengthening the evidence base</p> <p>To help ensure that its next digital strategy is well informed, the Council should draw on a wider evidence base, that includes:</p>	<p>It is acknowledged the evidence-based information informing the existing strategy is unclear, which will be rectified in the design and development of the new strategy, with this information included in the strategy document's introduction or appendix.</p>	<p>December 2025 (for the new strategy to be in place)</p>	<p>Markeus Woodworth (Interim Chief Digital Officer)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involving residents to understand their needs and the potential barriers they face accessing and using digital technology; and Using a range of external data sources. <p>The Council may find our audit criteria for Questions 1.1 and 1.2 in Appendix 1 helpful in considering this recommendation.</p>	<p>The existing Digital Strategy for the Council runs until 2025. The focus of this will be 'Digital for the Council' and with this in mind our customers will primarily be internal service areas. To understand their needs and barriers, a survey or workshop will be conducted.</p>	<p>December 2025 (for the new strategy to be in place)</p>	<p>Markeus Woodworth (Interim Chief Digital Officer)</p>
R2	<p>Partnership arrangements and collaboration</p> <p>To help ensure the Council identifies all potential opportunities to improve the value for money and impact of its strategic approach through partnership working the Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify potential organisations it could work in partnership with; where it enters into partnership arrangements, develops arrangements to assess and monitor their value for money 	<p>Partnership working is crucial. We have partnerships in place already including joint procurement with other local authorities sub-regionally, regionally, and pan-Wales. We assess the business case for any joint procurement before entering into arrangements.</p> <p>We also work in collaboration with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, and partnerships in WARP Cybersecurity and other joint initiatives across Wales including SOCITM and WLGA Digital. The NWEAB work is subject to 5 case business case process. The partnerships in WARP etc are more informal networks and information sharing arrangements.</p> <p>Whilst we are open to any new partnership opportunities, we feel we have identified and are already active in relevant and positive partnership arrangements</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

R3	<p>Costing and resourcing the strategy</p> <p>To help ensure that its digital strategy is deliverable and that the Council's ambitions are aligned with available resources the Council should fully cost the activity needed to deliver it.</p>	<p>Costing of projects are done on a project-by-project basis.</p> <p>High level costings will be provided in next strategy.</p> <p>However, please note: budgets set year on year, so the Council won't be able to get commitment for delivery of 5-year strategy upfront.</p> <p>Bidding in via the annual capital bloc allocation process will also be explored.</p> <p>The Council will look externally for grant funding e.g., for implementing school-based projects, corporate ICT/Digital doesn't historically benefit from grants.</p>	<p>December 2025 (for the new strategy to be in place)</p> <p>November annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Markeus Woodworth (Interim Chief Digital Officer)</p> <p>Markeus Woodworth (Interim Chief Digital Officer)</p> <p>Markeus Woodworth (Interim Chief Digital Officer)</p>
R4	<p>Arrangements for monitoring value for money and impact</p> <p>To better understand the impact and value for money of digital projects and the digital strategy the Council should develop a framework for assessing the value for money of digital projects and its overall strategic approach, including the extent to which planned savings are realised</p>	<p>The Council's performance management system Verto has been updated to include a section on the Business Case justification to demonstrate value for money and this is linked to the corporate plan.</p> <p>Additionally, within the closure report as well as being a section on costs whereby you can record the on-going costs there is a cashable benefits section whereby</p>	<p>N/A- completed</p> <p>N/A- completed</p>	<p>Jo Douglass (Lead Project Manager)</p> <p>Jo Douglass (Lead Project Manager)</p>

the savings can be detailed. So, these can be recorded for the project.

Appendix 4- Denbighshire County Council Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025) progress delivery update- September 2024

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
Page 175	<p>1 Aligning systems and technology to deliver online services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Registrars certificate ordering and booking system has been implemented and DCC are in a position where we could take the next step to providing online services to residents/customers subject to approval by the Superintendent Registrars. • A new online portal has been implemented for Planning allowing the searching of and commenting on planning applications. This went live in May 2024. • An education portal for admissions is scheduled to go live in September 2024. • Plans to implement a new CRM have commenced. We are looking at technologies and platforms that can deliver more than simple CRM functionality such as offering the ability to create bespoke applications and forms and simplify integration. This is also an opportunity to reduce the number of applications the Council purchases and introduction of single-customer sign-on. • Market research has taken place for an integrated HR and Payroll application. This will continue and will inform the procurement strategy. • The Council has advertised an Invitation to Tender for a new Social Care system. Subject to final political approval, this system will bring opportunities for increased online services such as online submission of referrals. • The new social care finance application currently being implemented will include a provider portal allowing organisations to view documents and submit invoices and related data to the Council. • The replacement corporate finance system went live in April 2024. • A new corporate website went live in 2019.

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New mobile applications have been implemented in Youth Services and Children's Social Care.• ICT will be supporting an all-Wales implementation of a new Library Management System (LMS) over summer and autumn 2024.• The Council went live with a new Operations Management System for Waste and Recycling in summer 2024 which integrates with our CRM system, allowing for efficiencies in how enquiries and requests are processed. This is a single system consolidating what was previously at least three applications into one i.e. refuse, garden waste, contaminated waste.• The implementation of the Housing Management System allowed the consolidation of two separate applications into one. This also gave rise to providing direct access to systems for trade operatives in Housing Repairs and Maintenance.• An information systems strategy is currently being developed with Housing Services and this is expected to be published in the Autumn of 2024.• Implementation of a new Coroners management system which allows online reporting of unexpected deaths. This went live in 2020.• A new Case Management System (CMS) for Legal Services went live in 2024.• A replacement system to manage FOI, EIR and SAR was implemented in 2022.• A digital preservation for the long-term storage of digital records is due to be implemented, potentially providing means for members of the public to search for records online.• The implementation of Microsoft Teams has led to efficiencies in travel time and spending and has led to other benefits including staff wellbeing.

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of webchat functionality for Council Tax which has led to a channel shift and a reduction in processing time for enquiries taken via that channel.
2	Corporate approach to ICT procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT procurements are channelled via ICT and require ICT sign-off, however, the timeliness of requesting ICT involvement is not always early enough in the process. Some Service-led projects do not always utilise sufficient ICT expertise which can lead to less desirable outcomes. More work is required in this area. Procurement and ICT Teams have developed good, well-established relationships. An internal audit investigation into ICT procurement concluded in 2024 and the service was judged to be of medium assurance.
3	Reshaping how the Council works through technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please see comments in row 1 (“Aligning systems and technology to deliver online services”)
Page 177	Addressing digital exclusion and supporting Denbighshire’s digital economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Resilience Team have been working closely with Cwmpas and their Digital Confidence Denbighshire project (https://cwmpas.coop/digital-confidence-denbighshire/), promoting the work they do and arranging digital drop-in sessions in our Community Centres. The team are also part of eCymru (https://ecymru.co.uk/) which is a housing portal for tenants to join and access several different courses or sessions across Wales. A Digital Skills Audit has been carried out with our social housing tenants to see if they need any digital help, such as keeping personal information safe online or general digital skills. This Digital Inclusion work aims to achieve three goals: ‘Access to connectivity’, ‘Access to devices/ provision to access the internet’ and ‘Skills and confidence to navigate the online world’.

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of this work, the team have a dedicated Digital Officer working closely with Openreach and local communities to look at options to improve available internet speed. A progress report on this work was presented at the Performance Scrutiny Committee in April this year. Report can be read here: Broadband Connectivity Report.
5	Resilience and Business continuity	<p>A lot of investment has taken place to improve Denbighshire’s Business Continuity and Resilience. Over the past five years we have seen the following improvements as well as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to the pandemic, Council employees demonstrated their ability to rapidly adapt and make use of new technology; continuing to provide services for residents whilst moving to remote working arrangements. Improved our Disaster Recovery (DR) by moving away from the traditional approach of using third-party companies to provide this to delivering it in-house across our two datacentres in Ruthin and Rhyl. Introduced a new backup and recovery hardware across our datacentres removing the need for tape to be used in the event of DR making it quicker and easier to restore systems. Development of a Cyber Security Strategy to underpin our Digital Strategy which sets out our approach for protecting our information systems and the data they hold to ensure the services we provide are secure and our residents, businesses and stakeholders can safely transact with us. This includes achieving a balance of embracing digital opportunities, including making information more widely available and accessible, whilst ensuring that the right levels of protection are in place.

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber Breach Ransomware Workshop provided by WLGA to be able to better respond to a cyber security incident. • Investigation of Ransomware technologies to better prevent attacks. • From 2024 and the rationalisation of buildings we are looking to move to Wireless as a primary method of connection.
6	Collaborative advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative procurements have or are being undertaken for the following services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education Management System ○ Library Management System ○ Additional Learning Needs System ○ Legal Case Management System ○ EdTech Dynamic Purchasing System ○ Social Care Case Management System ○ Social Care Finance System ○ Blue Badge System ○ Hybrid Mail Solution ○ North East Wales Archives Services (NEWA) ○ Multi-Function Device Contract ○ Public Protection Case Management System ○ Data Centre Framework for the procurement of services, hardware and maintenance. ○ Computer Network Framework for the procurement of services, hardware and maintenance.

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT will continue to consider collaborative procurements as and when appropriate. This approach is supported via the shared Procurement Team with Flintshire County Council, which enables us to be well-informed of any future procurements taking place and opportunities to collaborate on between, at least, the two Councils.
7	Prioritisation and managing expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT and Digital Services Department continue to deliver as effectively as possible with ever reducing resources. • Work is needed in this area to ensure that the prioritisation of major projects is transparent and decided by senior management in collaboration with ICT. • Competing priorities and difficulties in managing and meeting service expectations is expected to continue.

Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	12 September 2024
Head of Service	Catrin Roberts, Head of Corporate Support Service: People
Report author	Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Title	Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The report seeks Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to review its draft forward work programme (see Appendix 1). As part of its review the Committee is asked to reflect on how Scrutiny can support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and its aim of becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030, whilst also prioritising matters which the Committee deems important to scrutinise.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

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

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee

- 3.1 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate; and
- 3.2 determines whether any key messages or themes from the current meeting should be publicised via the press and/or social media.

4. Report details

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

- Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues.

4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on Scrutiny's business agenda they have to submit a formal request to the SCVCG seeking Scrutiny to consider a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of scrutinising suggested subjects.

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

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this

purpose, a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

Progress on Committee Resolutions

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

5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

5.1 Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 20 May to consider applications received for topics to be scrutinised. During that meeting three topics were referred to this Committee for detailed examination. The subjects referred are:

- Digital Strategy Review (on current meeting's agenda)
- Draft Asset Management Strategy 2024-29 (on current meeting's agenda)
- Annual Report of the North Wales Regional Emergency Planning Service 2023/24 (listed for presentation at the December 2024 meeting - see Work Programme attached at Appendix 1).

5.2 The Group's next scheduled meeting is on 16 September 2024.

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

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

6.2 Whilst the decision on the Committee's forward work programme itself will have a neutral contribution on the Council's aim of becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030, the Committee by effectively scrutinising all matters examined by it can help support the delivery of this ambition.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

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

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Note: Items entered in italics have not been approved for submission by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
7 November	Cllr. Barry Mellor	1. Blue Flag Status for Denbighshire's Beaches (Reps from NRW & Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water to be invited to attend)	To explore the work being undertaken with partner organisations in a bid to received blue flag status accreditation for as many as possible of the county's beaches	To seek assurances or make recommendations to ensure that all partners are working effectively together to achieve the accreditation with a view to boosting the local tourism and recreational economy and ultimately lead to wider economic benefits and support the delivery of a greener, fairer, safer and more equal Denbighshire	Emlyn Jones/Paul Jackson	By SCVCG July 2023 (in response to a Notice of Motion to County Council)
	Leader	2. North Wales Economic Ambition Board	To consider the Board's Quarter4/Annual Report	To ensure that the Board delivers its priorities and	NWEAB/Tony Ward	July 2023 (rescheduled May 2024)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
	(NWEAB Programme Office reps also to attend)		Annual Report 2023/24	on its work and progress during 2023/24	projects in line with the stipulations and conditions laid out between the Board and the UK & Welsh Governments	due to General Election) (RhE)
	Cllr. Elen Heaton	3.	Annual Report on Adult Safeguarding 2023/24	To consider the annual report on adult safeguarding, and information in place to meet the statutory requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 and an evaluation of the financial and resource impact of the Supreme Court's 2014 Judgement on deprivation of liberty on the Service and its work (data to include actual numbers in each category as well as % figures and the actual number of allegations proven)	An evaluation of whether the Authority is meeting its statutory duty with respect to adult safeguarding and has sufficient resources to undertake this work along with the additional work in the wake of the Supreme Court's judgement	David Soley/Michael Reay/Nerys Tompsett July 2023 (rescheduled May 2024 due to General Election) (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
	Cllr. Barry Mellor	4. Household Waste Recycling Centres	To review the management and operation of the contract with Bryson Recycling Ltd (including whether the contract had delivered the anticipated level of savings and generated projected income levels)	Support the delivery of a greener Denbighshire and a well-run, high performing Council	Paul Jackson/Simon Lammond	By SCVCG January 2024
19 December	Cllr. Elen Heaton	1. North Denbighshire Community Hospital Project (TBC)	<i>To consider the latest position with regards to the project's delivery, including WG's support for the project, identification of potential funding streams along with the expected timescale for various phases involved with its delivery</i>	<i>An understanding of current timescales and project brief to support the Council to plan its services for residents across the county</i>	BCUHB	Updated by RhE - March 2024
	Cllr. Julie Matthews	2. North Wales Regional Emergency Planning Service's Annual Report 2023/24 (TBC)	<i>To consider the Service's Annual Report</i>	(i) <i>An assessment of the regional service's effectiveness in responding to emergency</i>	NWREPS	By SCVCG May 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				<p><i>situations across the region and in Denbighshire to support the area's resilience in times of need</i></p> <p>(ii) <i>Ensuring that the Council realises value for money from this regional service and that the Service supports the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and Corporate Plan</i></p>		
13 February 2025						
3 April						
22 May						
10 July						
11 September						
23 October						

Future Issues

Item (description / title)		Purpose of report		Expected Outcomes		Author	Date Entered
Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered	
18 December							

For future years

Information/Consultation Reports

Information / Consultation	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
Information Report (for circulation Dec 2024)	Quarterly Monitoring of External Care Providers	To provide details of the regular monitoring of external care service providers commissioned by the council for social care services, identifying any escalating concerns or other areas of concern	Liana Duffy/Zoe Bradley-Ashcroft	By SCVCG 2018

INFORMATION REPORT (for circulation in Sept (Q1), Nov/Dec (Q2) & February (Q3) each year) Sept & Nov 2024 & Feb 2025	North Wales Economic Ambition Board	To provide information on the Board's performance and progress in delivering its priorities and projects in line with the stipulations and conditions laid out between the Board and the UK & Welsh Governments	NWEAB/Tony Ward	December 2021
INFORMATION REPORT (September 2025)	Collaborative Procurement Service's Annual Report	To receive information on the collaborative Service's activity and performance during 2023/24	Catrin Roberts/Karen Bellis	September 2023

Updated 30/082024 – RhE

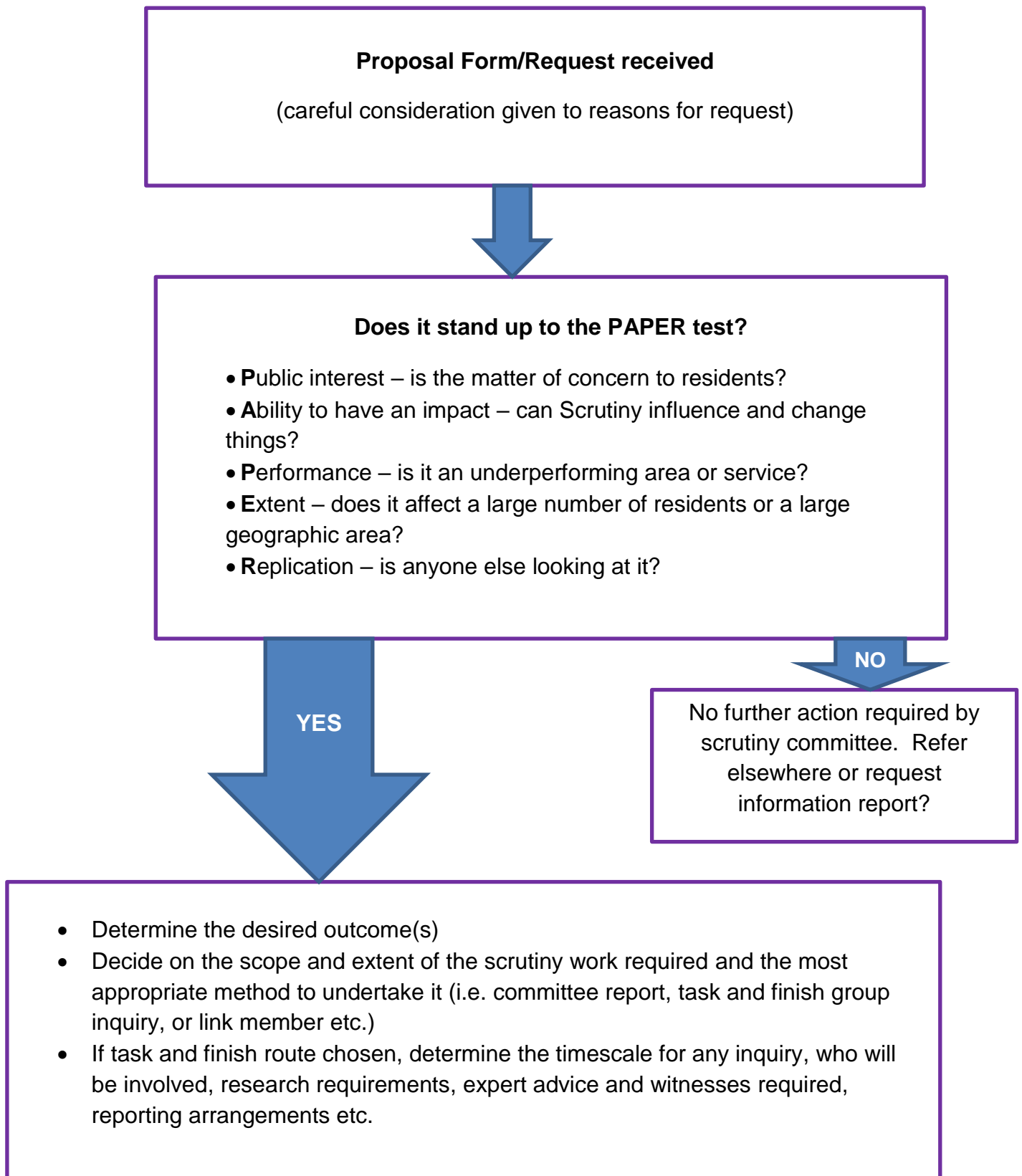
Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
7 November	24 October	19 December	5 December	13 February 2025	30 January 2025

Partnerships Scrutiny Work Programme.doc

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

Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



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
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	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
	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
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 / 17.06.24 KEJ
	2	Second Home / Long-term Empty Council Tax Premium	To seek Cabinet's approval to the timescales for delivery of the Second Home / Long-term Empty Council Tax Premium	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer – Liz Thomas / Report Author – Paul Barnes	08.07.24 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	Fee Charging Provisions - Mandatory Licensing Scheme for Special Procedures	To seek Cabinet approval to adopt the national agreed fees structure and delegate functions under the new scheme	Yes	Cllr Alan James Lead Officer/Report Author Emlyn Jones / Glesni Owen	01.08.24 KEJ
	4	Replacement for PARIS IT System – Tender Award	To seek Cabinet approval to award the contract for the new social care IT system	Yes	Cllrs Elen Heaton and Diane King Lead Officer/Report Author Nicola Stubbins / Dyfan Barr, Michael Jones	02.09.24 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 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
	7	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

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
	2	Disposal of Caledfryn	To seek approval for the disposal of Caledfryn as part of the savings proposals	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Daniel Roebuck	23.05.24 KEJ deferred from Sept to Nov 02.07.24
	3	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 Horan	
	4	Housing Support Grant – Keep My Home Project	To seek Cabinet approval to award the contract for the new service	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Ann Lloyd / Nigel Jones / Sharon Whalley	03.09.24 KEJ
	5	Housing Support Grant – Domestic Abuse Safety Unit	To seek Cabinet approval to award the contract for the new service	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Ann Lloyd / Nigel Jones / Alison Hay	03.09.24 KEJ
	6	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
	7	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
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	Housing Rent Setting & Housing Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/26	To seek approval for the proposed annual rent increase for council housing and to approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital & Revenue Budgets for 2025/26 and Housing Stock Business Plan	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Geoff Davies	28.06.24 KEJ
	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
21 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
18 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

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
24 September	10 September	22 October	8 October	19 November	5 November

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
16 May 2024	6. Review of Cabinet Decision Relating to Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme	<i>Resolved: that Cabinet’s decision of 23 April 2024 relating to the ‘Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme’ be upheld.</i>	Cabinet informed at its meeting on 21 May 2024 of the Committee’s decision.

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