

To: Members of the Partnerships
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 13 December 2024

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 19 DECEMBER 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 - 14)

To receive the minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 November 2024 (copy attached).

5 BLUE FLAG STATUS FOR DENBIGHSHIRE'S BEACHES (Pages 15 - 82)

To consider a joint report (copy attached) by the Head of Highways and Environmental Services & the Corporate Director: Environment & Economy on the work being undertaken with partner organisations in a bid to receive blue flag status accreditation for as many as possible of the county's beaches.

10.05am – 11.30am

BREAK 11.30am – 11.45am

6 NORTH WALES REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 (Pages 83 - 102)

To consider a report (copy attached) by the Head of Corporate Support Service: People presenting the North Wales Regional Emergency Planning Service's Annual Report 2023/24.

11.45am - 12.15pm

7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 103 - 124)

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.

12.15pm – 12.30pm

8 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

Terry Mendies

Kelly Clewett

Arwel Roberts

Bobby Feeley

David Williams

Jon Harland

Elfed Williams

Brian Jones

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information
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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, (name)

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

Denbighshire County Council

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

Date of Disclosure:

Committee (please specify):

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

(See the note below)*

Signed

Date

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

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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, 7 November 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Pauline Edwards (Vice-Chair), Bobby Feeley, Brian Jones, Terry Mendies, Arwel Roberts and David Williams

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Elen Heaton, Councillor Jason McLellan and Councillor Barry Mellor, Corporate Director: Economy and Environment (TW), Corporate Director: Social Services & Education (NS), Head of Highways and Environmental Services (PJ), Head of Adult Social Care & Homelessness Service (AL), Asset and Risk Manager (AR), Service Manager – Adult Social Care & Homelessness Service (MR), Scrutiny Co-ordinator (RE) and Committee Administrators (KJ and ED).

Hedd Vaughan-Evans – Head of Operations for Ambition North Wales
David Matthews – Land and Property Programme Manager for Ambition North Wales

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Joan Butterfield (Chair), Kelly Clewett, Raj Metri and Elfed Williams.

Councillors Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Bobby Feeley and Terry Mendies advised that they would need to leave the meeting before its conclusion.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair chaired the Committee's proceedings.

Prior to proceeding with the meeting's business the Chair advised that, following the publication of the agenda, a request had been received to vary the order of business to enable the 'Section 19 Flood Investigation Report into Storm Babet Event on 20th October 2023' (Agenda item 6) to be discussed ahead of 'Ambition North Wales Board Annual Report 2023/24' (Agenda item 5). This request had been permitted and the Chair thanked all Lead Members, Council and external officers, for accommodating this late change to the order of business.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No members declared any interests of a personal, or a personal and prejudicial nature, in any of the business items listed for discussion.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

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

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 September 2024 were submitted. The Committee:

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 September 2024 be received and approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

Matters arising: Business item 3 – the Scrutiny Co-ordinator confirmed that Councillor Elfed Williams had been furnished with the documentation he had requested in relation to the ‘Sustainable Communities for Learning – Rolling Programme’. Copies of which had since been circulated to all Committee members as part of the ‘Information Brief’ document earlier in the week.

Business item 5 – in response to an enquiry from Councillor Brian Jones on the current position regarding the review of the contract for monitoring CCTV activity in Rhyl and other towns in Denbighshire, Councillor Arwel Roberts offered to update Councillor Jones on the matter following the meeting.

5 SECTION 19 FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORT - STORM BABET

The Lead Member for Environment and Transport introduced the report (previously circulated) to the meeting. It was explained that on the 20th October 2023, there was a period of very heavy rainfall which affected a lot of the properties in the North of the County. National Resources Wales (NRW), Denbighshire County Council (DCC) and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) investigated why these floodings occurred. The purpose of the report was to introduce the findings or their investigations to the Committee and ask for any comments from members.

The Asset and Risk Manager advised that he was willing to attend each Member Area Group (MAG) meeting regarding the same and to provide an update. The Corporate Director: Economy and Environment added that Storm Babet was a significant storm which affected 62 homes and six businesses.

As part of the investigation, a door knocking exercise occurred to compile the information that was presented. It was noted that the report was multi-faceted and focussed on the properties affected and an attempted to ascertain solutions moving forward. Members attention was drawn to Sections 7 and 8 of the report (Appendix 1 to the report) which focussed on flood event and the improvements identified.

The meeting then opened up to members for questions. Members suggested that more maintenance that could be done to clear ditches and culverts, maybe this could have prevented further flooding. Comments were made by members surrounding maintenance of the pumping station in Rhyl which appeared to be lacking.

Officers responded and advised that maintenance was not just required to Denbighshire County Council's infrastructure but also to DCWW and NRW assets. The authority was looking to replace the system being used at that time from hiring individual contractors to clear green spaces and introduce a more ad-hoc system where hotspots would be identified and to approach the issue this way. It was also important to note that the authority had not stopped clearing ditches, this work was undertaken on a risk-based approach.

The role of farmers in contributing to the maintenance of these ditches and culverts adjoining their land were also discussed. The Head of Highways and Environmental Services advised that more work was required with farmers and landowners with a view to building better relationships to try and improve these issues, but this had proved to be a challenge in the past. Members asked how much cooperation there was from farmers to contribute to maintenance of hedges and ditches for example. It was advised that it was a difficult situation. The previous Asset and Risk Manager had tried to get some movement with this and increase engagement with the farming unions with the intention of using this as a leverage tool, however, ultimately, the land was privately owned despite affecting DCC infrastructure. The Council could not access any land or property in private ownership without the owner's permission, so it was a very difficult situation to manage.

Members raised concerns surrounding the inspections of river bunds and their maintenance and NRW and DCWW's cooperation with respect of this. It was asked when these bunds had last been inspected and whether if the bunds had not been inspected, serious floods could have been occurred. It was advised that the exact time frame for the inspection of each bund was not known, but officers offered to report back to members regarding the frequency. Officers advised that the authority liaised with DCWW and NRW regularly regarding the maintenance of all flood risk assets and were given assurances by both organisations that regular maintenance work was undertaken on their assets. Officers actively liaised with third parties however, these organisations had their own budget constraints.

Officers advised that preventative work was carried out and this work involved examining culverts around the county, especially those close to where flooding had previously occurred. As soon as weather warnings were received officers visited these well-known problem areas. The authority had invested in new software that enabled it to compile a profile of each infrastructure asset, the data profile of each asset held on this system would inform the Council's flood risk assessments in each area. Over time, the more data that was collected the more accurate the Council could identify hotspots more clearly and quickly.

Officers assured members that flood risk assessments would form part of the development, planning and consultation phases for the Council's new Local Development Plan (LDP).

Members emphasised the need for local volunteer Flood Groups to be established and supported and these were valuable networks to help residents plan and deal with flooding incidents.

At the conclusion of an in-depth discussion, and subject to officers discussing matters pertaining to the Maes y Gôg estate in Rhyl with the local member, the Committee:

Resolved:

- (i) to support the implementation of the improvements or the revision of working practices identified within the report with a view to mitigating against the future risk of flooding in the county; and***
- (ii) that a Member Scrutiny Proposal form be issued to the relevant Committee members for completion with a view to inviting representatives from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to a future meeting to discuss flood related matters.***

6 AMBITION NORTH WALES BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The Council Leader in his role as Lead Member for Economic Growth & Tackling Deprivation introduced the report (previously circulated) and explained that this was an annual report brought before the Committee. It was advised that the objective of the Board was to bring in private sector investment through these projects and introduce high quality jobs into North Wales. It was noted that this report was the third report of the 15-year cycle plan. The Lead Member also thanked his predecessor, Councillor Hugh Evans, for all the work conducted in the previous term.

The Head of Operations and the Land and Property Programme Manager gave a PowerPoint presentation which illustrated all the work that the Ambition Board had conducted in its third year and throughout its existence. This presentation emphasised that the aim of Ambition North Wales was to realise a confident and cohesive region by focussing on improving economic, social and environmental factors of North Wales. Projects that the Board had facilitated focussed on a number of varied themes, including language, culture and heritage. There were five programme areas which included 23 projects in total with a £1 billion target for investment with the aim of creating over 4000 new jobs for North Wales. During 2023-24 two key projects had made significant progress and another five new projects had joined the Growth Deal, all of which were detailed within the report.

The meeting opened up to members and questions surrounding the former North Wales Hospital site were raised. It was suggested by members that it did not seem much work had been done towards this. Officers advised members that this was not the case, the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) had been secured. Whilst the change in government had caused an inevitable delay in relation to an announcement on the funding, things had continued behind the scenes such as the Board approving the Outline Business Plan submitted by Jones Brothers. Officers advised that many new homes as well as commercial premises would, subject to planning approval be built on the site. Jones Brothers already recruited and provided apprenticeships and graduate schemes for young people and had relocated its training department to the site.

Other work that had been undertaken regarding the former North Wales Hospital included ensuring legal documents were in place such as the s106 and preparations to legally transfer the land and buildings from the local authority to Jones Brothers. Bats were also present on site, so licenses and relevant bat facilities had to be constructed. Next steps included to manage demolition of parts of the site and to deal with asbestos present. Officers advised they were looking to protect and enhance the project where possible and ensuring biodiversity was preserved.

Members asked questions surrounding employment with this project. It was advised that with regard to full time employment, 70 full time roles were expected to be based at the site during the project development stage but with regard to construction as well as apprenticeships, it was advised that at least 300 jobs would be created, but it was possible than this figure could be exceeded.

Questions arose from members regarding a lack of tourism and transport in Rhyl, particularly the train links. Members were advised as follows:

- both Welsh Government and UK Government had determined that transport should not form part of the Growth Deal, therefore the Plan did not encompass transport matters.
- That, whilst the Board had no formal role in relation to the proposed new National Park in North East Wales, its Agri-food and Tourism ambition did support the enhancement of tourism skills across all areas and facilitated targeted training and retraining to improve this.

Following an in-depth discussion, the Committee:

***Resolved:* subject to the above observations, to receive and endorse the progress made by the Ambition North Wales Board during both Quarter 4 and the 2023/24 financial year in delivering the third year of the North Wales Growth Deal.**

The Committee adjourned for a break at 11.55am and re-convened at 12pm.

As a number of members had left the meeting by this juncture the Committee was inquorate for the purpose of formulating recommendations. Consequently, those members still in attendance agreed to continue to transact the remainder of the Committee's business on an informal basis.

7 SAFEGUARDING ADULTS IN DENBIGHSHIRE ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The Lead Member for Health and Social Care introduced the report (previously circulated) to the meeting and highlighted the strong performance that featured throughout the report, including strong response times surrounding section 126 inquiries in which a 7-day target had been set by Welsh Government for such enquiries to be completed. The Council had achieved this target in dealing with 98.5% of the 409 enquiries received.

The Service Manager advised that it had been a busy year for the Adults Safeguarding Team. Completion rate at 98.5% for the completion of safeguarding referrals in the 7-day period. A number of audits had been conducted and scrutinised and despite the increase of workload, the high standard of work had continued and been maintained. Attention was drawn to Section 5 inquiries which refer to 'people in a position of trust (PoT)' and the reasons for the increase. It was advised that this was not a unique issue to Denbighshire, the increase was mirrored across the region, and was attributable to the increase in the complexity of clients' needs, as well as the raised awareness of the importance of making referrals.

The Chair then opened up the meeting for questions from members.

Members enquired whether family/unpaid/voluntary carers were monitored by the Safeguarding Team. It was advised by the Head of Adult Social Care & Homelessness Service, that the team did not get involved with family carers unless it was from a safeguarding perspective such as if a neighbour raised concerns for example. It was explained that the team relied on individuals reporting these instances if there were any concerns of any type of abuse occurring.

The increase in referrals was questioned by members and whether there was sufficient staff to cover the increasing workload. Officers advised and emphasised that this was not unique to Denbighshire and members were reassured there was enough staff to deal with this increase. It was also emphasised that, whilst the Police were actively involved with initial investigations, not all referrals advanced to a full investigation, an increase in numbers of referrals did not mean a corresponding increase in full investigations. It was anticipated that, once available, the revised Guidance on Position of Trust, would further aid the investigation of Section 5 referrals.

Members congratulated the Safeguarding Team on their efforts in ensuring that vulnerable adults in Denbighshire are protected from harm and:

Recommended: subject to the above observations that the Committee acknowledge the importance of a corporate approach to the safeguarding of adults at risk and the responsibility of the Council to view this as a key priority area.

8 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator introduced the report and appendices (previously circulated) which sought the Committee to review its programme of future work.

During her introduction she advised that a report on the 'Household Waste Recycling Centres' that had originally been scheduled for presentation to the present meeting had, due to pressures within the reporting Service, been rescheduled for the Committee's February 2025 meeting. The Committee's next meeting on 19 December 2024 had two items listed for presentation:

- North Wales Regional Emergency Planning Service's Annual Report 2023/24; and
- Blue Flag Status for Denbighshire's Beaches

The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) was scheduled to hold its next meeting on 25 November and members were reminded to complete and return the Members Proposal Form at Appendix 2 to the report if they had any matters which they felt merited scrutiny. At Appendix 3 to the report was a copy of Cabinet's forward work programme for members' information, whilst Appendix 4 provided an update on the progress to date with the Committee's recommendations from its previous meeting. The Information Brief document circulated to Committee members earlier in the week contained the additional information which had been requested by members at the Committee's previous meeting along with Information Reports. Members:

Recommended: that subject to the above the Committee confirm its programme of future work as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

9 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

None.

Meeting concluded at 12.10pm

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Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	19th December 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Barry Mellor: Lead Member for Environment and Transport, Paul Jackson: Head of Highways and Environmental Services
Report author	Paul Jackson: Head of Highways and Environmental Services / Tony Ward: Corporate Director, Environment and Economy
Title	Blue Flag Status for Denbighshire's Beaches

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report is about Blue Flag status for Denbighshire's beaches.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 At the request of the Committee, this report will enable Members to scrutinise the work being undertaken with partner organisations in a bid to achieve blue flag status accreditation for as many as possible of the county's beaches.

3. What are the recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee note the work being undertaken with partner organisations and make comments and recommendations as appropriate.

4. Report details

4.1. The Wales Coast Awards play a vital role in protecting our marine environment and are recognised around the world as a symbol of quality. The Blue Flag beach award is widely considered the gold standard for beaches. In the 2024 Blue Flag Award, 184 Blue Flags were awarded in the British Isles (UK & Ireland). There were 21 Blue Flags

awarded in Wales, and only 1 in North Wales (Prestatyn Central). The certification process is carried out every year and beaches can lose or gain their Blue Flag status.

4.2. Whilst most people are aware that Blue Flag certification considers the quality of bathing water, this is only part of the criteria. The Blue Flag criteria are divided into four categories with a total of 33 individual targets. The 33 individual criteria under the four categories are summarised in Appendix A, and a full explanation is provided in Appendix B: Blue Flag Beach Criteria and Explanatory Notes, 2024. The four main categories are:

- **Environmental Education and Information:** This includes information on the Blue Flag award itself along with details on the water quality. A beach map including locations of facilities must also be displayed.
- **Water Quality:** The most important stipulation is that no industrial, waste-water or sewage-related discharges should affect the beach.
- **Environmental Management:** These criteria include the administrative side of things as well as keeping the beach clean. It also states there must be toilets available to the public.
- **Safety and Services:** The beach should be patrolled by lifeguards. Other criteria include availability of drinking water and accessibility features.

4.3. Blue Flag status requires 'Excellent' water quality as one of the criteria, and a beach therefore cannot achieve Blue Flag status unless it has 'Excellent' water quality (even if it meets all the other criteria).

4.4. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are the lead agency in terms of regulating to protect bathing water quality. NRW are responsible for regulating Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) assets and work with them on proactive measures to prevent bacteria from the sewers impacting on bathing water quality. NRW also regulate and work with the agricultural sector. NRW in recent years have focused resource on funding agricultural schemes to reduce bacteria inputs from livestock in the Lower Clwyd. A summary of the work/role of NRW in respect of bathing water quality is attached at Appendix C. A similar summary relating to the work/role of DCWW is included at Appendix D.

- 4.5. Denbighshire has 4 recognised Bathing Waters, 3 of which are designated Bathing Beaches (Rhyl Central; Rhyl East and Prestatyn). The other designated Bathing Water is in the Marine Lake in Rhyl.
- 4.6. Prestatyn Central is the only designated Bathing Beach in Denbighshire to achieve 'Excellent' classification for water quality. It is therefore the only beach in Denbighshire to achieve Blue Flag status. Many years ago, DCC used to sample bathing waters at Splash Point, Ffrith, Barkby and Gronant. It is considered that there may be an opportunity for Barkby Beach to obtain Blue Flag status in future.
- 4.7. The 2024 Wales Coast Awards were based on the 2023 water quality classifications. Prestatyn achieved 'Excellent' classification for water quality in 2023, which enabled it to maintain the Blue Flag status in the 2024 Wales Coast Awards. The 2025 Wales Coast Awards will be based on the 2024 water quality classifications which will be formally announced in December 2024. Unfortunately, following some elevated sample results this season, Prestatyn has dropped a classification and will now be classified as a 'Good' bathing water. As the Blue Flag status requires 'Excellent' water quality as one of the criteria, Prestatyn will not retain its Blue Flag in 2025. The Blue Flag for Prestatyn will be replaced by the Seaside award. The new classifications for Bathing Water quality in Denbighshire will be as follows:

	Rhyl Central	Rhyl East	Marine Lake	Prestatyn
2023/24	SUFFICIENT	GOOD	SUFFICIENT	EXCELLENT
2024/25	POOR	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD

- 4.8. It is will be difficult for Rhyl to ever achieve Blue Flag status, given the proximity of the River Clwyd and its estuary which is the main issue in terms of bathing water quality. Sewerage outfalls are one of two major factors that can impact on water quality. The sewage infrastructure in the area has been designed to try and ensure that Rhyl achieves 'Sufficient' status, which is a long way from the 'Excellent' status required for Blue Flag status. The Clwyd Valley is also farmed intensively, and livestock access to streams can be a significant source of bacteria which impacts on water quality.

- 4.9. The bigger issue for Rhyl is not the inability to achieve Blue Flag status, it is that Rhyl Central will now be classified as a 'Poor' bathing water for 2025 following a number of elevated sample results this season. This means that people must be advised not to bathe in that area until the classification returns to 'Sufficient'. The assessment is made annually using a rolling four-year data set. At the end of the 2025 season, 2021 data will be removed from the assessment. As 2021 data contained some poor results, Rhyl Central is likely to return to 'Sufficient' in 12 months' time.
- 4.10. The 2015 Bathing Water Directive revision reviewed the limits for acceptable levels of bacteria, and this resulted in many beaches moving from 'Excellent' to 'Good' and from 'Good' to 'Sufficient', as in the case of Rhyl Central. Since 2015, Rhyl Central has been at risk of dropping to 'Poor' status but the use of Prediction & Discounting where daily water quality predictions are published allows up to 15% of sample results to be discounted from the data set. This has been key in preventing Rhyl Central from dropping to 'Poor' status before now.
- 4.11. The issues for Rhyl Central are not as prevalent for Rhyl East, as that part of the beach in Rhyl is further away from the River Clwyd and its estuary. Water quality samples for Rhyl East are therefore affected less than at Rhyl Central, and Rhyl East will retain its 'Good' status for 2025. Therefore, although people will have to be advised not to bathe in the water at Rhyl Central, this will not be the case further down the beach at Rhyl East. The area of the beach designated as Rhyl East begins at around the lifeboat station and stretches eastwards towards Splash Point.
- 4.12. The DCC Harbour Team works with DCWW and NRW to highlight periods of reduced water quality, putting out signage when notified of a predicted drop in water quality. The Harbour team have worked closely with DCWW and NRW to achieve improved water quality at Marine Lake by investing in a new sluice gate system and working with DCWW to install an automated closure system on the sluice gate linked to the emergency discharge system on Westbourne Avenue Pumping Station. The Harbour Team are responsible for applying for the coastal awards and ensuring with other departments that all criteria are met. The one criterion outside of our control is water quality and therefore our role is to challenge (and assist where possible) DCWW and NRW to engage in works and initiatives to improve the standards of water quality.

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

- 5.1. Bathing water quality and beach awards contribute mainly to the following two Corporate Plan themes: “a Prosperous Denbighshire”; and “a Greener Denbighshire”.

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

- 6.1. There are no direct costs associated with this report other than officer time in managing the impacts of the water quality assessments and working with partner organisations which can be contained within existing resources.

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

- 7.1. A well-being impact assessment has not been undertaken at this stage.

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

- 8.1. No other consultation has been carried out prior to this report to the Committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. Not required for this report.

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

- 10.1. There is a risk that people are put off from visiting Denbighshire’s beaches due to reduced classifications for bathing water quality in Rhyl Central and Prestatyn Central, and the loss of Blue Flag Status for Prestatyn.

- 10.2. **Rhyl:** Rhyl East will be the designated bathing beach for 2025 which is opposite the Kite surf café which may benefit this area of the promenade due to the increased footfall. Press releases will be issued nearer the time to inform members of the public of the change of bathing water area, and signage will be placed along the

promenade. During peak season, RNLI lifeguards will be strategically positioned directly shoreside of the new bathing water beach marked by the lifeguarding unit.

10.3. **Prestatyn:** Prestatyn Central will lose its blue flag for 2025 and will be replaced with a keep Wales tidy Seaside award, all infrastructure will remain, lifeguards will be present, bathing water beach unaffected.

11. Power to make the decision.

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

Appendix A: Summary of the 33 individual Blue Flag Beach criteria under the four categories

A. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

1. Information about the Blue Flag Programme must be displayed.
2. Environmental education activities must be offered and promoted to beach users.
3. Information about bathing water quality must be displayed.
4. Information relating to local eco-systems, environmental elements and cultural sites must be displayed.
5. A map of the beach indicating different facilities must be displayed.
6. A code of conduct that reflects appropriate laws and/or regulations governing the use of the beach and surrounding areas must be displayed.

B. WATER QUALITY

The Blue Flag Programme requires that beaches achieve Excellent bathing water quality.

7. The beach must fully comply with the water quality sampling and frequency requirements.
8. The beach must fully comply with the standards and requirements for water quality analysis.
9. Industrial, waste-water or sewage-related discharges must not affect the beach area.
10. The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for the microbiological parameter *Escherichia coli* (faecal coli bacteria) and intestinal enterococci (streptococci).

11. The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for physical parameters (i.e. it must not be affected by physical and chemical parameters, such as oil and floatables).

C. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

12. The local authority/beach operator should establish a beach management committee.
13. The local authority/beach operator must comply with all laws and/or regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach.
14. Sensitive areas must be managed (some sites at/near the Blue Flag beach may be very sensitive and require special management).
15. The beach must be clean.
16. Algal vegetation (e.g. seaweed) or natural debris must be left on the beach.
17. Waste disposal bins/containers must be available at the beach in adequate numbers, and they must be regularly maintained.
18. Facilities for the separation of recyclable waste materials must be available at the beach.
19. An adequate number of toilet or restroom facilities must be provided.
20. The toilet or restroom facilities must be kept clean.
21. The toilet or restroom facilities must have controlled sewage disposal.
22. There must be no unauthorised camping or driving and no dumping on the beach
23. Access to the beach by dogs and other domestic animals must be strictly controlled.
24. All buildings and beach equipment must be properly maintained.

25. Marine and freshwater sensitive habitats (such as coral reefs or seagrass beds) in the vicinity of the beach must be monitored.
26. A sustainable means of transportation should be promoted in the beach area¹.

D. SAFETY AND SERVICES

27. Appropriate public safety control measures must be implemented.
28. First aid equipment must be available on the beach.
29. Emergency plans to cope with pollution risks must be in place.
30. There must be management of different users and uses of the beach so as to prevent conflicts and accidents.
31. There must be safety measures in place to protect users of the beach, and free access must be granted to the public.
32. A supply of drinking water should be available at the beach¹
33. At least one Blue Flag beach in each municipality must have access and facilities provided for the physically disabled.

¹ Guidance only

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BLUE FLAG BEACH CRITERIA AND EXPLANATORY NOTES 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Blue Flag Programme for beaches, marinas and tourism boats is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education). The Blue Flag Programme started in France in 1985. It has been implemented in Europe since 1987 and in areas outside of Europe since 2001 when South Africa joined. Today, Blue Flag has become a truly global Programme, with an ever-increasing number of countries participating in it.

The Blue Flag Programme promotes sustainable development in freshwater and marine areas. It challenges local authorities and beach operators to achieve high standards in the four categories of water quality, environmental management, environmental education and safety. Over the years, the Blue Flag has become a highly respected and recognised award working to bring together the tourism and environmental sectors at local, regional and national levels.

The explanatory notes given in this document make up the common and shared understanding of the Blue Flag beach criteria and the requirements for the implementation thereof. The explanatory notes provide details on the assessment and management of compliance with the Blue Flag beach criteria.

The criteria are categorised as either imperative or guideline. Most beach criteria are imperative, i.e. the beach must comply with them in order to be awarded the Blue Flag. If they are guideline criteria, it is preferable that they are complied with, but not mandatory.

It must be emphasised that the Blue Flag beach international criteria in this document are the minimum criteria. A National Operator can choose to have stricter criteria to what is outlined here, as long as they are in the same line of philosophy as the Blue Flag international criteria. These more stringent criteria must be approved by the National Jury and communicated to the International Jury. Moreover, the beach administrator must be informed about the stricter criteria before the beginning of the following Blue Flag season.

These beach criteria and explanatory notes are to be used by all Blue Flag applicants in order to understand the requirements that must be met before a beach can receive the Blue Flag award. For guidance purposes, this document should also prove valuable for the management of those beaches already accredited with Blue Flag status. The beach criteria and explanatory notes also serve as a guide for the National, Regional and International Blue Flag Juries when making decisions about a Blue Flag beach candidate.

During the Blue Flag season, the flag must fly at the beach. The flag is both a symbol that the beach participates in the Programme but also an indication of compliance with the criteria. The flag may either be flown 24 hours a day during the Blue Flag season or only during the hours when the beach meets all the Blue Flag criteria. In the case of the former, there must be adequate signage indicating the time when services (e.g. life-saving), and facilities (e.g. toilets) are in operation.

If a beach that has the Blue Flag award does not comply with the Blue Flag criteria, the flag may be permanently or temporarily withdrawn from the beach. There are several degrees of non-compliance:

1. A **minor non-compliance** occurs when there is a problem with only one imperative criterion, which is of little or no consequence to visitor health and safety and the beach environment.

Should the non - compliance be to the detriment of visitor health and safety or the beach environment, it must be treated as major non - compliance.

When minor non-compliance occurs and can be immediately rectified, the flag is not withdrawn, and the non-compliance is only registered in the control visit report. If, however, a minor non-compliance cannot be rectified immediately, the beach is given ten days in which to comply fully with all criteria. The flag is withdrawn until all problems are rectified, and this is noted on the Blue Flag national and international websites.

2. **Multiple non-compliance** relates to non-compliance with two to three imperative criteria which are of little or no consequence to visitor health and safety and the beach environment.

Should any on the non - compliance be to the detriment of visitor health and safety or the beach environment, it/they must be treated as major non - compliance.

When multiple non-compliances occur, the beach is given ten days in which to comply fully with all criteria, the flag is withdrawn until all the problems are rectified, and the national and international websites are updated accordingly.

3. **Major non-compliance** occurs when the beach does not comply with one or several criteria, with a consequence for the health and safety of the beach user or to the environment, as well as the general perception of the beach and therefore the Programme.

When detecting a major non-compliance, the flag is withdrawn immediately and for the rest of the season. The beach information board must clearly indicate that the Blue Flag award has been withdrawn. The national and international websites are updated accordingly.

In all cases of non-compliance, the National Operator must immediately inform the local authority/beach operator about the observed areas of non-compliance. Information about the reason for a withdrawal of the flag must be posted clearly at the beach. The local authority/beach operator must inform the National Operator of re-compliance with the criteria and present the appropriate documentation needed. The flag can then be raised at the beach again. The National Operator should also consider a follow-up control visit to check that the beach does comply. In the event that the local authority/beach operator does not ensure and document re-compliance with the criteria within ten days, the National Operator must ensure that the Blue Flag is withdrawn for the rest of the season at the beach.

In the event that conditions on the beach change and the Blue Flag has to be temporarily withdrawn, e.g. when climatic events cause damage to the beach or an emergency arises, the beach management must inform the National Operator that the Blue Flag has been temporarily withdrawn and the national and international websites must be updated accordingly.

Apart from updating the national and international Blue Flag websites of the status of the beach, the National Operator must inform the Blue Flag International Head Office about the non-compliance. If the non-compliance is noted by an international controller, the National Operator has to give feedback to the Blue Flag International Head Office within 30 days.

The applicant for the Blue Flag award is the authority charged with responsibility for the beach. This may be a local municipality, private hotel, national park, or private beach operator. A beach may be eligible for the Blue Flag award if it is legally designated as a bathing area and it has the necessary facilities and services to comply with the Blue Flag criteria.

A beach must be accessible to all (regardless of age, gender, political views, religion) in order to be eligible for the Blue Flag award. It is preferable that beach users be granted free access to a Blue Flag beach, i.e. to use the beach and its facilities without paying a fee. Blue Flag, however, recognises that at some beaches, e.g. private beaches, members of the public are charged a small, reasonable fee to access the beach. Other payments may be levied for services in the area, e.g. for parking or hiring of equipment, but have to stay within the reasonable limits. If a beach wishes to have an entry fee higher than 30 US dollars, it must apply for a dispensation case to the International Jury.

FEE, and the National Operator in a country, reserve the right to refuse or withdraw the Blue Flag award from any beach where the local authority/beach operator is responsible for violations of national environmental regulations or otherwise acts in discord with the objectives and spirit of the Blue Flag Programme. Blue Flag beaches are subject to announced and unannounced control visits by the National Operator and FEE International.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Each beach must provide at least five environmental education activities to the public, preferably during its Blue Flag season. It is possible for beaches managed by the same municipality to provide the same five environmental education activities.

Each beach must have at least one Blue Flag information board in place, containing all the information required by the criteria listed below. For long beaches, it is recommended that more than one Blue Flag information boards are installed (approximately one every 500 metres). All Blue Flag information boards must follow national standards with respect to information, content and design. These Blue Flag information boards must be in place at all Blue Flag beaches.

Criterion 1. Information about the Blue Flag Programme must be displayed.

Information about the Blue Flag Programme must be displayed on the Blue Flag information board. The correct Blue Flag logo must be used, in accordance with the FEE branding guidelines. The essence of each of the four categories of the Blue Flag criteria must be explained in this information. The length of the Blue Flag season must also be included.

The information could also be posted at other locations, e.g. at major access points, lifeguard stations, other beach facilities, or in parking areas. Tourist information offices should also have information about the Blue Flag Programme.

Contact details for the local, national and international Blue Flag representatives must be posted as well.

In areas of international tourism, it is recommended that the information be provided in relevant languages.

In the event that the Blue Flag is temporarily withdrawn, a relevant notice must be posted at the beach informing the public as to the reasons why the flag was withdrawn.

Blue Flag beaches could promote the Green Key Programme as another eco-label run by FEE with a message such as: "Along with the Blue Flag, the Foundation for Environmental Education also develops another eco-label for various tourism enterprises: Green Key. Find more information at: www.greenkey.global (or the national Green key website of the country)"

Appendix B provides an example of how the Blue Flag information can be presented.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 2. Environmental education activities must be offered and promoted to beach users.

Environmental education activities promote the aims of the Blue Flag Programme by:

- increasing the awareness of, and care for, the local environment by recreational users and residents.
- training personnel and tourist service providers in environmental matters and best practices.
- encouraging the participation of local stakeholders in environmental management within the area.

- promoting sustainable recreation and tourism in the area.
- promoting the sharing of ideas and efforts between the Blue Flag Programme and other FEE Programmes (YRE, LEAF, Eco-Schools and Green Key).

The planned environmental education activities for the coming season must be included in the application documents, and so must a report on activities carried out during the previous Blue Flag season (if applicable).

At least five different activities must be offered to the municipality or community - preferably during the Blue Flag season. The activities should focus on the environment, environmental issues, Blue Flag issues or sustainability issues. At least some of the activities should be carried out at the beach and have a direct focus on the beach environment.

The educational activities must be effective and relevant, and each year the local authority must re-evaluate the activities that were implemented and work towards constantly improving them.

Where the planned environmental education activities are of interest to and involve, the general public or beach users, these activities must be publicised in good time to inform the public about the opportunities they offer. Such activities must also be publicised on the Blue Flag information board, but could also be publicised in other areas in the beach area, in local centres, in newspapers and other media.

The environmental education activities must be clearly disseminated to the public. Preferably, the activities should be posted on the common information board. However, dissemination could include an updatable list posted at the kiosk or clubhouse, SMS notification or other means of communication. Whatever the platform for dissemination is, it has to be stated on the information board where the user can find out more about the activities.

Furthermore, these environmental education activities must be offered for free. A small participatory fee is accepted if needed to cover costs such as lunches, water, etc. but no business benefits can be made through these environmental education activities.

Local authorities/beach operators are encouraged to implement and/or support sustainable development projects in which public participation is a key element, e.g. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals initiatives.

If specific sensitive natural areas (including Marine Protected Areas) exist near a Blue Flag beach (e.g. mangroves or seagrass beds), it is strongly recommended that some of the educational activities address these sensitive natural areas.

Examples of good educational activities can be downloaded from the internal pages of the Blue Flag international website (www.blueflag.global).

Appendix C provides further background on the environmental education activities.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 3. Information about bathing water quality must be displayed.

Bathing water quality information must be displayed on the Blue Flag information board. It is recommended that a table or figure with easily identifiable symbols that correspond to the results

be used. The information must also clearly explain how the water quality results relate to the imperative criteria for water quality, with specific reference to sampling frequency and the conditions under which Blue Flag status can be withdrawn.

The authority in charge of providing the bathing water quality results must do so shortly after the analysis so that the data can be updated regularly. It is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that the beach operator/beach management receives the information no later than one month after the sampling date. The complete and detailed data must be made available by the local authority to anybody upon request.

Appendix D provides an example of how this information could be presented.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 4. Information relating to local eco-systems, environmental elements and cultural sites must be displayed.

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that beach users are well informed and educated about relevant environmental elements (including valuable cultural sites/communities), local ecosystems and any sensitive areas in the surrounding environment so that they are encouraged to learn about and experience the environment in a responsible way.

Information about coastal zone ecosystems, wetland areas, unique habitats or any sensitive natural areas must be displayed at or close to the Blue Flag beach. The information must include details about the natural area and a code of conduct for visitors to the area. If the full information is not available on the Blue Flag information board, there must at least be a short notice on the board informing the public about the nearby sensitive areas and where they can find further information.

Relevant environmental information could furthermore be displayed at tourist sites, at the natural areas, or in tourist information offices. The information can be published in tourist brochures, local newspapers or pamphlets created specifically for this purpose. In areas that are visited by a high number of tourists, it is recommended that the information be presented in more than one way, as listed above, and it should be presented in relevant languages.

In the case of sensitive underwater environments, specific information about these areas must be provided for divers and snorkelers.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 5. A map of the beach indicating different facilities must be displayed.

A map showing the boundaries of the Blue Flag beach area and the location of key facilities and services must be posted on the Blue Flag information board. The map must be of good quality, easy to read and properly oriented.

Pictograms should preferably be used.

The required map elements (where applicable) should include “You are here” pointers, and show the location of:

- lifeguards or lifesaving equipment
- the area patrolled (for beaches with lifeguards)
- first aid equipment
- telephones
- toilets (including toilets for disabled people)
- drinking water
- car and bicycle parking areas
- authorised camping sites at/near the beach
- recycling facilities
- location of water sampling point(s)
- access points and access for disabled persons
- zoning (swimming, surfing, sailing, boating, etc.) where applicable
- nearby public transport
- footpaths
- demarcation of Blue Flag area
- location of other information boards
- rivers and inflows
- local landmarks (where applicable)
- stormwater outlets
- nearby sensitive natural areas, etc.
- direction (North)
- scale bar

For guidelines on the design and suitability of maps for Blue Flag beaches, visit www.blueflag.global.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 6. A code of conduct that reflects appropriate laws and/or regulations governing the use of the beach and surrounding areas must be displayed.

The code of conduct must address the activities of beach users and their conduct on the beach. The beach code of conduct must be displayed on the Blue Flag information board. The information could furthermore be posted at other locations, e.g. at all major entrance points, near to the relevant activity (i.e. a “No Diving” sign on a pier) or as information at the relevant sites. Internationally recognised symbols, e.g. pictograms, must be used wherever possible.

The code of conduct must include rules about the presence of domestic animals, zoning (when appropriate), fishing, litter management, the use of vehicles, camping, fires, etc.

Laws and/or regulations governing beach usage and management should be available to the public at the office of the local authority/beach operator.

The period when the lifesaving equipment and/or lifeguards, and first aid, are available must be clearly marked on the Blue Flag information boards and at the lifeguard station. An explanation of the emergency flag system in use must also be provided.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

WATER QUALITY

The Blue Flag Programme requires that beaches achieve Excellent bathing water quality. The bathing water quality standards have been based on the most appropriate international and national standards and legislation.

Blue Flag is an international award - and it, therefore, has one minimum global standard for water quality. The standards described here for bathing water quality for beaches must be adopted unless stricter national standards are already in existence, e.g. testing for total coliform bacteria. In that case, the beach must comply with the more demanding national standards for bathing water quality.

Criterion 7. The beach must fully comply with the water quality sampling and frequency requirements.

A Blue Flag beach must have at least one sampling point, which must be located where the concentration of bathers is highest. In addition, where there are potential sources of pollution, e.g. near streams, rivers or other inlets, stormwater outlets, etc. additional sampling points must be established at these sites to provide evidence that such inflows do not affect bathing water quality.

All sampling points of the applicant beach must comply with the Blue Flag bathing water quality criteria.

Samples for microbiological and physical-chemical parameters must be taken.

Similarly, in the case of inland waters where the water is supplemented by outside sources during dry periods, the water quality of the outside source must meet the Blue Flag bathing water quality standards.

Samples should be taken 30 cm below the water surface except for the mineral oil samples that should be taken at surface level.

How often must a sample be taken?

For each sampling point, there must be no more than 31 days between any two water samples during the Blue Flag season. This includes the gap between the pre-season sample and the following in-season sample. The Blue Flag Programme does not accept applications from beaches, irrespective of the length of the Blue Flag season, where less than five samples have been taken. This means that a minimum of five samples must be taken, evenly distributed during the season. The first sample must be taken within 31 days before the official starting date of the Blue Flag season.

Only one sample value per day is to be recorded in the percentile calculation.

When sample results raise a concern about a possible increase in levels of pollution, it is recommended to temporarily increase the sampling frequency in order to track any possible pollution incident.

In the event of short-term pollution, one additional sample is to be taken to confirm that the incident has ended. This sample is not part of the set of bathing water quality data. If necessary to replace a discarded sample, an additional sample is to be taken seven days after the end of the short-term pollution. Discounting of samples because of short-term pollution during the last assessment period

is allowed for maximum 15% of the total number of samples provided for in the monitoring calendar established for that period, or one sample per bathing season, whichever is greater.

When calculating 15% of the total number of samples provided for that period, the result must be rounded up or down.

The rule is:

Anything lower or equal to 49 should be rounded down (for example: a result of 2,49 gives a possibility of discounting two samples).

Anything higher or equal to 50 should be rounded up (for example: a result of 2,50 gives a possibility of discounting three samples).

Both the original and the additional samples have to be sent as a dispensation case to the International Jury for the evaluation (see Appendix A on dispensation cases).

In case of an oil spill, abnormal weather or other extreme events which can have a serious adverse effect on the quality of the bathing water or the health of the bathers, the beach manager must temporarily take down the Blue Flag and clearly state the reason on the information board. It is recommended that the wording of this information is along the lines: "This beach has recently experienced abnormal weather/extreme event. Swimming is not recommended at this time due to the possibility of pollution/danger to the bathers."

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 8. The beach must fully comply with the standards and requirements for water quality analysis.

An independent person, officially authorised and trained for the task, must collect the samples.

An independent laboratory must carry out the analysis of the bathing water samples. The laboratory must be nationally or internationally accredited to carry out microbiological and physical-chemical analyses. The testing method and data resulting from it must also be accredited.

In the event that the sampler or the laboratory is not independent, at the time of application, a dispensation must be requested and details provided as to why this is required, e.g. in some cases beaches are considerable distances away from the services necessary to meet this requirement.

Methods of analysis:

In the interest of increased quality and comparability of the bathing water quality data used for the evaluation of candidates for the Blue Flag, FEE finds that methods of analysis that ensure certain trueness, reproducibility, repeatability and comparability between methods should be used. FEE follows European (CEN) or International (ISO) standards in its recommendations regarding parameters and acceptable methods of analysis.

Water quality results must be provided to the National Operator as soon as they are made available but not later than one month after the sample has been taken.

A sampling calendar must be established prior to the start of the bathing season. Sampling must take place no later than four days after the date specified in the sampling calendar unless there are

exceptional circumstances preventing this. In such a case, the National Jury must submit the beach as a dispensation case to the International Jury (*see Appendix A for more information on dispensation cases*).

Sampling history:

The water quality results for the previous four seasons must accompany all applications. In order to be eligible for the Blue Flag, the beach must show -through these reports- that the bathing water quality standards were met in the previous seasons.

For new countries or new beaches, results from a minimum of 20 samples per sampling point taken within the proposed Blue Flag season must be available for the Blue Flag award to be considered. The sampling history may be taken in one Blue Flag season in order to be able to apply the following year. The applicant beach may also choose to take fewer samples and wait to apply when 20 samples per sampling point have been collected (for example taking ten samples in year 1, 10 more in year 2 and applying in year 3). Remember that a minimum of 5 samples has to be taken per Blue Flag season and that the sampling frequency detailed in criterion 7 must be respected.

The water quality information of the current season must be posted on the Blue Flag information board, in accordance with Criterion 3. *See Appendix D for a recommendation for presenting water quality information on Blue Flag beaches.*

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 9. Industrial, waste-water or sewage-related discharges must not affect the beach area.

A bathing water profile must be compiled for every Blue Flag beach. A bathing water profile includes identification of potential sources of pollution, a description of the physical, geographical and hydrological characteristics of the bathing water, as well as an assessment of the potential for cyanobacteria and algae formation.

It is recommended that there should not be any industrial, urban wastewater or sewage-related discharges into the Blue Flag area or immediate buffer zone/surrounding area. If there are discharge points in the area of the beach, these must be documented at the time of application.

Where combined sewage overflow discharges or other urban/industrial wastewater discharges are identified within, or immediately adjacent to, the proposed award area, information to warn the public that there is an intermittent discharge which could, in the short term, impact the bathing water quality must be provided.

The collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater in the community must meet national/international standards and comply with national/international legislation. For EU member countries, there are requirements for the treatment and effluent quality given in the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC). A number of new EU countries have been granted dispensation from the EU Directive. Regardless of national/ international standards and legislation, this wastewater or other discharges must not negatively affect the environment or compromise the water quality standards of a Blue Flag beach.

Regarding industrial pollution, notification must be given about industrial facilities and plants in the vicinity of the beaches, stating their likely influence on the environment. Moreover, the appropriate authorities must confirm in writing that the area is being monitored to ascertain the environmental

impacts of nearby industrial facilities and confirm that the facilities do not pose a public health risk or environmental hazard.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 10. The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for the microbiological parameter Escherichia coli (faecal coli bacteria) and intestinal enterococci (streptococci).

The microbiological parameters to be monitored are given below:

Parameter	Coastal and transitional waters Limit values	Inland waters Limit values
Escherichia coli (Faecal Colibacteria)	250 cfu/100 ml	500 cfu/100 ml
Intestinal Enterococci (streptococci)	100 cfu/100 ml	200 cfu/100 ml

- cfu = colony forming units (of bacteria)

Accepted percentile:

For the evaluation of an applicant beach, the Blue Flag Programme requires 95th percentile compliance with the above limit values. This is in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Directive (2006) as well as the recommendation of the World Health Organisation. The percentile has to be calculated for each parameter and also met for each parameter. For example, if the 95th percentile is below the limit values for Escherichia coli but not for Intestinal Enterococci, then the beach cannot be awarded with the Blue Flag.

Details on how to calculate the 95th percentile can be found in Appendix F. A calculation spreadsheet, however, is available on the internal Blue Flag database. All bathing water sample results must be entered into the spreadsheet, and the percentiles will be calculated automatically. This sheet must be sent to Blue Flag International with the application.

For EU countries implementing the Blue Flag, it is imperative that an applicant beach is classified as having 'Excellent' water quality.

As stated previously, discounting of a sample may be considered in case of extreme (weather) conditions. Should this be necessary, applicant beaches must be sent in as dispensation cases. See *Appendix A for further details on dispensation cases.*

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 11. The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for physical parameters.

Water quality can also be affected by physical and chemical parameters such as oil and floatables:

- There must be no oil film visible on the surface of the water, and no odour detected. Ashore and on land the beach must be monitored for oil and emergency plans should include the required action to take in case of such pollution.

- No floatables may be present, such as tarry residues, wood, plastic articles, bottles, containers, glass or any other substances.

Immediate action should be taken if abnormal changes are detected. This includes abnormal changes in the colour, transparency and turbidity of the water. Should physical and chemical pollution be detected repeatedly, the Blue Flag must be taken down for the remainder of the season, and the beach will not be eligible for the Blue Flag the following year unless the applicant fulfils the conditions for applying as a dispensation case.

Other tests can be conducted, such as the pH value of the water (its value ranges from 6 to 9 in most bathing waters).

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Criterion 12. The local authority/beach operator should establish a beach management committee.

The beach management committee should be charged with ensuring compliance with all environmental management criteria, including Coastal and Marine Protected Area requirements if appropriate. The committee should consist of all relevant stakeholders at the local level. Relevant stakeholders could be a local authority representative, hotel manager, beach manager, lifeguard, educational representative, local NGO, or other stakeholders such as community representatives, special user groups, Coastal and Marine Protected Area representatives, etc.

The beach management committee should co-operate with and support the local authority/beach operator and could institute environmental management systems and conduct environmental control visits of the beach and its facilities.

Where appropriate, a beach management committee may operate over a number of Blue Flag beaches within a local authority or an area/region, i.e. there is no need for a separate beach management committee for each individual Blue Flag beach.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
	All regions

Criterion 13. The local authority/beach operator must comply with all laws and/or regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach.

The beach must comply with laws and/or regulations pertaining to issues related to coastal zone planning, environmental management, wastewater management, environmental conservation, and others in order to receive and maintain Blue Flag status. The applicant must ensure that the facilities and activities under his/her responsibility comply with these laws and/or regulations. The management of the beach location, facilities, beach operation and immediate surrounding area must comply with official development plans and planning regulations. The legislation may include regulations for land-use zoning and planning, sewage/industrial waste effluent discharge, environmental health, conservation plans, operations licenses and permits, etc.

The location of facilities and use of the beach area and its vicinity must be subject to planning guidelines.

This includes environmental impact assessments. At the time of application for Blue Flag status, the applicant authority must provide written evidence from the planning department that all buildings on the beach meet local building regulations.

Existing beach facilities, construction and other use of the beach and its vicinity must be in compliance with laws regulating the use of the coastal zone or freshwater areas, including environmental conservation regulations. The inland beach area, including dunes, paths, and parking areas must be properly maintained according to coastal zone management principles.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 14. Sensitive areas must be managed.

Some sites at/near the Blue Flag beach may be very sensitive and require special management. In these cases, the beach operator must consult an appropriate conservation organisation or expert for advice on how to manage these sites. Where areas require special management, at the time of application, the applicant must provide confirmation that this consultation has taken place and that a management plan will be implemented.

However, the sensitivity of certain areas may prevent them from being part of a Blue Flag beach or from having information posted at the beach directing people to the area. An increased number of visitors could endanger wildlife and/or habitats, e.g. using land space for the construction of facilities, parking, paths, etc. As a general rule, the Blue Flag award is only given to sites that can demonstrate management of visitors and recreational use that prevents long-term irreversible damage to the local natural environment.

If a Blue Flag beach is in or near a Coastal and/or Marine Protected Area, it is necessary to consult with the Coastal and/or Marina Protected Area management in order to ensure compatibility with ecosystem conservation and biodiversity goals.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 15. The beach must be clean.

The beach and surrounding areas, including paths, parking areas, and access paths to the beach must always be clean and maintained. Litter should not be allowed to accumulate, causing these areas to become unsightly or hazardous.

The beach must comply with national guidelines or legislation concerning litter and waste management. Beach cleaning may be mechanical or manual, depending on the size, appearance, and sensitivity of the beach and its surroundings. In high use areas, where possible, mechanical sieving and deep cleaning of the sand should be carried out occasionally to remove small size waste, such as cigarette butts, etc.

During stormwater flows, the outlets and surrounding areas must be kept clean.

Cleaning of the beach must be carried out with consideration for local flora and fauna, e.g. where turtles may have buried eggs in the sand. The use of insecticides or chemicals for cleaning the sand or surrounding environment is not allowed. Cleaning in Protected Areas as well as sensitive areas (sand dunes, etc.), must be done in accordance with the existing laws and regulations, and advice from the relevant authority.

For information about the management of algal waste and seaweed, refer to criterion 16.

To determine the cleanliness level of the beach, it is recommended that a Beach Litter Measuring system, or similar system, be used. (See Appendix G for further details).

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 16. Algal vegetation or natural debris must be left on the beach.

Algal vegetation is generally accepted as referring to seaweed. Seaweed and other vegetation/natural debris are natural components of both freshwater and marine ecosystems. These ecosystems must be considered as living and natural environments and not only as a recreational asset to be kept tidy. Thus, the management of seaweed or other vegetation/natural detritus on the shore should be sensitive to both visitor needs and biodiversity. Natural disposal by tides and waves at the beach is accepted, as long as it does not create a nuisance.

Vegetation should not be allowed to accumulate to the point where it becomes a hazard; however, only if it is absolutely necessary should vegetation be removed. This could include accumulation of seaweed in warm weather causing decay, which in turn produces odours that attract flies and their larvae. Rotting seaweed could also be slippery and become a hazard for people walking on the shoreline. It could also reduce access to the beach for recreational activities or for disabled users.

If vegetation is removed, then consideration must be given to its disposal in an environmentally-friendly way, e.g. through composting or for fertilizer use. It is recommended that not 100% of the seaweed is removed, but that removal focuses on the areas where the accumulation creates problems. Wherever possible, environmental specialists should be consulted regarding the management of algal vegetation on the beach.

In some areas, seaweed is dried on the beach for later use as fertilizer or dune stabiliser. While this good practice should not be discouraged, it is also necessary to ensure that it does not create a nuisance for beach users.

If vegetation accumulation is persistent on the beach, it is recommended that a seaweed management strategy is developed, as a part of the beach management plan.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 17. Waste disposal bins/containers must be available at the beach in adequate numbers, and they must be regularly maintained.

Waste disposal bins or litter bins (preferably with covers) should be of a suitable design and appearance as well as being functional. It is recommended that bins made of environmentally friendly products are used, e.g. bins made of recycled composite plastics or wood.

There should be an adequate number of bins on the beach, and they should all be regularly maintained, well secured, and spaced appropriately. Individual bin capacity, the number of users on the beach and how frequently the bins are emptied determine the number and minimum space between bins placed on the beach. During the peak tourist season, the spacing between bins and the frequency of emptying should be adjusted as necessary.

In summary, when choosing and locating bins, the following factors should be considered:

- Bin capacity.
- Environmentally friendly products.
- Type and source of litter.
- Volume of pedestrian traffic.
- Servicing methods and intervals (including peak times).
- Local environment, e.g. winds, high tides, scavenging seagulls.

- Accessibility, e.g. height, surface.

The collected waste should only be disposed of in licensed facilities that are approved by authorities on the basis of environmental requirements. The duty of the community receiving the Blue Flag is to make sure that the waste is properly disposed of.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 18. Facilities for the separation of recyclable waste materials must be available at the beach.

Should the community have a local recycling facility, containers must be made available at the beach for these materials, e.g. glass, cans, plastic, paper, etc. The receptacles should be properly designed and managed for the type of waste received, should be emptied regularly, and be well placed for accessibility.

The recycling facilities should accommodate the collection and separation of as many different types of materials as possible, three being the minimum.

On application, the local authority/beach operator must indicate whether the local authority has facilities for the recycling of waste. If no such facilities exist, the applicant must apply for a dispensation from this criterion.

Blue Flag encourages all local authorities/beach operators to promote recycling and waste separation at the beach, even if the community does not have a local recycling facility.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 19. An adequate number of toilet or restroom facilities must be provided.

The number of toilets/restrooms available at the beach must reflect the average number of beach visitors during the peak season, the length of the beach and the number and location of major access points.

The toilet or restroom facilities must be easy to locate through signage and through information on the map on the Blue Flag information board.

The presence of showers (on the beach or in the buildings), changing rooms and nappy changing facilities are furthermore encouraged. Restrooms/toilets may also be located in nearby shops, restaurants, cafeterias or other establishments open to the general public. Facilities for disabled visitors should also be provided (see criterion 32).

Toilet or restrooms facilities must be equipped with washbasins, soap and clean towels (paper or cloth) or a hand-dryer.

Access to the toilet/restroom facilities must be safe.

Consideration should also be given to the design and maintenance of these facilities. They should be well integrated within the built and natural environment, and they must be regularly maintained so as to present a well-maintained appearance and to prevent vandalism of buildings.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 20. The toilet or restroom facilities must be kept clean.

The toilet/restroom facilities must be kept clean at all times. The frequency of checking and cleaning the facilities must reflect the intensity of use. Beaches with a high number of daily visitors must have their facilities checked and cleaned every day or several times a day.

The use of environmentally friendly cleaning materials, soap and towels is recommended.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 21. The toilet or restroom facilities must have controlled sewage disposal.

Sewage or effluent from the toilets must not enter the ground or the water untreated. In villages, communities, or in a municipality with sewage treatment facilities, the toilet facilities must be connected to the municipal sewer.

For facilities located outside areas serviced by the municipal sewage system and/or at remotely located beaches, individual treatment and regularly emptied holding tanks that prevent untreated sewage, effluent or seepage from entering the ground or the water -and which do not adversely affect the environment- are acceptable.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 22. There must be no unauthorised camping or driving and no dumping on the beach

Unauthorised camping, driving and dumping must be prohibited on the beach. Information about these restrictions must be displayed at the beach (as part of the code of conduct, Criterion 6).

Vehicles (except for those used for the purpose of cleaning and safety, e.g. for moving lifeguard equipment, or emergency vehicles) must not be allowed on Blue Flag beaches. For cases, however, where vehicles cannot be entirely prohibited, this must be adequately justified, and they must be properly managed. Areas for driving and parking, as well as car-free zones, must be designated and, whenever the situation requires it, police or traffic guards must control the beach. If vehicles are allowed, they must be prohibited from entering the high water zone at any time. The major part of the beach must be designated entirely vehicle-free. These sites must submit their application with a dispensation claim for this criterion.

Where there are no physical barriers preventing access to the beach by vehicles and where there are problems with unauthorised vehicles, camping or dumping, bylaws must be put in place to prohibit these activities. Information about these by-laws must be displayed. The use of the beach or its nearby areas as dumps for litter and other waste is not accepted.

In the case of specially planned events that involve the use of vehicles on the beach, a special management plan must be drawn up and applied to prevent damage to the ecosystem, as well as risks to beach users. *See Appendix H for guidelines on events on Blue Flag beaches.*

Parking for emergency vehicles must be provided in close proximity to the beach.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 23. Access to the beach by dogs and other domestic animals must be strictly controlled.

Dogs or pets, other than assistance dogs are not allowed on a Blue Flag beach or in the Blue Flag area if it is part of a larger beach. If the presence of pets is permitted by the local and national legislation, animals are only allowed in the parking areas, walkways and promenades in the inland beach area and must under control.

If the beach is patrolled by mounted police measures must be taken to ensure that no faecal matter contaminates the beach.

Wherever possible stray animals must be managed, and systems should be in place to remove stray animals from the beach. Measures must also be put in place to prevent access to the beach by stray animals. If stray animals are able to access the beach and cannot be controlled, it is recommended that the beach operator/local authority erect signs informing the public about this fact. It is also recommended that information be displayed about what the public should do should stray animals be seen on the beach.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 24. All buildings and beach equipment must be properly maintained.

Consideration must be given to the appearance of buildings and structures at the beach. They should be well integrated within the natural and built environment, should adhere to construction standards and meet environmental and aesthetic requirements.

Equipment on the beach includes facilities or services not discussed in any other criteria, e.g. playgrounds and piers. Equipment must be regularly maintained and checked in order to ensure that it is safe to use. Consideration must be given to: the cleanliness of equipment, its condition, the environmental effects of paint and other materials used for maintaining the equipment/buildings and any potential risk associated with its deterioration and malfunction. Wherever possible, environmentally friendly products should be used.

All construction work or hazardous structures must be fenced off to prevent access by the public. When and if construction takes place during the Blue Flag season, all Blue Flag criteria must be met during the period of the construction. Also, construction activities must not affect beach users.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 25. Marine and freshwater sensitive habitats (such as coral reefs or seagrass beds) in the vicinity of the beach must be monitored.

If there is a sensitive habitat (such as a coral reef or seagrass beds) located within 500 metres from any part of a Blue Flag beach, a monitoring programme must be established to monitor the health

of the habitat (coral reef or seagrass beds) at least once a season.

An expert organisation or relevant authority must be consulted regarding the monitoring and management of this sensitive area.

The “Reef Check” Coral Reef Monitoring Programme could be used. *See Appendix G for further details of the Reef Check monitoring system.*

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions where applicable.	

Criterion 26. A sustainable means of transportation should be promoted in the beach area.

This criterion refers to all actions that:

- encourage public and collective transport.
- encourage bicycling, bike renting and facilities for bike parking.
- support plans to organise traffic and reduce the peak traffic periods.
- develop pedestrian access.

The Blue Flag Programme encourages the promotion of alternative means of transportation, e.g. beach shuttles, bicycle rental or free bicycles. Such initiatives should be given particular attention in communities with high traffic densities in the beach area or where the beach is located in a sensitive area.

It is recommended that the local authority/beach operator implements a traffic management plan to reduce traffic volumes and the impact of traffic on land use and air pollution in the Blue Flag and surrounding areas.

It is also recommended that information about the availability of sustainable transportation be made available on the Blue Flag information board.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
	All regions

Criterion 27. Appropriate public safety control measures must be implemented.

The beach operator must ensure that safety measures comply with the national legislation regarding beach safety.

Moreover, it is strongly recommended that the beach operator undertakes a safety risk assessment for each designated bathing area. This safety risk assessment is to be carried out by the appropriate national authorities or, where applicable, by a Full Member organisation of the International Life Saving Federation (ILS), see Appendix I.

The public safety control measures recommended by the safety risk assessment should be implemented as a priority, based on available resources.

Irrespective of the above, a Blue Flag beach with a high number of visitors must be guarded/patrolled by an adequate number of lifeguards placed at appropriate intervals as recommended in the risk assessment and according to the beach characteristics and use. The number of lifeguards must increase according to peak usage, and a minimum of two every 200m is recommended for those beaches which have not undertaken a risk assessment.

Lifeguards must have appropriate national or international qualifications. Certificates must be checked prior to employment and must be made available to the National Operator upon request. Lifeguards must only be employed for lifeguarding and not in combination with other duties, such as water sports, rentals and services, cleaning etc.

Lifeguards must be easily recognisable. It is therefore recommended that lifeguards wear the internationally recognised red/yellow uniform. Lifeguards must be provided with appropriate lifesaving equipment.

Bathing areas patrolled by lifeguards must be clearly marked out. The area must be defined on the map, on the information board and/or physically on the beach with markers or flags. The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) recommends that flags and signs should be in accordance with ISO 20712. Additionally, Blue Flag international pictograms should be used.

On beaches, with low hazard risks and with few¹ users, public rescue equipment can replace lifeguards, unless the national legislation or the safety risk assessment states otherwise.

Public rescue equipment could include: lifebuoys, hooks, lifejackets, life rafts, etc. The equipment must be regularly inspected and must fulfil national/international guidelines.

Where public rescue equipment is provided, it must be clearly positioned, visible and located at regular intervals, allowing it to be reached quickly from any point on the beach. On beaches without lifeguards, maximum intervals of 100 metres between the equipment are recommended for those beaches which have not undertaken a risk assessment. Public rescue equipment must be accompanied by instructions for use and what to do in the event of a rescue. It is recommended that the location of equipment is identified by an emergency marker. The location of the lifesaving equipment/lifeguard tower must be indicated on the beach map on the Blue Flag information boards.

¹ Few = An average of less than 50 beach users per day over a period of 4 weeks during the high season.

The period when the public rescue equipment and/or lifeguards, and first aid are available must be clearly marked on the Blue Flag information boards and at the lifeguard station(s). An explanation of the beach safety flag system in use must be provided.

The lifesaving equipment must include access to an emergency phone unless the risk assessment states otherwise. The equipment must be regularly inspected and must fulfil national/international guidelines.

The beach operator must provide safety instructions which must be posted on the information board and other appropriate place(s) on the beach.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 28. First aid equipment must be available on the beach.

The first aid may be available by means of: a) a lifeguard on-site, and/or b) an attended first aid station with trained personnel, and/or c) equipment located in a shop or other beach facility at the beach, and/or d) directly available to the public on the beach. It is strongly recommended that busy beaches and family beaches have first-aid stations with staff in attendance. First-aid personnel must have appropriate qualifications.

First aid stations should have the following equipment a) adequate first aid stock (basic first aid supplies such as bandages, gloves, disinfectant, plasters, etc.) b) cold water and, preferably, hot water c) first aid bed d) oxygen cylinder and mask e) immobilizing trauma board (e.g. immobilizing blocks or spider harness) f) other equipment (shark attack pack), etc.

First-aid stations or the location of first-aid equipment must be clearly sign-posted so that beach visitors may easily locate them (including on the map of the Blue Flag information board). See Criterion 5. In addition, the period during which first aid is available must be clearly informed.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 29. Emergency plans to cope with pollution risks must be in place.

The emergency plan must provide a clearly identified procedure, facilitating efficiency in the case of an emergency. An emergency could result from oil spills, hazardous/toxic waste spills entering the beach from the sea, discharge of stormwater, hurricanes, algal blooms that could be dangerous, etc. An emergency in this context would be defined as an event which leads to a large scale impact on the beach or bathing water.

In order to quickly address pollution at the local level in coordination with local authorities, the following should be included:

- identification of individuals to contact in case of pollution.
- involvement of all administration services and individuals necessary to intervene.
- procedure for the protection or evacuation of people if necessary.
- procedure of public warning and information.
- withdrawal of the Blue Flag.

The emergency plan must specify who should be contacted in the case of a pollution incident. A responsible local person must be designated for this position. It must also specify who does what in the case of an emergency, including pollution incidents.

The emergency plan must furthermore prove compliance with other national legislation in the area, e.g. a national oil spill contingency plan.

As long as the hazard persists, the public should be informed of the pollution or potential danger by posting information at the beach, at all access points, in the media, tourist offices and through any other relevant means of communication. If the hazard is in the form of large scale polluted water, then the public must be informed that bathing is not safe and the beach should be closed to swimming. A case of pollution constitutes an infringement of Blue Flag criteria. To ensure the integrity of the Blue Flag, the flag must be temporarily withdrawn and information posted on the Blue Flag information board at the beach.

Emergency phone numbers for the police, first aid, and other relevant emergency numbers, along with the contact details for emergency services in the event of an oil or toxic chemical spill, must be posted at the beach, preferably on the Blue Flag information board.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 30. There must be management of different users and uses of the beach so as to prevent conflicts and accidents.

Beaches that support multiple activities must have management plans to prevent accidents and conflicts. This must include zoning for swimmers, surfers, windsurfers and motor craft. At the same time, recreational use of the beach must be managed without a negative impact on the natural environment or the biodiversity of the beach, and with consideration for aesthetic issues.

Swimmers should be protected from all sea craft (motor, sail or pedal). Where necessary, zoning through the use of buoys, beacons or signs must be in place. The same must be done for surfing areas. Distinctions should be made between motor, paddle or sail craft. The use of these various activities must be separated.

Powerboats and powered craft should operate at least 100-200 metres away from the swimming area. The exact distance is to be determined by the local regulatory authority. Furthermore, patrons who operate powered craft must be provided with guidelines regarding the use of their craft and the location of different zones.

The relevant authority or designated persons, for example, lifeguards, must enforce the zoning of the different recreational areas in the water. Different activities on the beach must also be clearly marked and zoned.

Consideration must also be given to potential noise impact from various activities (motorised activities, stereos and kites, etc.).

If special temporary events are to be held on the beach, then these should take place outside of the main swimming areas. If special activity events prevent the beach from complying with any of the Blue Flag criteria, then the flag must be withdrawn for the duration of the event. When such an event takes place, users of the beach must be notified through public warnings at the beach and,

preferably, in the local media prior to the event. *See Appendix I for guidelines for events on Blue Flag beaches.*

The beach itself must be managed in accordance with an environmental plan that protects sensitive species and habitats at the beach. This can be achieved through zoning or other preventative actions. In some cases, it may be necessary to restrict, disperse or otherwise manage certain activities. Beaches with sensitive dune or other habitats must be managed in such a way as to protect these sensitive habitats, e.g. protective fences. Recreational activities must be managed to prevent environmental degradation, e.g. coastal erosion or damage to vegetation, as well as to prevent birds and other wildlife, e.g. breeding turtles, from being disturbed.

Some particularly sensitive sites may require careful planning and management. In such cases, evidence must be provided to show that recognised local conservation organisations or groups have been approached and that a management plan has been drawn up.

Besides the use of physical separation of the different users, zoning must be clearly indicated on the map on the Blue Flag information board, and information could also be given at access and entry points (see Criterion 5).

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 31. There must be safety measures in place to protect users of the beach, and free access must be granted to the public.

The public must have access to Blue Flag beaches without being a client of a certain hotel or beach club. Access to the beach should preferably be free, although at some beaches public access is provided through charging a small and reasonable fee (no more than 30 US dollars).

Access to the beach must be safe. Beaches that are physically challenging must have facilities for safe access, e.g. secured steps with handrails. Similarly, there must be designated pedestrian crossings on busy roads in the vicinity of the beach.

Beach promenades and steps onto the beach must be complete and in good condition. The car park surface must be in good order. Parking places reserved for the use of disabled persons must be available and must be clearly marked. See Criterion 22 for information related to parking on the beach. Other access paths must also be safe, with regulations for cars and bicycles. Bicycle paths should be encouraged whenever relevant.

Where promenade edges are higher than 2 metres above the beach, warning signs and/or a barrier must be in place to prevent accidents. This is especially important where the beach surface is rocky. Consult criterion 33 regarding access for people with physical disabilities.

Visitors to the beach should be safe while on the beach. Information about safety must be readily available. The times of availability of lifesaving services and first aid must be clearly marked on the Blue Flag information boards or at the lifeguard station. In addition, an explanation of the emergency flag system, if in use, must be provided.

If needed, adequate security must be available at the beach in the form of trained and qualified guards responsible for patrolling. The guards must wear easily identified uniforms and should be

able to present their licence as trained security personnel on request.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

Criterion 32. A supply of drinking water should be available at the beach.

There should be a potable water source at the beach, e.g. from a fountain, pipe, tap, etc. This source can be in the restroom/toilet block or on the beachfront, and it must be protected from contamination by animals.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
	All regions

Criterion 33. At least one Blue Flag beach in each municipality must have access and facilities provided for the physically disabled.

It is strongly recommended that all Blue Flag beaches have facilities that allow access by the physically disabled, granting them access to the beach, surrounding buildings, and the restroom facilities. It is a Blue Flag requirement that at least one beach in every municipality must provide these facilities. It is a Blue Flag recommendation that at this beach, if possible, there is access to the water for the physically disabled.

Access to the beach must be facilitated by access ramps designed for users with various disabilities. It is recommended that the ramp design and material fit the natural environment and, wherever possible, environmentally friendly materials are used, i.e. recycled composite plastics.

Facilities must be designed for wheelchair and other disabled users and should comply with the ISO Standard Code for Access. The beach must comply with national regulations regarding access and facilities for people with disabilities. In addition, parking areas must have reserved spaces for disabled parking. If access ramps cannot be provided due to the topography, e.g. at steep cliffs, the local authority must apply for a dispensation for this criterion.

If none of the Blue Flag beaches in a local authority can provide access and facilities for the disabled, a request for a dispensation for this criterion must be documented in the application.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

APPENDIX A: Dispensation cases

All imperative criteria have to be complied with in order to obtain the Blue Flag. In the event of discussions arising out of the National Jury processes, and if an applicant has failed to fulfil some of the imperative criteria, the National Jury could forward a beach to the International Jury as a dispensation case. In the case of an application requiring a dispensation, the National Jury must forward the case to the International Jury with the necessary background documentation and an explanation as to what imperative criteria have not been fulfilled and giving reasons as to why a dispensation is requested.

Dispensation cases may arise when a beach has exceeded the required limit values of bathing water quality criteria because of a known, documented incident during the bathing season. Dispensation cases argued on the basis of incidents considered unusual but not atypical of the site are not considered.

Most frequently, request for dispensation is caused by exceptional/extreme weather conditions impacting on compliance with the water quality criteria. A National Jury can, in such cases, give a dispensation to omit a sample if the national authority's controlling bathing water quality regulations officially approve such a dispensation. Furthermore, an official statement from national weather authorities stating that the weather was exceptional must accompany the request for dispensation. For EU-member countries: if the request for dispensation of omission of a sample has been approved by the European Commission, and written proof of the European Commissions' approval is provided to the International Coordination, then the case is not considered as a dispensation case.

If a case of high pollution levels can be attributed by way of documentary evidence to other issues, such as an accident or another unavoidable incident, it is also possible to forward to the National Jury, such a candidate as a dispensation case. The documentation must show that the problem has been rectified and that the pollution was undoubtedly linked to the incident in question.

A beach can apply for dispensation when:

- facilities are under construction at the time of the application but will be finished by the start of the season.
- owing to extreme weather conditions, the imperative criteria on the beach are not met, e.g. signage or walkways, access to the beach has been damaged, etc. However, these must be rectified by the start of the season.
- a beach is not accessible to the physically disabled, yet it is the only beach in a local authority to run the Blue Flag Programme. The beach must present a plan on how and when the beach can fulfil the relevant criteria as a central part of the dispensation application.
- the location of the beach is such that the distance from services renders it unable to meet an imperative criterion, e.g. an accredited laboratory.

APPENDIX B: Information about the Blue Flag Programme must be displayed.

[Criterion 1]

THE BLUE FLAG PROGRAMME

This beach has been given the Blue Flag award. The Blue Flag is an environmental award, given to communities that make a special effort to manage their coastal/inland water environment and beaches with respect for the local environment and nature. To attain the Blue Flag, the community and its beach operators have to fulfil a number of criteria covering water quality, environmental information and education, safety, service and facilities.

This effort by the local community and its beach operators ensures that you and your family can expect to visit clean and safe environments at selected bathing sites. And it makes sure that the local community maintains a basis for sound development.

Facts about the Blue Flag:

The Blue Flag is awarded by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a non-governmental environmental organisation, which is represented by national organisations in each of the participating countries.

The Blue Flag is an environmental award for beaches, sustainable boating tourism operators, and marinas. Only local authorities or private beach operators can apply for a Blue Flag for beaches. The criteria for Blue Flag beaches cover four main areas: a) water quality, b) environmental information and education, c) environmental management, and d) safety and services.

The criteria of the Programme are developed over time so that participating beach operators have to keep working on solving relevant environmental problems to get the Blue Flag. Blue Flag award is only given for one season at a time, and the award is only valid as long as the criteria are fulfilled. When this is not the case, the responsible persons at the local level are obligated to take the Blue Flag down.

The national FEE member organisation monitors the Blue Flag sites during the season.

You can help the Programme by also taking actions to protect the environment:

Use the litter-bins on the beach and recycle waste if possible.

Use public transport, walk or rent a bike to get to the beach.

Obey the beach code of conduct.

Enjoy the nature of the beach and its surroundings, and treat it with respect.

Choose a holiday destination that cares for its environment - and an environmentally friendly hotel too, if possible. Along with the Blue Flag, the Foundation for Environmental Education also develops another eco-label for touristic enterprises: Green Key. Find more information at: www.green-key.org

Local, National and International Blue Flag responsible parties:

Name and address of the local responsible person, national Blue Flag operator and the International Co-ordination must be posted.

Text to accompany the names and addresses could be the following: "These are the names and addresses of the local, national and international Blue Flag contacts. It will assist the Programme, if you could report on how these beaches comply with the Blue Flag standards. In this way, you can help ensure that the Blue Flag standard continues to be met."

Types of Activities

There must be a mixture of different types of environmental educational activities for different user groups. Some activities must be carried out at the beach and have a direct focus on the beach or coastal environment. The different types of activities can be divided into five categories:

Activities for Passive Participation: This could include exhibitions, films, presentations, slide shows, conferences, debates, presentations by international experts, etc.

Activities for Active Participation: This includes guided tours, educational games, theatre/plays, cleaning days, coast observation days, diving/snorkelling orientation sessions, beach inspections, photography or drawing contests, nature conservation projects, green technology projects, "Adopt a Beach" programmes, community coastal monitoring programmes, etc.

Training Activities: This could be training for teachers, beach or marina staff, persons in charge of children groups, lifeguards, cleaners, law enforcement officers, specific national training programmes, etc.

Publishing and Media: The production of leaflets, stickers, interpretive signs, postcards, school and municipal newsletters, books, T-shirts, bags, posters, radio broadcasts, etc.

Blue Flag Environmental Information Centre: It is strongly recommended that Blue Flag beaches provide an Environmental Information Centre (station, kiosk), where specific information about Blue Flag and environmental education issues can be provided. Such a centre must offer both activities and exhibitions and provide environmental and nature information in order to qualify as an environmental interpretation or education centre. Information about its location and activities must be provided at the beach or in nearby tourist information offices. The centre should be open to, and have activities and information for the general public, not only local school children.

Target groups

The activities should target a wide range of different groups. It is important that the beach operator, together with other operators in the area, organise a programme to educate and raise awareness within the many different interest groups that influence the use of the local environment. These interest groups could be visitors, locals, tourism employees, fishermen, local industries, etc.

The types, number and target groups of activities should match the situation. For example, in a major tourist destination, more than one activity per season should be available to the general public.

Connection with existing programmes

The activities can be part of already existing environmental education programmes, implemented either on-site or in the local community (Sustainable Development Goals related activities, Eco-Schools activities, etc.). It is also recommended that the beach operator work together with local NGOs in setting up educational activities.

Information about Activities

Information about the publicly accessible activities must be made available at the beach and preferably also in local tourism newspapers or magazines or posted in local tourism offices. The published information should include: the kind of activities, when and where are they going to take place, who they are for, etc.

Not Acceptable

Activities that are not acceptable for meeting this criterion are:

Activities held to meet other Blue Flag criteria such as the general cleaning of the beach, waste management, recycling, and posted environmental information otherwise required on the information board (i.e. information on surrounding sensitive environments), etc.

Activities focusing only on tourism without a specific focus on sustainable tourism.

Activities otherwise implemented by the local authority or beach operator as part of the standard management of health, safety, transportation or tourism.

APPENDIX D: Recommendations for presenting water quality information on Blue Flag beaches.
Example of a coastal water beach:
[Criterion 3]

Beach: _____
 Contact person: _____

Local authority: _____
 Telephone no: _____

Date												
Escherichiacoli / Faecal coliform												
☺ < 250cfu/100ml												
☹ >250cfu/100 ml												
Intestinal Enterococci / Faecal streptococci												
☺ <100/100 ml												
☹ >100/100 ml												

<p>Blue Flag and bathing water quality</p> <p>This beach has met the Blue Flag water quality standards. The bathing water is continuously monitored for the different types of bacteria shown in the tables. The bathing water is tested at least every 31 days. In the table, you can see when the water has been analysed and how many bacteria were found.</p> <p>A small number of bacteria tells you that the water is very clean - a high number of bacteria tells you that the water may be polluted and could contain bacteria from sewage.</p>	What do the results mean?	
	Faecal coliform / E.coli	Faecal streptococci / Intestinal enterococci
	☺ Below 250 <i>Excellent bathing water</i>	☺ Below 100
☹ Above 250 <i>Is allowed a few times during the season</i>	☹ Above 100	

APPENDIX E: the 95th percentile

The 95th percentile is a calculation method used to obtain the average amount of pollution. In terms of Bathing Water sampling results, the value shows the results that are less than or equal to the limit values 95% of the time. The standards refer to values that would be exceeded by less than 5% of the time.

The 95th percentile is derived through the following calculation (based on the explanation in the EU Bathing Water Directive 2006):

1. Take the log₁₀ value of all bacterial enumerations in the data sequence to be evaluated. Zero values cannot be used and should be replaced by a value of 1 (or the minimum value allowed)
2. Calculate the mean of the log₁₀ values (μ)
3. Calculate the standard deviation of the log₁₀ values (σ)
4. The upper 95 percentile is derived from the following equation: $\text{antilog}(\mu + 1,65 \sigma)$
5. The resulting value must be within the limit values as stated above

A calculating spreadsheet is available on the Blue Flag Podio Library.

APPENDIX F: Beach Litter Measuring System – a method of mapping the status of litter on a beach [Criterion 15]

In order to determine the cleanliness on the beach, the Beach Litter Measuring System could be used by the beach manager or the National Operator when conducting beach monitoring visits.

The system differentiates between bulky litter (>10 cm) and fine litter (<10 cm). It takes a closer look at the amount of litter in defined representative areas on the beach. According to the amount of litter, beaches are classified into different cleanliness levels (A+ to D). The method combines taking pictures and making counts.

At a Blue Flag Beach, the cleanliness level should be A+ or A.

Step by step guidance on how to define your beach's cleanliness level:

Bulky Litter

1. Define an area of 100 m² (10 m x 10 m) for your bulky litter count and take a photo (Choose the dirtiest 100 m² that you can find on the beach).
2. Count the units of bulky litter (>10 cm) within the area.
3. Take a picture of the area (to keep as proof),
4. Determine the cleanliness level with the help of the beach litter indicator (see below)

Fine Litter

1. Define an area of 1 m² for your fine litter count and take a photo (choose the dirtiest area within the 1 m²)
2. Count units of fine litter (<10 cm) within the area
3. Take a picture of the area (to keep as proof)
4. Determine the cleanliness level with the help of the beach litter indicator (see below)

Beach Litter Indicator

Number of litter units per area	Cleanliness level
0	A+ Very Clean
1-3	A Clean
4-10	B Moderately Clean
11-25	C Dirty
> 25	D Very Dirty

General

1. Keep a record of your measurements (date, time, location, circumstances, weather conditions, cleanliness level(s) for bulky litter, cleanliness level(s) for fine litter, other comments).
2. Repeat these steps at different locations along the beach if possible.
3. Repeat the measurement at different times during a season and different times of the day if possible.

It is important to keep in mind that starting to use this system might require more time in the beginning.

Once you get some exercise or training, it will be a quick, easy and helpful tool.

For a more detailed version of the beach litter indicator or a description of the system, please visit the Blue Flag website or contact the Blue Flag International Head Office.

1 The Beach Litter Measuring System was developed by the Keep Holland Tidy Foundation and the Royal Dutch Touring Club.

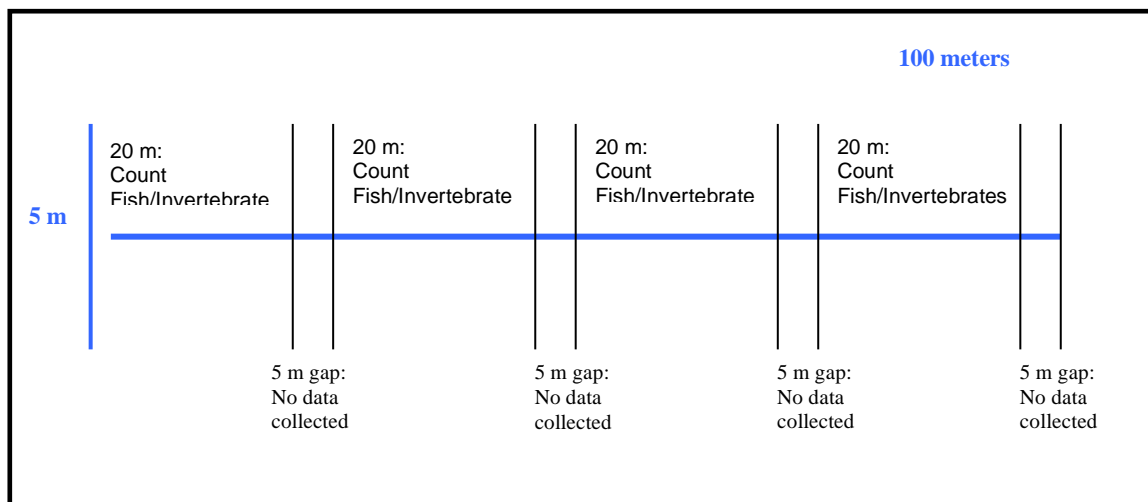
Below is a very brief description of the content of the “Reef Check” monitoring programme. For full information about the “Reef Check” system and information about national/international support, please consult <http://www.reefcheck.org>.

“Reef Check” is designed for use by volunteer, non-scientist snorkelers or scuba divers. A local “Reef Check” team should be established with a scientist and a group of snorkelers and divers trained to carry out the analyses. The team members must be skilled at identifying the indicator organisms and substrate categories. It is strongly recommended that the team attend a “Reef Check” training session. If there are already “Reef Check” teams established at the national or local level, these teams can be approached for support.

In order to carry out the monitoring, the following equipment is necessary: a copy of the instruction manual, indicator organism ID cards/books, GPS, transect lines, underwater paper and waterproof pencils/markers, buoys, plumb line and safety gear.

If possible, the monitoring should take place at two depths: shallow water (2-6 metre depth) and mid-reef (6-12 metre depth). Reefs in many areas are, however, not suitable for monitoring at more than one depth.

A 100-metre transect should be established (preferably parallel to the shore). The transect must be divided into 4 x 20-metre observation areas divided by 4 x 5-metre gaps. For re-survey, it is



important to document or permanently mark the transect start/endpoints.

The “Reef Check” coral reef monitoring program consists of four types of data collection methods: 1) Site description (environmental conditions and ratings of human impacts), 2) Fish counts, 3) Invertebrate counts, 4) Substrate type measurements.

The site description includes information about: location (overall and exact location), survey time, nearby population, weather conditions, rating of human impacts on the coral reef and the possible protection of the coral reef. The substrate survey includes the record of the substrate at points with 0.5-meter intervals along the 4 x 20-metre transect. The substrate must be classified in one of the following categories: hard coral, soft coral, recently killed coral, nutrient indicator algae, sponge, rock, rubble, sand, silt/clay, or other substrate. In the “Reef Check” manual, there is more information about how to conduct the substrate survey and classify the substrate.

The level of coral bleaching, presence of coral disease, presence of litter and coral damage must be

noted.

Each region has different indicator fish and invertebrate species that should be counted along the 4 x 20-metre transect. In the “Reef Check” website and manual, there is more information about the fish and invertebrate species to include in the counting and information about how to conduct the counts. Finally, it is recommended to supplement the survey with photo and/or video documentation.

APPENDIX H: Guidelines for events on Blue Flag beaches

[Criterion 30]

Should events be planned for Blue Flag beaches, it is recommended that the beach operator attempt to achieve a win-win situation regarding both hosting the event and maintaining Blue Flag status. Events on Blue Flag beaches are not incompatible with the management of the Blue Flag Programme. However, the event should not compromise Blue Flag standards. The Blue Flag should not be lowered simply because an event is planned on the beach.

The decision to allow events to take place on beaches is ultimately the decision of the beach operator managing that facility and would, as such, be guided by local by-laws and other legislation. Should the beach operator be concerned about potential impacts on Blue Flag standards,, early contact and discussion with the National Operator is recommended. It is reiterated that it is the responsibility of the beach operator to ensure that Blue Flag standards are met.

If necessary, additional resources, e.g. cleaning staff, portable toilets, etc. should be brought in to ensure that the standards do not drop.

Wherever possible, the Blue Flag area should be zoned (including the use of buoys – where appropriate – in the water) so that a designated Blue Flag swimming area is still retained and the beach can still fly the flag. It is not recommended that the whole beach be dedicated to the event.

Wherever possible, every attempt should be made to ensure that all the Blue Flag standards are still met on the beach during the event.

In terms of the criteria of Blue Flag, compliance with all environmental and building legislation also applies to any events and/or the construction of facilities on the beach. This includes the possibility of undertaking Environmental Impact Assessments or producing environmental reports on the impact of the event on the natural surroundings. In this case, permission from the relevant environmental authorities in the region would be necessary.

The public must be given advance warning of any events planned for Blue Flag beaches. This could be in the form of posters or other information at the beach, through announcements in the local media, or on local authority/beach operator websites if appropriate. A notice indicating details of the event, duration of the event, where more information can be obtained, where complaints can be made, etc. must be posted at the beach.

In case of an activity that takes place on the beach after hours, i.e. for those beaches that withdraw the flag at the end of the day when criteria are no longer met, the beach operator must ensure that the beach and the facilities are cleaned and returned to order before the flag is due to be raised the next morning, even if this means the cleaning teams must work through the night. So, if the flag is normally raised at 08h00 in the morning, the facilities must meet Blue Flag standards by 08h00 in the morning.

It is recommended that the local authority/beach operator consider a fee to be levied on the organisers of events hosted on Blue Flag beaches and that this income be used to make improvements to the beach or within the local area.

Appendix I – Guidance on ILS Safety Risk Assessment for Beaches [Criterion 27]

INTRODUCTION

The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) is the world authority in the global effort to prevent drowning and works with national life-saving organisations to improve drowning prevention, water safety, water rescue, lifesaving, lifeguarding and lifesaving sport. FEE and ILS have therefore entered a Memorandum of Understanding where FEE recognises ILS as being the world authority in the global effort to prevent drowning.

FEE encourages National Operators and local authorities to work with ILS national organisations when possible.

ILS will undertake risk assessments all over the world and take care that information boards, according to ISO 20712, are placed at as many beaches as possible. When this is not possible, an independent risk assessment may be conducted. Below are guidelines produced by ILS.

BACKGROUND

Risk management can be defined as a logical and systematic approach of identifying, analysing, assessing, countering, monitoring and communicating risks associated with any activity or process. In its *Guidelines for safe recreational water environments (Vol.1)* the World Health Organization states: 'Assessment of hazard and risk inform the development of policies for controlling and managing risks to health and well-being in water recreation. ... The assessment of a beach or water should take into account several key considerations, including:

- the presence and nature of natural or artificial hazards,
- the severity of the hazards as related to health outcomes,
- the availability and applicability of remedial actions,
- the frequency and density of use,
- the level of development.

PRINCIPLES

The purpose of hazard and risk assessment is to assess the probability that certain events will take place and assess the potential adverse impact these events may have on people, property or the environment, or other adverse outcomes.

ILS sees the implementation of risk assessments for all aquatic locations as a key element of the strategies to reduce injury and loss of life or other adverse impacts on the aquatic environment.

A generic framework and the main elements of the risk management process identified are:

- Communication and consultation
- Establishing the context
- Risk identification
- Risk analysis
- Risk evaluation
- Development of a risk control measures plan
- Monitor and review

This framework is consistent with the international standard ISO 31000 – Risk Management – Guidelines on principles and implementation of risk management.

The basic rationale for conducting a risk assessment is:

1. Identify the hazards of a particular location and assess the risks of possible human interaction with the hazard.
2. Provide the basis for a risk management plan.
3. Improve safety and reduce the risk of death or injury at the location.
4. Ensure the best use of resources and encourage effective management and cost-effective operations.
5. Reduce the potential for litigation stemming from accident and management practices.
6. Provide guidance for the development of policy, procedure and practices.

A **hazard** is a source of potential harm or a situation with a potential to cause a loss.

The term **risk** is used to describe the probability that a given exposure to a hazard will lead to an adverse outcome.

The job of accurately analysing the potential personal risk to the public at a coastal and/or beach location is complex. The determination and evaluation of potential risks is made more complicated in coastal regions due to the continually changing nature of the environment. Coastal regions are dynamic environments where the presence and level of a potential danger varies with numerous factors such as time, water conditions, weather and human interaction.

In order to effectively assess hazards and their associated risks, the assessor must understand all the contributing factors that come together to create the danger, for example, the beach topography, the prevailing weather and wave climates, and the number of people who use the beach and their chosen activities.

Consideration is required to counter (control) and manage the risks to ensure visitors can enjoy the safest aquatic recreation possible. Solutions may include any one or combination of the following “hierarchy” of controls.

1. Removal of risk; hazards, people or both, where possible (Elimination).
2. Remove access to the location at which the hazard may present a risk (Isolation).
3. Share the risk with another party or parties, for example through contracts, partnerships or insurance (Transfer).
4. Install a barrier such as a fence or vegetation (Engineering control).
5. Management (Administrative) controls that may include:
 - a. Community education programmes to raise awareness of potential hazards.
 - b. International standard signage to ISP 20712, which will enable visitors to make informed decisions on whether they wish to proceed into an area or undertake a particular activity.
 - c. Supervision through the deployment of appropriately trained personnel, such as lifeguards.
 - d. Implementation of appropriate emergency management systems.
 - e. Use and appropriate positioning of public rescue equipment, such as lifebuoys/rings.
 - f. Zoning, such as the use of marker buoys and flags to define areas in which non-compatible activities should be conducted such as powerboats, swimming and sailing.
6. Retain and management of the risk (Residual risk).

REFERENCES

International Life Saving Federation (ILS), 2007, ILS Beach Risk Assessment Policy.
International Life Saving Federation of Europe (ILSE), 2007, ILSE Risk Assessment Guidelines.
International Life Saving Federation of Europe (ILSE), 2010, ILSE Designated Bathing Area Risk Assessment Report.
International Standards Organisation (ISO), 2008, ISO 20712 Water Safety Signs and Beach Safety Flags (Parts 1, 2 & 3).
Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), 2007, *A guide to coastal public rescue equipment*
World Health Organisation (WHO), 2003, *Guidelines for safe recreational waters Volume 1 - Coastal and freshwaters.*

Appendix J – Blue Flag Guidelines for further developments of your beach

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Information about the Blue Flag Programme and the other FEE eco-labels must be displayed. **The staff on the beach must be educated about Blue Flag and be able to provide information about it to the beach users.**

Twice a year, there is a meeting with the staff about BF measurements/environment/sustainability.

This is preferably done before and after the Blue Flag season, but for those beaches with year-long seasons, meetings can be held every six months.

The discussions can be verified by reports of minutes of management meetings.

Every employee knows about BF, can communicate about BF with the guests

There is an internal system in the beach management so that new staff is informed about the Blue Flag Programme, and that, especially for new employees, there is training about what Blue Flag criteria mean in their job. Part-time staff employed in high-season is also informed about Blue Flag.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The water consumption in the sanitary facilities and showers must be controlled.

1. There is a maximum flow of 9 /minute out of showers
2. There is a maximum flow of 6 litres/minute out of the taps.
3. There is a maximum flow of 6 litres per toilet flush.

The beach uses water-saving measures in taps, showers and toilets. The flow of water taps for washbasins is up to 6 litres per minute. The flow of showers is up to 9 litres per minute. For the flushing of all toilets, not more than 6 litres of water are used.

The beach management should also influence the water consumption of private companies or businesses on the beach, such as restaurants, which could then implement the Green Key criteria and obtain the Green Key certification.

Exceptions:

When toilets have a greywater system or have a stop button, a maximum of 9 litres per flush is sufficient.

In addition to the reduction of water consumption, the beach takes additional measures. These could include the use of pressure or sensor faucets, a system to stop the water flow easily, payment system (coins, Sep key), use of greywater, a water recycling system, etc.

There must be an environmental policy and an environmental plan for the beach. The plan should include references to water management, waste and energy consumption, health and safety issues as well as the use of environmentally friendly products wherever possible. All employees must be informed and educated about these issues.

→ same as for marinas and boats

The beach, including the lifeguard station and private businesses, registers its annual consumption data of energy, water, waste, and (optionally) cleaning products. These data are converted into indices. An excel sheet is used for this purpose.

The records must show the following information:

- quantities of gas, electricity, water,
- all charges for gas, electricity, water,
- cost per unit consumption of gas, electricity, water.

There is an energy control visit every 5 years

The beach management has commissioned a further study of the energy performance of the recommended measures. The measures are included in the sustainability programme (guideline 2).

Only environmentally friendly cleaning products (which are certified with an ecolabel) must be used for the cleaning of the facilities on the beach.

Sanitary and interior cleaning products must have an accredited environmental label or must be products not included in the blacklist (see attachment 1: Green Key blacklist).

Sanitary and interior cleaners must have an eco-label, for example. European Ecolabel, Nordic Swan and Blue Angel).

When outsourcing the cleaning operations, the existing contract should be reviewed with the above terms to be included in the next contract review, and definitely within one year after the initial assessment for the Blue Flag.

Exception:

Specific cleaners that are regulated by laws for health and safety, hygiene and/or food safety (HACCP), either periodically or in case of an emergency, are not covered by this criterion.

For daily cleaning activities, only fibre cloth products are used.

Only environmentally-friendly toiletries, paper towels and toilet papers must be provided in the sanitary facilities on the beach. Soap and other personal care products must be provided in dispensers with a dosing system.

Paper towels and toilet paper must be made of non-chlorine bleached paper or must have an eco-label.

Only energy-efficient lighting must be used. Sensors which regulate the use of the light should be installed wherever considered as being useful.

All lighting is energy efficient (PSL, TL, SL, LED, etc.). Not later than one year after the inspection of the beach, energy-efficient lighting is used in and around (= outdoors) the buildings. For bulbs not meeting the criterion, the beach provides a substitution plan.

Energy-efficient lighting has a minimum light output of 40 lumen/watt. PL, TL, SL and LED lighting satisfy this condition. Halogen lighting and traditional light bulbs are not to be used on the beach anymore.

If there is no suitable alternative, a beach may get a dispensation for this point. The beach operator must demonstrate that it can not be technically realized or that the required investment has a payback period of > 5 years.

In and around the buildings on the beach, there is a substantial use of lighting sensors to prevent unnecessary illumination.

- Explanation: Lighting Sensors can turn lights on/off based on, for example, the presence of people (motion sensor) or too little light (light sensor). In this manner, unnecessary operation of lamps is prevented.

The energy supply on the beach should be based on renewable sources.

The beach uses renewable energy sources.

- Explanation: This includes renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and water; through solar, windmills, photovoltaic solar cells (electricity generation) or similar renewable energy, tylen hose for heating (tap) water etc.
100% of the total amount of electricity is generated sustainably.
- Explanation: Sustainably generated electricity refers to electricity generated from renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and water. There are various names used: green energy, green electricity or natural electricity.

Green gas: The total amount of purchased gas is generated sustainably from biomass. Explanation: Green gas is gas produced from biomass. This "biogas" is brought into the natural gas, thus reducing the use of existing fossil natural gas resources. If you purchase green gas, then this is accompanied by a certificate of origin.

The beach and beach equipment/facilities should aim at being climate neutral.

The beach management carries out a CO₂ study for its activities (e.g. to set a fixed CO₂ footprint) to investigate if it can be carbon neutral.

Explanation: Working with CO₂ emission certificates is always the culmination of activities. Save first, then see whether the beach itself can generate renewable energy. The third step is to neutralize CO₂ emissions by purchasing CO₂ certificates for the remaining CO₂ emissions.

Artificially made green areas and gardens on the beach must be maintained sustainably.

Chemical pesticides and fertilizers cannot be used more than once a year unless there is no organic or natural equivalent.

As no chemical pesticides or fertilizers should be used on the establishment's premises, an alternative could be to use gas flames or mechanical herbicides. By using gas flames, the best effect is achieved if the plants are not burned down to the ground but rather just scorched.

Flowers and gardens must be watered in the early morning or after sunset

This criterion aims to reduce the water consumption, especially when tap water is used for watering. It is the best way to avoid evaporation and have the best impact on the roots of plants.

Rainwater is collected and used for watering flowers and gardens

This criterion also aims to reduce tap water consumption. An alternative water system to store and use rainwater limits the use of freshwater for watering.

When planting new green areas, endemic or native species are used.

Endemic species use less water than non-endemic, and their use preserves the biodiversity of the surroundings.

When making a plan for new green areas, think of the following components:

- a. introduction (including business data);
- b. a global inventory of paved surfaces, plant and trees species on and around the beach and a description of present landscape elements;
- c. a description of how current and future natural areas on and around the beach are handled (e.g., in terms of pruning, lawn mowing, weed control etc.);
- d. a management plan for nature on and around the beach. This plan looks at the desired future development;
- e. summary measures and costs of the plan;
- f. + appendices outline.

Artificially made beaches must be created and maintained sustainably.

A beach which has been artificially created must be managed in a sustainable way. Ecological evaluations must be undertaken in order to ensure a positive impact.

For example, the ecological impact of the sand brought to create the beach must be minimised as much as possible.

The facilities on the beach must be made of environmentally friendly materials. Local suppliers should be preferably used when equipping the beach with new buildings, infrastructure or furniture.

Encompasses buildings, furniture, infrastructure etc.

Also: Environmental friendly painting

For painting works, less environmentally harmful paints that have an eco-label are used. Explanation: When painting the buildings on the beach, use only environmentally friendly interior and exterior paint. The paints have a label such as Ecolabel, EU ecolabel or similar.

During new construction, reconstruction or renovation of the beach, the business will take into account the environment and sustainability of materials used.

Explanation:

- The purchased wood that is used for building is durable'
- Certified wood that has been approved by national authorities is used, for example, TPAC (Timber Procurement Assessment Committee) approved.
- The Energy Performance Coefficient (EPC) is at least 5% lower than required in national legislation.
- Other measures could be: buffering rainwater, water conservation, protection of biodiversity, promotion of environmentally friendly mobility or reduction of emissions and pollution by equipment used for building or by innovations in the use of the building.

Based on the sustainable procurement policy, the beach management makes demands on its suppliers. The beach management asks suppliers for a signed declaration of delivery of sustainable products and services.

Explanation: A sustainability declaration is a document describing the requirements of the beach management from suppliers and in which the supplier declares to be committed to this effect.

CSR

The beach management has a CSR policy, covering the areas of Human Rights, Labour Equity, Environmental Education, and Anti-Corruption.

There is a declaration of CSR policy by the beach management

The beach management has a CSR policy statement in which it defines its objectives on sustainability and corporate social responsibility. The statement must be prominently displayed.

→ Explanation:

A CSR policy is a statement of the senior management of the beach, indicating that sustainability and CSR are an integral part of business.

The statement pays at least attention to:

- general CSR objectives/sustainability outline, policy concern for people/planet/profit, and structural part of business objectives,
- implementation activities, which should be in accordance with company policies and procedures established,

- general rules regarding the implementation of the company's sustainability policy, with regard to the fulfilment of legal requirements, staff training and recording/monitoring of the environmental performance of the company.

The beach develops a CSR programme for the next three years

The sustainability program covers three years, and shows which environmental sustainability actions will take place to reduce the consumption of gas, water, electricity and waste (prevention) in that period. The policy also includes activities and measures in the area of procurement, transport management, community involvement, etc. Take the international Blue Flag criteria as a guide.

Every employee can provide input to CSR

The beach management has the policy that all staff members can provide input to CSR/Sustainability. For example, there is a "suggestion box" where the staff can submit their ideas about increasing sustainability on the beach.

The beach management takes at least two measures during the controlling period to promote community involvement and social responsibility.

Social/community involvement

The beach management takes at least two measures to encourage sustainable relationships in the immediate environment and to fulfil its commitment to perform better in the social field.

For example, the beach management:

- promotes good relations with local residents/stakeholders, and works on a long-term relationship with them (offers free facilities, organizes free events, provides an annual offering to compensate for any inconvenience).
- stimulates the local economy/
- works with other local organizations, such as local associations, environmental organisations, etc.
- is actively involved in a charity or conservation organization.
- provides free communication platforms for charity.
- distributes sustainable gifts and/or sale items.
- sponsors social/community organisations, directly or indirectly, materially or immaterially, or is committed to a social purpose
- participates actively in charity work.

Blacklist Green Key cleaning products.

FEE/Green Key

Blacklist for cleaning products in the Green Key Programme

The Blacklist is prepared by the consultant organisation, Ecoconso.

This list covers multi-purpose and sanitation products (typical cleaning products). For cleaning in any other specific area that needs special products, one must check for compliance with national legislation.

Surfactants:

Surfactants that are not readily biodegradable under aerobic condition

Surfactants that are not biodegradable under anaerobic conditions and that are classified with H400/R50 (very toxic to aquatic life), Alkylphenoethoxylates (APEOs), onylphenoethoxylates (NPEOs) and derivatives.

Quaternary ammonium compounds that are not readily biodegradable.

Sequestering or anti-scaling agents:

EDTA (ethylenediamine tetraacetate) and its salts, phosphates.

Acids:

Phosphoric acid, hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid.

Bases:

Ammonium hydroxide.

Solvents:

Detergents containing more than 6% by weight of VOCs with a boiling point lower than 150°C.

Chlorine:

Reactive chloro-compounds (such as sodium hypochloride).

Conservators:

Formaldehyde.

Antimicrobial or disinfecting ingredients added for other purposes than preservation.

Bioaccumulable preservatives classified as H410, H411, R50/53 or R51/53. Preservatives are not regarded as bioaccumulable if BCF < 100 (bioconcentration factor) or logKow < 3 (log octanol/water partition coefficient)

APPENDIX C: NATURAL RESOURCES WALES (NRW)

DENBIGHSHIRE BATHING WATER STATUS

Introduction

North Wales benefits from over forty EC designated bathing beaches / bathing waters (BW's). Natural Resources Wales monitor the bathing waters in Wales throughout the bathing season. Under the Regulations, we are required to sample our bathing waters a minimum of 5 times throughout the season. This year, the majority of our bathing waters were sampled 10 times, with some being sampled 16 or 20 times. It's our job to work with government, bathing water controllers, local authorities and businesses to maintain and improve bathing water quality in Wales.

At the end of the 2024 season, the four EC BW's in Denbighshire will have the following classifications :

	Rhyl	Rhyl East	Marine Lake	Prestatyn
2023	SUFFICIENT	GOOD	SUFFICIENT	EXCELLENT
2024	POOR	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD

The above table shows that both Rhyl and Prestatyn have dropped a classification. Marine Lake has improved a classification.

Further information for Rhyl and Prestatyn are below:

RHYL

The 2015 Bathing Water Directive revision (rBWD) reviewed the limits for acceptable levels of bacteria and this resulted in many beaches moving from 'Excellent' to 'Good' and from 'Good' to 'Sufficient', as in the case of Rhyl. Since 2015, Rhyl has been at risk of dropping to 'Poor' status but the use of Prediction & Discounting (P&D) where daily water quality predictions are published and allows up to 15 % of sample results to be discounted from the data set. This has been key in preventing such a drop in classification until 2024.

Following a number of elevated sample results this season, Rhyl will now be classified as a 'Poor' bathing water for 2025

What influences Rhyl BW water quality

Reductions in the bathing water quality at Rhyl can almost entirely be attributed to the proximity of the River Clwyd and its estuary. On an outgoing tide the river follows the Training Wall and appears to flow out to sea without affecting the bathing water sample point which is in line with Rhyl Seaquarium. As the tide turns, the long shore drift pushes the river water towards Rhyl Beach. Rivers are naturally higher in bacteria compared to that of coastal waters. In wet weather, river bacteria levels rise significantly above acceptable bathing water standards and if this coincides with an incoming tide at Rhyl, a reduction in water quality can be observed.

The bacteria in the river is normally from two significant sources:

Sewage – the majority of sewage is collected and treated by Welsh Water via their network of sewers, pumping stations and sewage works. There are many permitted overflows / outfalls on this system and designed to spill storm sewage in very wet weather, with significant outfalls near Marine Lake and Rhuddlan. The sewage infrastructure in the area has been designed to ensure Rhyl achieves Sufficient status.

Agriculture – the Clwyd Valley is farmed intensively with large dairy farms located in the lowlands, as well as sheep and beef cattle throughout. Livestock access to streams can be a significant source of bacteria if there is unrestricted access.

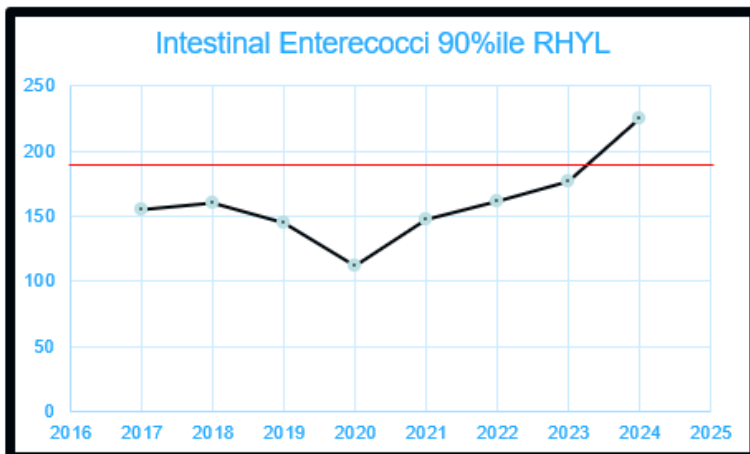
Other sources of bacteria local to Rhyl may include birds and dog. It is also possible for rough seas to disturb bacteria loaded sediment.

Levels of bacteria

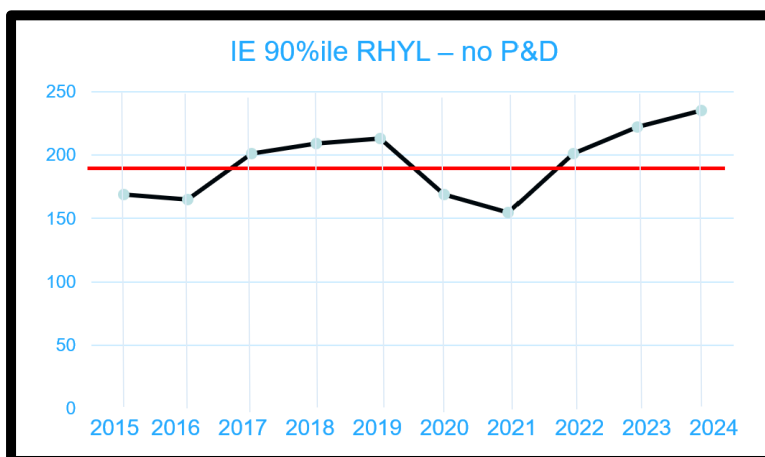
We sample for two bacteria at EC beaches – E Coli and Intestinal Enterococci (IE), both faecal indicators. Samples are taken between May and September and are roughly two weeks apart.

EColi levels would place Rhyl in Good status but IE levels have exceeded the threshold of 185 (red line below) and hence the 'Poor' status.

The graph below shows IE at Rhyl in recent years after the discounting of samples.



The graph below shows IE at Rhyl in recent years without discounting of samples – had there been no P&D :



The graph above shows that without P&D, Rhyl would have been classed as Poor in 2017 to 2019 and 2022 onwards.

NRW work to minimise the risk

Bacteria tends to die with time and therefore the further away the source of the bacteria, the less likely the bacteria are to reach Rhyl. We have therefore focused our work on the lower Clwyd catchment, from around Denbigh downstream to Rhyl.

The sewerage infrastructure was upgraded in 2012, designed to ensure Rhyl achieved Sufficient status. Our investigations and regulation indicate that assets in

the lower Clwyd are being operated in accordance with permit requirements, including storm overflows which are permitted to discharge in storm conditions.

We also work closely with Welsh Water on proactive issues such as misconnections in the surface water drains, reducing storm overflow discharges and nature based solutions to traditional sewage treatment that has the added benefit of bacteria reduction.

We have focused significant resource and investment towards reducing agricultural sources of bacteria. We have worked with the farming unions, Farming Connect, Rivers Trust and many farmers, initially on our Lower Clwyd Project and then the Clwyd Opportunity Catchment work to reduce agricultural bacteria input into the lower Clwyd. Livestock access to watercourses in the summer months is not a breach of any regulations, and we have therefore sought funding to fence out livestock and providing alternative sources of water. Since 2019, we have invested over £350k on such schemes in the lower Clwyd catchment.

Forward look

Rhyl will have 'Poor' status for 2025. The assessment is made using a rolling four year data set. At the end of the 2025 season, 2021 data will be removed from the assessment. As 2021 data contained some poor results, Rhyl is likely to return to 'Sufficient'.

We believe that the prediction model that has been successful since implementation in 2015 is now in need of updating. An improved model would likely allow a number of poor results to be discounted that currently aren't. We are looking to carry out this work prior to the start of next season. We will continue to work closely with Denbighshire County Council Harbour team to ensure the prediction requirements continue to be met.

We will continue to work with farmers in the catchment to restrict livestock access to stream. We will also look to work with other stakeholders to increase such work.

We will continue to regulate Welsh Water's assets in the area and work with them on proactive measures e.g. clean water removal from sewers.

PRESTATYN

Under the revised BWD in 2015, Prestatyn has achieved 'Excellent' classification until this year. Following some elevated sample results this season, Prestatyn will now be classified as a 'Good' bathing water for 2025. The Blue Flag status requires 'Excellent' water quality as one of the criteria. This will mean that Prestatyn will not retain its Blue Flag in 2025.

What influences Prestatyn BW water quality

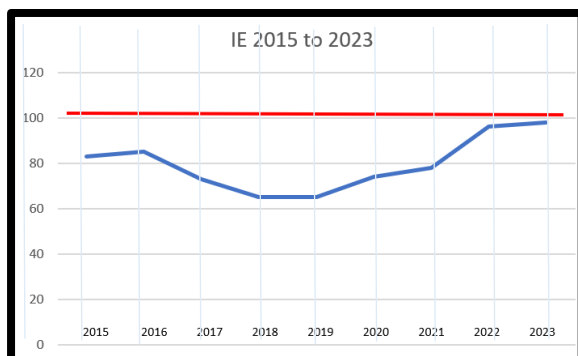
During high flows in the Clwyd catchment, the river water entering the sea at Rhyl (~4 miles to the west) is pushed on incoming tides towards Prestatyn bathing waters.

Rhyl Cut outfalls into bathing waters approximately two miles to the west. The catchment is of limited size with some agriculture and three sewer overflows.

Levels of bacteria

EColi levels would place Prestatyn just within 'Excellent' status but IE levels have exceeded the threshold of 100 (red line below) and hence the 'Good' status.

The graph below shows IE at Prestatyn in recent years after the discounting of samples.



At the end of 2024 season, Prestatyn IE exceeded the 100 threshold for 'Excellent' with 106 IE.

NRW work to minimise the risk

The work detailed above for Rhyl will also have had a positive impact on Prestatyn.

Forward look

Prestatyn will have 'Good' status for 2025. The assessment is made using a rolling four year data set. At the end of the 2025 season, 2021 data will be removed from the assessment. As 2021 data contained good results, Prestatyn is likely to remain as 'Good'.

The key piece of work is to improve the prediction model for Prestatyn. The four year data set (2021 – 24) contains 11 elevated results, of which five were predicted. We believe that an updated model would have predicted all but one of these results. We are looking to carry out this work prior to the start of next season.

Any future work in the Clwyd catchment will also benefit Prestatyn, along with catchment work in the limited area drained by Rhyl Cut.

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Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water & Denbighshire Bathing Water Quality

December 2024

Wastewater process overview

DCWW operate a vast wastewater network across Denbighshire featuring pumping stations, wastewater treatment works and storm overflows. As a result of this infrastructure, DCWW are permitted to discharge 2 types of wastewater effluent:

1. **Treated final effluent** – this is the treated end product that is discharged from a wastewater treatment works and is returned back into the environment (either into a river or coastal waterbody). Wastewater undergoes up to 5 stages of treatment and the level of treatment is determined by works permit, issued to DCWW by Natural Resources Wales (NRW). Compliance against this permit is monitored through regulatory sampling and regulatory data submission to NRW as well as on site inspections
2. **Storm effluent** – in heavy rainfall/storm conditions the sewer network can become overwhelmed by sudden high flows of surface water/ rain water (as much of the network is combined, meaning sewage and rain water travels in the same pipes). In these circumstances, in order not to cause internal or external flooding, storm overflows are permitted to operate and allow storm effluent (a dilute mixture of sewage and rainwater) to be discharged into a river or coastal waterbody. Storm overflows must only discharge under permit conditions set out by NRW and compliance against these permits is monitored through regulatory data submissions to NRW as well as on site inspections where applicable. Note that storm effluent is not the same as raw sewage.

How do DCWW protect bathing waters?

- Welsh Water disinfect final effluent near bathing waters using ultra violet treatment but this is not usual practice in rivers. This helps maintain the bathing water quality by making bacteria in the treated wastewater inert.
- Where a bathing water does not meet good status, Welsh Water work with NRW to undertake investigations into bathing water quality
- Where it is identified that Welsh Water assets contribute to less than 'good' status, improvements will be incorporated into our 5 yearly investment plans
- Welsh water carry out UV treatment at Denbigh, Dyserth, Rhuddlan, St.Asaph and Llanasa wastewater treatment works

The impact of storm overflows on bathing water quality

Storm overflows have the potential to impact bathing water quality. However, a discharge from a storm overflow does not necessarily cause poor bathing water quality and the absence of storm overflow discharges does not guarantee good bathing water quality (due to the impacts from other sources and sectors). Data below examines the impact of nearby storm overflows on bathing water quality samples at Rhyl and Prestatyn

Prestatyn

There are 8 DCWW overflows in the vicinity (within 2km) of Prestatyn bathing water:

Permit No	Asset Name (SO Map)	EO/CSO
CG0317701	Prestatyn Nant Hall Road Foul	Emergency
CM0052701	Prestatyn Marine Park	Emergency
CM0052801	Prestatyn Coronation Gardens	Emergency
CM0148301	Prestatyn Bastion Gardens No 2	Emergency
CM0173101	Prestatyn Meliden Road	Storm
CM0193101	Prestatyn Bodnant	Storm
CM0193301	Prestatyn The Mall	Storm
CM0193501	Prestatyn Purbeck	Storm

How these assets operated on days that bathing water samples were collected can be seen below:

Bathing Water Sample Data				DCWW Overflow Data								Summary
Sample Date	Sample Time	escherichia coli count	intestinal enterococci count	Prestatyn Nant Hall Road Foul	Prestatyn Marine Park	Prestatyn Coronation Gardens	Prestatyn Bastion Gardens No 2	Prestatyn Meliden Road	Prestatyn Bodnant	Prestatyn The Mall	Prestatyn Purbeck	
07/05/2024	14:35:00	10	10	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
24/05/2024	11:03:57	4300	713	No	No	22/05 255 mins	No	22/05 75 mins	No	No	No	Discharges - 'poor' sample
07/06/2024	14:50:00	10	18	No	No	06/06 15 mins	No	05/06 15 mins	No	No	No	Discharges - 'excellent' sample
24/06/2024	13:55:00	10	10	No	No	No	No	22/06 15 mins	No	No	No	Discharges - 'excellent' sample
10/07/2024	13:02:00	91	27	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
25/07/2024	10:15:00	136	118	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'good' sample
13/08/2024	14:36:00	10	10	No	No	13/08 120 mins	No	13/08 60 mins	No	No	13/08 75 mins	Discharges - 'excellent' sample
27/08/2024	15:45:00	45	27	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
02/09/2024	10:25:00	600	550	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'poor' sample
19/09/2024	11:45:00	100	10	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample

Across the bathing season, storm overflows were discharging on 4 sample days, one of these samples returned a 'poor' result. Note that 'exceptionally wet weather' was recorded by the Met Office on 24th May 2024

Rhyl Central

There are 7 DCWW overflows in the vicinity (within 2km) of Rhyl Central bathing water:

Permit No	Asset Name (SO Map)	EO/CSO
CG0317001	Rhyl Tynewydd Road	Storm
CG0347301	Rhyl Coast Road	Storm
CG0429601	Rhyl Westbourne Grove (Reservoir) Nra	Storm
CG0429701	Clifton Park Road CSO No 2	Storm
CM0044001	Rhyl Marine Lake	Storm
CM0173001	Clifton Park Rd CSO1, Rhyl	Storm
CM0193201	Dyserth Bay CSO	Storm

How these assets operated on days that bathing water samples were collected can be seen below:

Bathing Water Data				Storm Overflow Data							Summary
Sample Date	Sample Time	escherichia coli count	intestinal enterococci count	Rhyl Tynewydd Road	Rhyl Coast Road	Rhyl Westbourne Grove (Reservoir) Nra	Clifton Park Road CSO No 2	Rhyl Marine Lake	Clifton Park Rd CSO1, Rhyl	Dyserth Bay CSO	
07/05/2024	13.00	118	136	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'good' sample
24/05/2024	14.15	1700	360	No	23/05 465 mins	No	No	22&23/05 1395 mins	No	22&23/05 915mins	Discharges 'poor' sample
07/06/2024	13.50	10	18	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
17/06/2024	12.45	10	10	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
24/06/2024	13.20	10	10	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
03/07/2024	12.50	10	10	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
10/07/2024	11.50	82	109	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'good' sample
17/07/2024	11.47	18	10	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
25/07/2024	11.15	245	64	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
02/08/2024	13.01	191	136	No	No	01/08 45 mins	No	No	No	No	Discharges - 'good' sample
09/08/2024	11.30	260	64	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'good' sample
14/08/2024	14.14	45	10	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'excellent' sample
19/08/2024	13.20	182	280	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'poor' sample
27/08/2024	13.40	240	137	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'good' sample
02/09/2024 (discounted)	11.20	210	240	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'poor' sample
19/09/2024	11.01	460	350	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No discharges - 'poor' sample

Across the bathing season, storm overflows were discharging on 2 sample days, one of these samples returned a 'poor' result. Note that 'exceptionally wet weather' was recorded by the Met Office on 24th May 2024.

Water quality modelling and bacterial source apportionment

DCWW completed a coastal bathing waters study for Rhyl and Prestatyn in 2017 which indicated that diffuse pollution sources were the main factor affecting bathing water quality. Further support from DCWW was requested by NRW to expand understanding of diffuse sources and therefore the National Environment Programme (NEP) output for DCWW to complete another bathing water study was agreed for AMP7 (period 2020-2025).

DCWW worked closely with NRW to complete this 2nd study providing detailed reports. The outputs of this 2nd study were the same as the first AMP6 study but included sub catchment level detail of diffuse types and river inputs. Key points from the study outputs are included below:

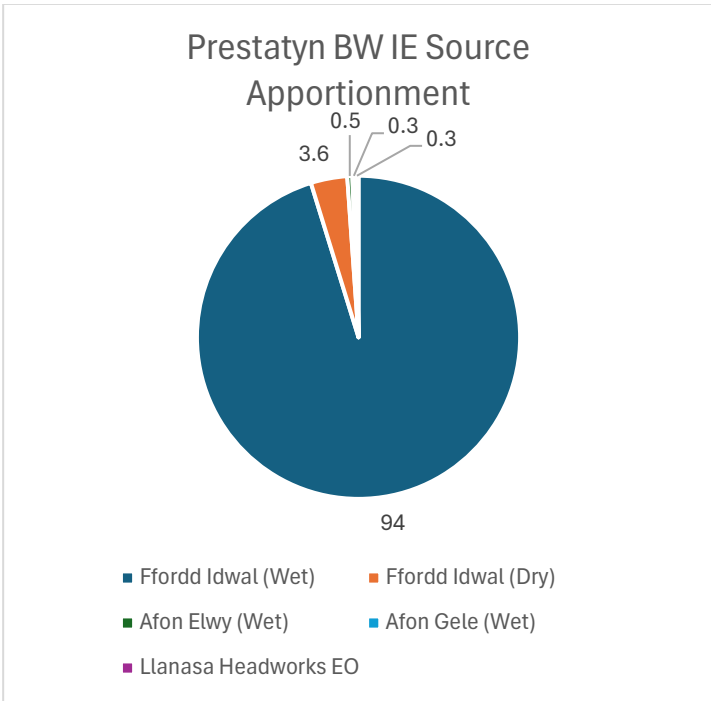
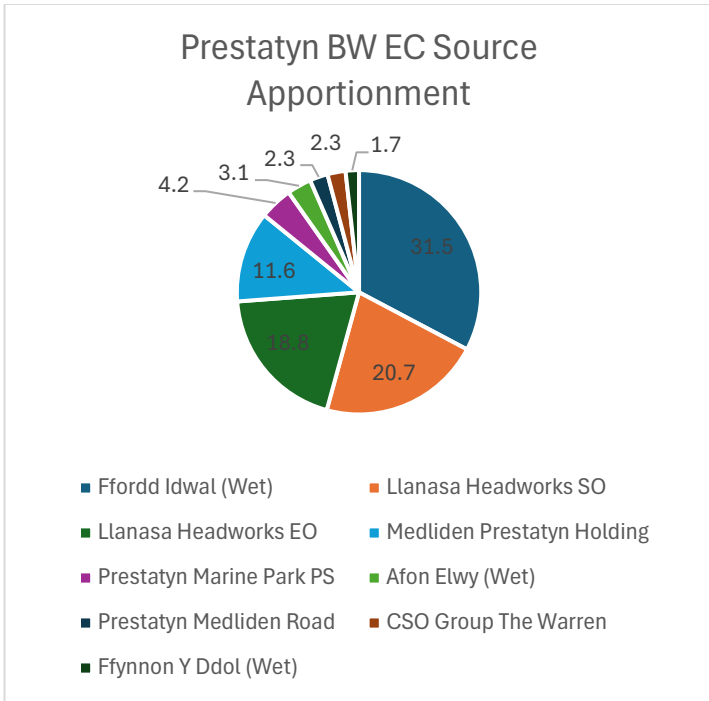
Finding 1 - The Rhyl bathing waters are predominantly impacted by diffuse loads from the upstream Clwyd catchment. These loads account for more than 75% of the bacteria impact and are due to faecal loading from cattle and sheep. Sheep account for the majority of livestock in the catchment and the majority of the load.

Finding 2 - Discharges from DCWW assets are predicted to account for less than 25% of the impact. Impacts are based on current best information regarding asset performance. Impact is greatest from the local Kinmel Bay catchment (3.5% IE at Rhyl and 5% IE at Rhyl East) due to its larger size and closer proximity. Upstream catchments are comparatively small, the largest contribute between 1% and 3% of the impact (Denbigh and Ruthin approx. 3% each, Rhuddlan and St Asaph approx. 1.5% each, Trefnant and Dyserth 0.5% each) and the remaining small catchments contribute approximately 1% of the total impact.

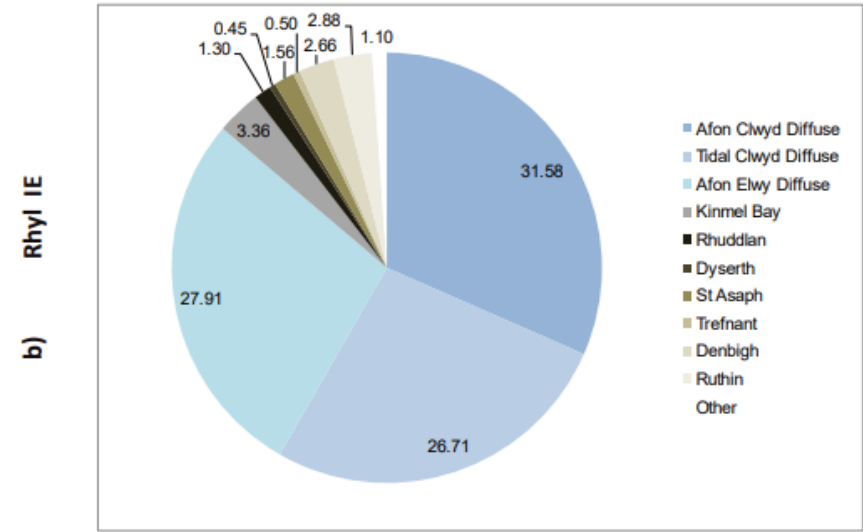
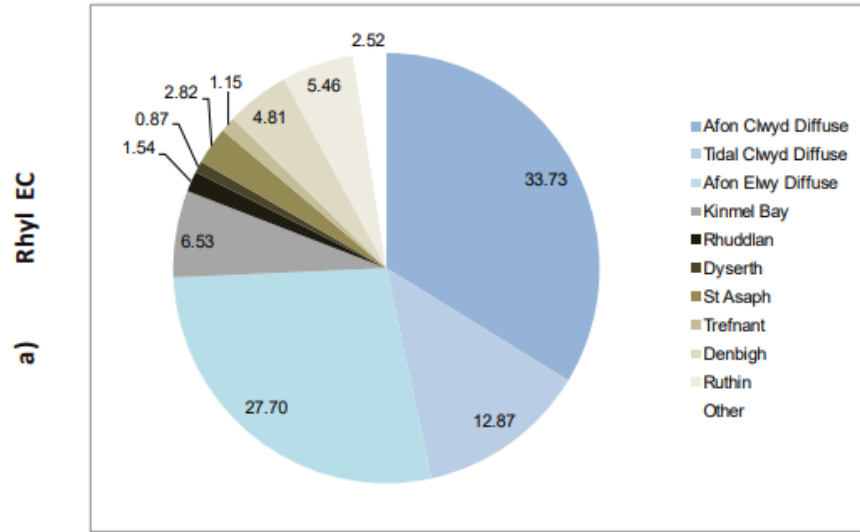
Finding 3 - Reducing discharges from DCWW assets is predicted to have relatively little effect due to the relatively small proportion of impact they represent. As a hypothetical exercise, the study included a scenario for removing all storm overflow discharges (which is impracticable). The scenario showed that this would reduce the DCWW impact to less than 5%, but the improvement in bathing water performance is relatively small and would not be sufficient to improve classification or remove the need for discounting.

A summary of source apportionment for bacterial load can be seen below:

Prestatyn



Rhyl Central



AMP8 Investment in Denbighshire

Final determination from Ofwat is due on 19th Dec and therefore all proposed schemes are subject to change. However, DCWW has proposed a number of improvements to wastewater facilities in Denbighshire in our AMP8 business plan. These include:

- Rhuddlan storm tank capacity increase
- Tremeirchion phosphorous removal scheme (nature based solution)
- Denbigh flow increase (increasing treatment capacity)
- Ruthin flow increase (increasing treatment capacity)

Near Real Time Data Platform

As of early 2024, DCWW have been publishing storm overflow data in near real time on our Storm Overflow Map. This allows the public to view asset by asset storm overflow data to within 1 hour of operation. Assets are still being added to the platform (which is currently in 'beta' version) but assets in the vicinity of bathing waters were prioritised in the first tranche of uploads and therefore the assets in the bathing water areas of Rhyl and Prestatyn are well represented on the map. This data is also voluntarily supplied to the campaign group 'Surfers Against Sewage' by Welsh Water and is used to populate the 'Safer Seas and Rivers App'. It is worth noting, however, that the Safer Seas and Rivers App aggregates data and applies a more generic 'area' warning/indicator, rather than providing granular, asset level detail which is available on DCWW's platform. A link to the DCWW Storm Overflow Map is available [here](#) and an example screenshot can be seen below



Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	19th December 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities.
Head of Service	Catrin Roberts, Head of Corporate Support Services - People
Report author	Helen Kilgannon, North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service
Title	North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service Annual Report for 2023/2024

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 This report is about the Annual Report of the North Wales Council Regional Planning Service for 2023/24.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 To promote the North Wales Council's Regional Emergency Planning Service (NWC-REPS) Annual Report and provide confidence to Members that Denbighshire is prepared in the event of an emergency. NWC-REPS ensure that sufficient arrangements are in place regarding emergency planning within the Council and the report specifically details:

- How the regional service contributes to resilience and security of communities in Denbighshire
- The current work programme of the Service
- The structure within Denbighshire County Council to respond to a crisis or Emergency
- Out of hours emergency planning provision
- Training and Development for staff in Emergency Planning roles

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to review the Annual Report and comment on the progress of the North Wales Council's Regional Emergency Planning Service work for 2023/24.

4. Report details

- 4.1 Isle of Anglesey County Council, Gwynedd Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council work together in a partnering relationship through the establishment in 2014 of a Regional Emergency Planning Service for North Wales.

- 4.2 This service undertakes the functions of the councils in respect of civil contingencies and is accountable to an Executive Board that comprises senior representatives of those Councils. NWC-REPS provides a service to ensure the Local Authorities are compliant with the following legislation:

- Civil Contingencies Act, 2004
- Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations, 2015
- Pipeline Safety Regulations, 1996
- Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations, 2019

- 4.2 The Service works to:

- Reduce duplication and repetition of tasks
- Improve the harmonisation of the work and resilience of teams
- Improve deployment of available resources by sharing specialist support and common tasks
- Improve consistency of response between authorities
- Improve communication channels between the North Wales Resilience Forum and local authorities

The Annual Report details the work of note NWC-REPS have undertaken in the last year.

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

5.1 The decision does not directly contribute to the Corporate Plan.

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

6.1 Denbighshire County Council's annual contribution to the service is £83,401. The contribution is based on a proportion of 14.865 % towards the annual budget for the service. Since its inception, the Service has reduced the contributions of the 6 local authorities by over £300k.

6.2 There are no costs arising directly out of the scrutiny of this report.

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

7.1 A well-being impact assessment is not required for this report.

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

8.1 There have been no consultations with others prior to this meeting.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The costs of the service are set out in section 6 of the report, which have been reduced over the years by delivering the service regionally.

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

10.1 There are no risks directly associated with the scrutiny of this report.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Scrutiny's powers are as set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Sections 7.3 and 7.4 of the Council's Constitution.

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Annual Report 2023/24

This is the annual North Wales Councils - Regional Emergency Planning Service report for the year 2023-2024. It covers the work carried out by NWC-REPS across the six local authorities in the region, as well as multi-agency activities undertaken to support North Wales Local Resilience Forum.

North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service

enquiries@nwc-reps.org.uk
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North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service (NWC-REPS)

Isle of Anglesey County Council, Gwynedd Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council work together in a partnering relationship through the establishment in 2014 of a Regional Emergency Planning Service for North Wales. This service undertakes the functions of the councils in respect of civil contingencies and is accountable to an Executive Board that comprises senior representatives of those Councils.

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- Improve communication channels between the North Wales Resilience Forum and local authorities



Incident management

NWC-REPS provides a 24/7 all year-round Duty Officer to act as the initial point of contact for emergency response.

During financial year 2023 - 2024, NWC-REPS assisted in this role in the following ways: -

- **Receiving and assessing Natural Resources Wales warnings and alerts:**

- 56 Community Flood Alerts
- 181 Flood Alerts
- 5 Community Flood Warnings
- 8 Flood Warnings
- 8 Early Warnings

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- **Receiving, and assessing Met Office Weather Warnings:**

- Gwynedd = 104 (100 yellow / 4 Amber)
- Conwy = 100 (95 yellow / 5 Amber)
- Anglesey = 68 (65 yellow / 3 Amber)
- Denbighshire = 92 (87 yellow / 5 Amber)
- Flintshire = 78 (72 yellow / 6 Amber)
- Wrexham = 86 (80 yellow / 6 Amber)

- **Receiving and responding to incidents that included: -**

- Amber snow incident February 2024
- Storm Babet October 2023
- Storm Isha January 2024



Learning & Development

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

In order to learn from other local authorities who have faced major incidents/emergencies, NWC-REPS facilitated a series of workshops looking at the following events:

- [Manchester Arena](#)
- [A HQ Fire](#)
- [Salisbury poisonings](#)

The workshop consisted of an officer from the affected local authority detailing the event.

What went well during the response and the issues faced meant we could learn from this to assist us with our preparedness going forward.

The workshops were well attended, valuable and received excellent feedback.

E-Learning

All 14 modules have been under review by the Senior EPO and are now available on Learning@Wales. The provision of a new bespoke training and exercising database will enable more accurate recording of the modules completed and will provide an automatic refresher schedule to take place.

- [Training and Exercising](#)
- [Multi-Agency](#)
- [JESIP](#)

NWC-REPS is a key member of the JESIP planning and delivery group and assist in facilitating the Operational and Tactical training packages.

- [JESIP Operational](#)
- [JESIP Tactical/Wales Silver](#)
- [Loggist training](#)
- [Exercises](#)

Power Outage Exercise

An exercise to test the impact of a widespread electricity outage and to build a shared understanding of the implications for local multi-agency partners in their response.

Wales Gold

An exercise to prepare strategic leaders to work effectively in a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) and Recovery CO-ordinating Group (RCG) in response to recovery from a major incident.

Exercise Bardic Llif

A military planning exercise for UK operations in support of civil authorities. Military assets were tasked to test 160th (Welsh) Brigade's ability to plan for and execute multiple MACA tasks within the scenario. Civilian partners supported the SCG and Exercise Control (EXCON) during the live exercise.

Exercise Electra

Several team members from NWC-REPS and local authority colleagues attended this exercise which was organised by NWMWTRA to demonstrate compliance with Pen-y-Clip tunnel emergency operating procedures.

Learning & Development

Wildfire Exercise - During March 2024, NWCREPS attended meetings, and a live exercise for NWFRS on Moel Fammau, which is on the Flintshire/Denbighshire border.

Other

Rest Centre Exercises

Following the successful roll out of the new Rest Centre Plan, the plan required exercising to embed within all local authorities. Exercises were planned within designated rest centre venues across North Wales. The exercise started with an introduction by the Local Resilience Forum Co-ordinator on its role during emergencies followed by a presentation from North Wales Police and NWC-REPS. The scenario was then detailed to the attendees. This gave attendees a chance to talk through issues that they may face when running a rest centre.

Actions for Lead Emergency Planning Officers emerged from these exercises, and they are currently working with colleagues in their designated local authority to complete the actions and ensure all local authorities are prepared should a rest centre be required.

Exercise Cooper

Exercise Cooper took place to test the accuracy and availability of staff which are detailed in the local authority Emergency Contact Directories (ECD's). A total of 48 staff were randomly selected to check the accuracy of 107 contact numbers. Following this exercise, changes were made to ECD's to ensure accuracy is maintained.



Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Major incident response

Following the adoption of the NWC-REPS template, Senior Managers attended a presentation in March to embed the Plan and structure. It was also used as an opportunity to raise awareness of the work of NWC-REPS and the responsibilities of local authorities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This is complimented by engagement on the 2024 Wales Gold and JESIP training programmes.

The Conwy Valley Flood Partnership Group convenes quarterly, and NWC-REPS chair a working group to develop the Conwy Valley Multi Agency Flood Response Plan.

Mynyddfa Rhuddlan Community Partnership has focused on the consultation regarding proposed flood defences.

NWC-REPS attend and contribute to the work of the Cyber Response Programme Group.

A review of Rest Centre provision and activation procedures is currently underway and following completion will be tested.

Throughout the year NWC-REPS joined partners from the CCBC wrap-around services and local councillors to support over 200 refugees via the activities of the Ukraine Re-settlement Support Group.

Business Continuity Management

The suite of documents produced by NWC-REPS were introduced to Conwy for consultation. A workshop was held with senior managers to review the Corporate and Service Continuity Plans. The Corporate Plan is in final stages of draft awaiting approval following amendments.

NWC-REPS attend the PSPG and SAG meetings and are working with group members to assist regarding the impacts on local authorities regarding the introduction of Martyn's Law.

Planned work for financial year 2024/2025

- Work is ongoing with NRW and CCBC licensing regarding caravan and holiday park evacuation arrangements.
- NWC-REPS, Dwr Cymru and Conwy CBC are liaising to develop water distribution arrangements. This is required to provide and distribute alternative water supplies to the public following the declaration by DCWW of a major incident affecting the production or distribution of the piped water supply (treated water to domestic and non-domestic customers).



Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Bridge Contingencies

During Scrutiny Committee in October 2023, members asked what contingencies were in place when and if both bridges were suddenly to close. Important factors such as hospital access to Ysbyty Gwynedd and HGV stacking were widely unknown. The service supported the Chief Executive in writing a letter to the Chair of the LRF asking for focus on the issue and support from all relevant multi-agencies. Following this a task and finish group was established, chaired by NMWTRA. NWC-REPS organised with Welsh Government (WG) and multiple agencies to investigate what the government's role was in such a scenario and what work was being done to mitigate the risk. Work is progressing and it is expected a plan will be in place before the end of the year.

Avian Flu

An avian flu outbreak severely affected seabird colonies on Anglesey in August 2023. More than 1,200 dead birds were collected. The local authority's main waste contractor did not have the relevant permissions or training to collect ABP CAT 1 Material. A temporary contract was drawn with a contractor who could collect the birds. NWC-REPS attended meetings and liaised with Pembrokeshire County Council who had been dealing with similar numbers. This allowed for shared learning and best practice. NWC-REPS also attended the WG weekly meeting named 'Seabird'. It also engaged with Bangor University for any information or patterns regarding the diseases of birds on Puffin Island and the Skerries.

Business Continuity

The new business continuity template has now been populated by all council services. The service has supported the Council exercising the plans by developing and facilitating bespoke sessions. As part of the exercises, all staff participating will

be recorded as completing the exercises on a training matrix. Also, any feedback regarding how well staff feel incident response is enacted, or what can be improved, is captured during the exercise, and fed back to the plan author to consider going forward. The service also asks what potential further training or exercising is required by services.

- The service now engages with the council's SAG which assists the on-call duty officer.
- The service is supporting the council regarding PSPG, specifically Martyn's law.
- The service presented a brief to members on the role of the service and emergency planning.
- The service continues to support the council with the COVID-19 Inquiry.
- The service's e-learning courses continue to brief staff on its roles and responsibilities regarding emergency planning and incident response.

Planned work for financial year 24/25

- Continuing support for business continuity.
- Consideration for a bespoke 'Council Incident Plan' regarding both bridges closing.
- Identifying loggists per service and supporting them with training and exercising.
- Provide support regarding the introduction of Martyn's Law and preparedness of the local authority.
- Work on the actions and challenges raised by the Mighty Oak exercise (loss of power)
- Identify any training requirements following the business continuity exercising.
- Embed an annual cycle of exercising business continuity arrangements.

Gwynedd Council

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Gwynedd's emergency management team and subgroups have been established and regular meetings are diarised. These meetings provide updates regarding each sub-groups progress on internal work and plans, with support, leadership and guidance provided from the Strategic Panel.

NWC-REPS supported Gwynedd with incidents, including an RAF Chinook Helicopter with mechanical difficulties that landed in a field in Arthog in July 2023, Palm oil spill on Barmouth's shoreline, house fire in Hirael Bangor, multiple wildfires in the region, severe weather, bridge maintenance and several calls for assistance from NWP regarding cannabis farms.

Following the implementation of Gwynedd's new gold rota, NWC-REPS developed and facilitated a desktop exercise in October 2023 based on the scenario of a house fire in Caernarfon. The aim was to explore the processes in place and how they can be improved further.

Sites were identified to assist Welsh Water in opening emergency water stations for the public in the event of water loss.

Planned work for 2024 to 2025

The Business Continuity Plan template has been agreed. NWC-REPS will support services with populating the document before embedding and exercising the plans.

Rest Centre box contents and locations are being updated and the Rest Centre Contacts have been updated and verified Rest Centre exercises will be undertaken in all authorities.

NWC-REPS attends Fairbourne for a meeting twice a year. Work is ongoing with the Fairbourne Operations Group to develop and embed an evacuation plan for this site due to current and future flood risks.



Work carried out during 2023 to 2024

Support from NWC-REPS at SAG Meetings - Attending monthly SAG meetings and injecting as appropriate from an Emergency Planning perspective. SAG meetings for Wrexham Football Club are supported.

Staff from Wrexham CBC have adopted the new template for Service Continuity Plans (SCPs) - transferring the necessary information from the old plans into the new template is ongoing Follow up meeting with each representative have been undertaken to explain the new plans. Work has started on a Service Continuity Exercise to be carried out once plans are complete - working alongside staff in WCBC to devise an appropriate exercise that can be used to test all SCPs.

Coal Tip meetings with Welsh Government are ongoing - This is allowing NWC-REPS to see what is happening in other parts of Wales and to identify best practice. A template for Coal Tip Plans has been identified and this is now being populated before the draft is shared with colleagues in Wrexham.

EMRT Sub-Groups are meeting quarterly with the support of NWC-REPS. Structures for response and recovery are embedded and EMRT meet on a regular basis.

NWC-REPS supported Wrexham with response to the following incidents:

- **A525 Lorry Fire in June 2023** - Attending multi agency meetings and liaising between WCBC and other organisations as requested.
- **Potential Student accommodation evacuation in October 2023** - Liaising with Humanitarian Assistance Team to stand up a Rest Centre and stand down as requested by NWP.
- **The fire at Bryn Business Centre in February 2024** - Duty Officer assisted with liaison between NWFRS and WCBC.

Wrexham Public Space Preparedness Group - attending meetings and supporting as required.

Planned work for 2023 to 2024

Service Continuity Exercises - Once all new plans have been signed off by services, exercises will take place to test them. Work is ongoing with the Chair of the Service Continuity Team to ensure that lessons learned are embedded into the plans.

Develop and roll out micro exercises for the Emergency Management Response Team and all sub-groups to ensure the structures response is tested and robust - Arrange with the Chair of EMRT to run a test exercise which can be used within all the subgroups to test the EMRT structure.

Rest Centre staff training following recruitment drive - Tabletop discussions for Rest Centre Staff to explain the processes within the Rest Centre and their role within in view of Rest Centre locations to ensure coverage throughout the Borough - implement an annual review to ensure that the venues are fit for purpose and available for use as rest centres.

Review and revise all necessary plans to ensure all risks are mitigated in WCBC. Following completion, ensure all staff are aware of any changes and exercised where necessary.



Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

During 2023, the council undertook a major re-structure of its senior leadership team and corporate services. This saw several changes to Chairs and Deputy Chairs in the Strategic Emergency Management Team. Comprehensive training has been provided to the new Chairs and Deputies.

Due to the severity of flooding in October during Storm Babet, NWC-REPS facilitated a debrief which has since been presented to SEMT and recommendations have been embedded to further improve our response to an incident.

Due to staff turnover, the pool for loggists has reduced and was no longer robust. The Corporate Emergency Information Team have identified a new pool of loggists which has provided more robust continuity.

Following the rest centre desktop exercise, DCC identified the need for a live rest centre exercise to further test their plan. NWC-REPS facilitated a live rest centre exercise on the 15th February 2024 at Rhyl Leisure Centre. The response to the injects was led by Denbighshire's Humanitarian Assistance Team. Over 50 participants took part over the course of the day. The exercise was well received and a debrief report concluded Denbighshire's good practice and provided recommendations to improve further.

Planned work for 2024 to 2025

- Ensure the Business Continuity Plan template is rolled out in all services and exercised when appropriate.
- Ongoing development for the new Chairs and Deputies in the SEMT structure
- Exercise the Strategic Emergency Management Team and all sub-groups to ensure a cohesive response and identify any further training and development.



Flintshire County Council

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

Supporting, advising, and offering Civil Contingencies advice for the Council on the Asylum Seeker Settlement Team within Flintshire.

NWC-REPS have facilitated several COMAH site familiarisation visits, including Great Bear distribution and FMC Agro in Deeside. The visits were well received.

FCC arranged a Dŵr Cymru Emergency Distribution exercise on the 29th June 2023. This allowed FCC to exercise their response and ensure their arrangements in the event of loss of water are robust.

NWC-REPS have supported Flintshire during several weather events including:

- 1) Storm Larissa (9th-12th March 2023)
- 2) Storm Babet (19th - 21st October 2023)
- 3) Amber snow weather warning (February 2024)

NWC-REPS facilitated debriefs which were presented to EMRT and lessons learnt have now been embedded to ensure a robust response.

Planned work for financial year 2024 to 2025

- Humanitarian Assistance Team planning for a follow-up exercise in August 2024 following the Rest Centre Exercise in November 2022.
- Review of FCC Rest Centre support staff and 'Training Needs Analysis'.
- Operational team members attending COMAH site training at sites in Flintshire.
- Business Continuity Group will be reviewing the Service Continuity Plans 2023.
- Drafting of the FCC Cyber Incident Response and Recovery Plan.



- There is a need for a review on Rest Centre locations, this was recognised from the debriefs following Storm Babet and Ffynongroyw Flooding.
- A new training package for Rest Centre Managers is being created, following benchmarking of other local authority Emergency Planning Teams training.
- Collation of Information is ongoing of the HAVG for data mapping on JIGSO.

COMAH, PIPELINE and NUCLEAR WORK

Work carried out during financial year 2023 to 2024

COMAH Planning and Exercising

- Coordination and delivery of the multi-agency emergency planning and exercise schedules, for Great Bear Distribution and FMC Agro Ltd, to ensure local authority compliance with COMAH 2015. Delivery of these schedules also included the revision and reissue of the FCC External Emergency Plans for the sites.
- Representation of the service at the
 - Regional COMAH Competent Authority meeting to discuss regulatory compliance.
 - National Local Authority COMAH Good Practice Group

MAJHP/Pipeline Safety Regulations Planning and Exercising

Working with existing and proposed high-pressure pipeline operators, to ensure regulatory compliance for all six North Wales local authorities:

- Liaison with Uniper UK and ENI LBOC to agree the changes required to the FCC Major Accident Hazard Pipeline plans relating to their changing high pressure gas pipeline infrastructure.
- Ongoing monitoring and review of National Planning Inspectorate casework relating to the Hynet Carbon Capture Pipeline Infrastructure, a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP).

Nuclear/REPPiR Planning and Exercising

Monitoring and reviewing nuclear related emergency planning legislation, in order to support the local authorities maintain regulatory compliance:

- Drafting of a regional local authority nuclear response guidance framework, to ensure compliance with the Radiation Emergency



Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPiR), 2019 (Regulation 22).

- Ongoing representation of NWC-REPS at the site stakeholder groups for the decommissioning nuclear power stations at Wylfa & Trawsfynydd
- Ongoing representation of NWC-REPS at the national:
 - Local Authority Nuclear Working Group
 - Nuclear Legacy Advice Forum working group.

COMAH Planning and Exercising

- Coordination and delivery of the multi-agency emergency planning and exercise schedule for Synthite Ltd, including revision and reissue of the FCC multi-agency External Emergency Plan for the site.
- Revision and reissue of the FCC & WCBC multi-agency plans for FMC Agro Ltd, Great Bear and Kronospan Ltd.

MAHP/ Pipeline Safety Regulations Planning and Exercising

- Revision of the Uniper UK, ENI LBOC, National Gas & Wales & West Utilities Major Accident Hazard Pipeline Plans (MAHP) for all six local authorities.
 - Coordination and delivery of a MAHP awareness event for the six local authorities.
 - Coordination and delivery of multi-agency emergency exercises with Uniper UK and National Gas.
- Coordination of multi-agency feasibility work with ENI LBOC to establish if the development of the Hynet Carbon Dioxide pipeline in Flintshire, will require a Major Accident Hazard Pipeline; operational carbon dioxide infrastructure has a major accident hazard likelihood, but the Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSR 1996) currently do not include a statutory requirement for emergency plans relating to the transport of pressurised CO2).

Nuclear/REPPIR Planning & Exercising:

- Finalisation of a regional local authority nuclear response guidance framework, to ensure compliance with the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPIR), 2019 (Regulations 19 & 22).

Regional Multi-Agency Working Groups:

- Emergency Water Distribution Working Group - contribution to finalisation of DCWW's and Hafren Dyfrdwy's emergency water distribution plans (work led by DCWW's & Hafren Dyfrdwy).



- Menai Straits Simultaneous Bridge Closure Group - contribution to the development of a multi-agency framework for this risk with Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils (work led by NMWTRA).
- Wildfire Planning & Exercising Working Group - contribution to the delivery of a wildfire exercise and revision of the existing multi-agency wildfire plan (work led by NWFRS).
- Maritime Response Working Group (Pleasure Vessel Sinking Risk) - contribution to the development of multi-agency maritime response plan for this risk with the coastal local authorities (work led by HM Coastguard).
- Battery Technology Risk Working Group (Electric Vehicle accident mitigation / national grid level Battery Energy Storage System installations) - contribution to this emerging area of multi-agency risk planning, for all six local authorities (work led by NWFRS).

Targets for 2024/2025

Training Database

The database will provide a comprehensive and up to date history of training and exercising completed by all those involved in the Emergency Planning throughout the North Wales region. The database is nearing completion, but the final stages have unfortunately been delayed due to priorities by the IT Business Solutions team. Review of the Learning and Development Strategy.

We have supported North Wales Police in developing a Modern-Day Slavery Reception Centre Plan. A desktop exercise to ensure embedding and testing will be developed.

Recovery Exercise

Following the review of the Recovery Plan we will look to test the plan with a desktop exercise.

A suite of business continuity scenarios following the completion and embedding of the Business Continuity Plans have been developed by the Emergency Planning team and are ready to be delivered.

Plans

North Wales Local Resilience Forum Recovery Plan

This plan has been under review and is now available in draft to be seen by the six local authorities for consultation and feedback. Once agreed the plan will be tested with a desk top exercise.

North Wales Resilience Forum Coastal Pollution Plan

As coastal pollution is listed as a risk on the risk register, a draft coastal pollution plan is currently being developed by NWC-REPS. This has also been added to the agenda for the Environment Group.

Business Continuity and the Voluntary Sector

A guide has been created by NWC-REPS to support small and medium sized businesses to develop a response to prepare for and manage disruptive events that could impact on their day-to-day business. This guide will be available on local authority internet web pages and will be placed on the HAVG agenda to be cascaded through their business links.

Human Aspects of an Emergency Response

This document has been developed and is a checklist to consider how to plan and respond to the human aspects of major incidents and emergencies. Human aspects consider people - survivors, families, friends, displaced such as refugees, communities, and responders. Providing multi-agency, timely and appropriate humanitarian assistance helps people recover quicker and can mitigate longer term impacts.

Future priorities

To support and guide the six North Wales local authorities regarding the implementation of Martyn's Law. This law, currently pending UK wide legislation will improve protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK by mandating, for the first time, those responsible for certain premises and events to consider the terrorist risk and how they would respond to an attack.

Employee Induction

A new team member booklet has been developed to ensure new starters have a consistent induction.



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Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	19 December 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 25 November to consider applications received for topics to be scrutinised. During that meeting one topic was referred to this Committee for detailed examination. It relates to the February 2024 Audit Wales report on '[Urgent & Emergency Care Flow Out of Hospital](#)' and its associated [combined organisational response](#). A report on all partners' progress in addressing the recommendation has been provisionally scheduled into the Committee's forward work programme for its April 2025 meeting, subject to all required representatives being available to attend that particular meeting.
- 5.2 The Group also agreed to a request to set-up a joint informal meeting of Denbighshire's Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and Conwy County Borough Council's Social Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the purpose of examining the progress made by the Conwy & Denbighshire Joint Youth Justice Service (YJS) in implementing the Regulator's recommendations following its [inspection](#) of the Service in May 2024. The joint informal meeting of both scrutiny committees will be held via video conference at 2pm on 18 March 2025 (see Appendix 1 attached).
- 5.3 The SCVCG's next scheduled meeting is on 20 January 2025.

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.

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
13 February 2025	<i>Cllr. Elen Heaton</i>	1. <i>North Denbighshire Community Hospital Project</i> <i>(TBC)</i>	<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>	<i>BCUHB</i>	Updated by RhE - March 2024
	Cllr. Barry Mellor	2. 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	Tony Ward/Paul Jackson/Alan Roberts	By SCVCG January 2024 (rescheduled October 2024 RhE)
<i>19 March 2025 (1pm – virtual joint informal meeting with Conwy County</i>	<i>Cllr. Diane King</i>	1. <i>Joint Conwy & Denbighshire Youth Justice Service</i>	<i>To review the progress made to date in complying and addressing the</i>	<i>Assurances that all recommendations have been addressed or are being</i>	<i>Nicola Stubbins/Jenny Williams/ Anest Gray FRAZER</i>	<i>By SCVCG November 2024</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
<i>Borough Council's Social Care & Health O&S Committee)</i>			<i>recommendations made by HM Inspectorate of Probation following its inspection of the service in 2024</i>	<i>progressed and that all partners are working effectively together to support the delivery of Corporate Plan themes and priorities</i>		
3 April	Cllr. Elen Heaton	1. <i>Urgent & Emergency Care: Flow Out of Hospital (TBC)</i>	<i>To examine the progress made by all partners in addressing the recommendations made in the 2024 Audit Wales report 'Urgent & Emergency Care: Flow Out of Hospital – North Region' report, including causes for delayed transfer of care</i>	<i>Ensuring that co-ordinated and streamlined process are in place to aid safe and supported discharge from hospital for vulnerable residents to help them sustain their independence and reduce reliance on statutory services</i>	<i>Nicolas Stubbins/Ann Lloyd/ Gethin Morgan (NWSSIC) & Gareth Evans BCUHB</i>	<i>By SCVCG November 2024</i>
22 May						
10 July	Cllr. Elen Heaton	1. Annual Report on Adult Safeguarding 2024/25	To consider the annual report on adult safeguarding, and information in place to meet the statutory requirements of the Social Services and	An evaluation of whether the Authority is meeting its statutory duty with respect to adult safeguarding and has sufficient resources to	Ann Lloyd/ Michael Reay/Nerys Tompsett	October 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			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)	undertake this work along with the additional work in the wake of the Supreme Court's judgement		
11 September	Cllr. Rhys Thomas	1. Community Safety Partnership [Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee]	To detail the Partnership's achievement in delivering its 2024 /25 action plan and its progress to date in delivering its action plan for 2025/26. The report to include financial sources and the progress made in spending the allocated funding.	Effective monitoring of the CSP's delivery of its action plan for 2024/25 and its progress to date in delivering its plan for 2025/26 will ensure that the CSP delivers the services which the Council and local residents require	Helen Vaughan-Evans/Sian Taylor	<i>Sept 2024</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			(report to include actual numbers as well as percentages to enable the Committee to effectively evaluate the impact of measures put in place)			
	Cllr. Elen Heaton	2. North Wales Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2024/25	To provide an overview of the Regional Partnership Board's activities during 2024/25 and its priority areas for 2025/26	Ensure that the Board is working effectively to support the delivery seamless health, social care and well-being services for Denbighshire residents and the wider North Wales region	Nicola Stubbins/Gethin Morgan - Head of Regional Collaboration	<i>Sept 2024</i>
23 October						
18 December						

Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered

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 03/12/2024 – RhE

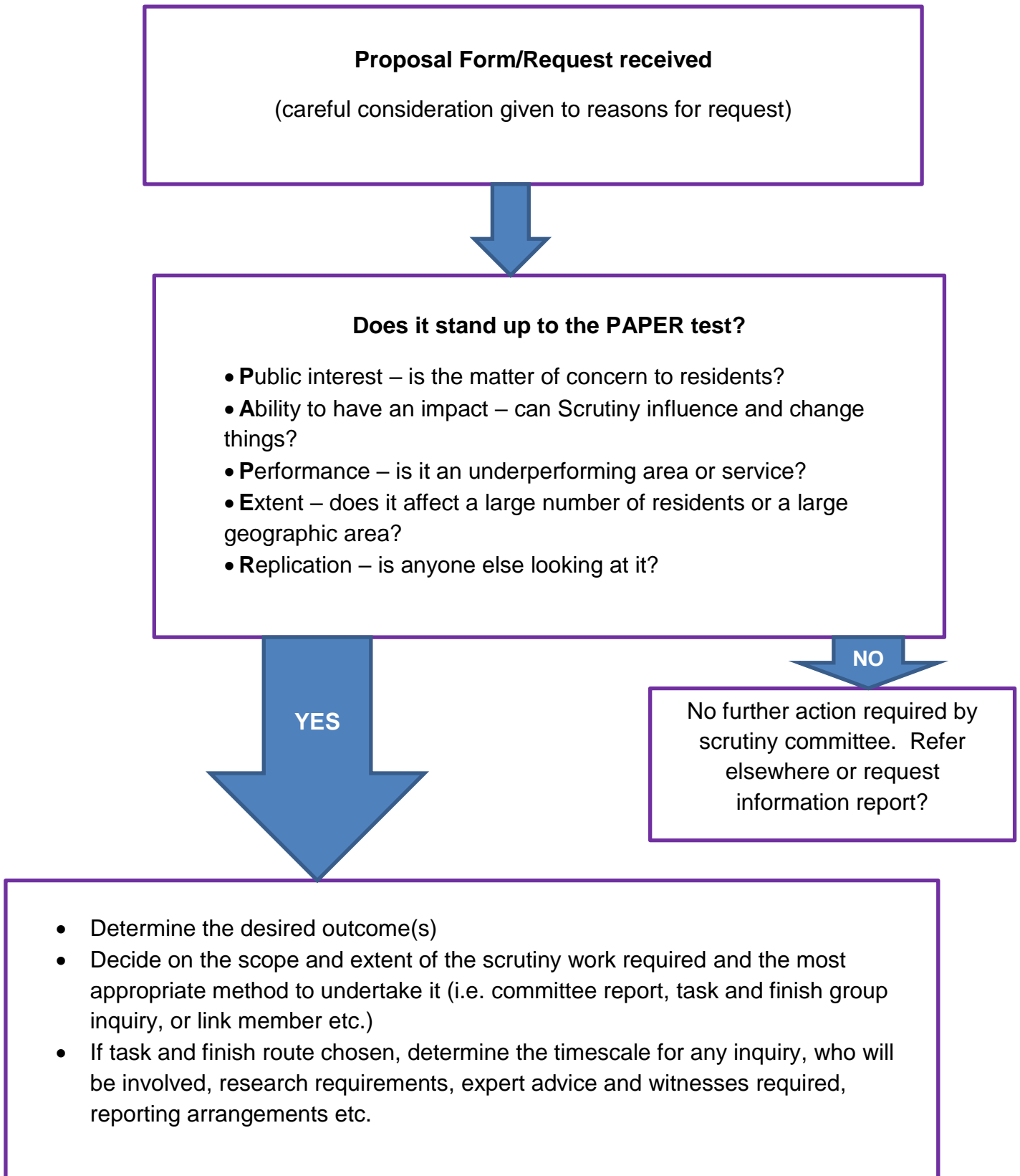
Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
13 February 2025	30 January 2025	3 April	20 April	22 May	8 May

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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
21 Jan	1	North Wales Domiciliary Care Agreement	Contract Award Agreement of the formal tender	Yes	Cllrs Elen Heaton & Diane King Lead Officer/Report Author – Nicola Stubbins / Ann Lloyd / Llinos Howatson	17.09.24 KEJ
	2	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter	To provide an overview of Denbighshire's summary of performance from the PSOW and actions required	Yes	Cllr Julie Matthews Lead Officer/Report Author – Ann Lloyd / Kevin Roberts	10.09.24, rescheduled 02.10.24, rescheduled 22.10.24 KEJ
	3	Corporate Joint Committee Governance Arrangements	To agree the governance arrangements for the transfer of the NWEAB into the CJC	Yes	Cllr Jason McLellan Lead Officer/Report Author – Gary Williams	26.04.24, rescheduled 11.06.24, 10.09.24, 25.10.24 KEJ
	4	Updated Contract Procedure Rules	To seek approval of the updated Contract Procedure Rules	Yes	Cllr Julie Matthews Lead Officer/Report Author – Karen Bellis	12.11.24 KEJ
	5	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
	6	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

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
	7	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
	8	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	Economic Strategy	Outline of Denbighshire's new Economic Strategy & Action Plan and request for Cabinet to approve the final documents.	Yes	Cllr Jason McLellan Lead Officer/Report Author – Emlyn Jones / James Evans	27.09.24 KEJ
	2	Former North Wales Hospital – Approval to Issue Third Party Agreement	To seek Cabinet approval to issue the third party contract	Yes	Cllr Jason McLellan Lead Officer/Report Author – Emlyn Jones / Gareth Roberts / Amy Selby	21.11.24 KEJ
	3	Panel Performance Assessment Response	To approve the Council's management response to the Panel Performance Assessment Report	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Heidi Barton Price	12.04.24 KEJ, rescheduled 25.10.24 KEJ
	4	Interim Position on the Proposal for a new National Park in North East Wales	To consider a draft interim position on the National Park proposal that attempts to capture the initial view of members and officers. To then confirm the 'next steps' process for	Yes	Cllr Alan James Lead Officer/Report Author – Emlyn Jones / Huw Rees	28.11.24 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
			DCC to adopt the interim position before it is sent to NRW.			
	5	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
	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
25 March	1	Residential Care Fees 2025/2026	To seek Cabinet approval for the setting of care home fees for the financial year 2025/26.	Yes	Cllr Elen Heaton Lead Officer/Report Author – Nicola Stubbins / Ann Lloyd	25.09.24 KEJ
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
29 April	1	Denbighshire County Council Local Toilet Strategy	To approve the Local Toilet Strategy	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor	14.10.24 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
					Lead Officer/Report Author – Paul Jackson/Hayley Jones	
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item

FUTURE ITEMS 2025

24 June 2025	Council Performance Self-Assessment 2024 to 2025 (year-end)	To consider a report on the Performance Self-Assessment	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Emma Horan	03.10.24 KEJ
29 July 2025	Second Home / Long-term Empty Council Tax Premium	To provide information and an update on the proposed Council Tax premiums for second homes and long-term empty properties	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Liz Thomas / Paul Barnes / Elaine Edge / Leah Grey	04.12.24 KEJ
18 November 2025	Council Performance Self-Assessment Update - April to September (QPR1&2) 2025	To consider an update report on the Performance Self-Assessment April to September	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen	03.10.24 KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

				Vaughan-Evans / Emma Horan	
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Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>21 January</i>	<i>7 January</i>	<i>18 February</i>	<i>4 February</i>	<i>25 March</i>	<i>11 March</i>

Updated 04/12/2024 – KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

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Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
7 November 2024	5. Section 19 Flood Investigation Report – Storm Babet	<p><u>Resolved:</u></p> <p><i>(i) to support the implementation of the improvements or the revision of working practices identified within the report with a view to mitigating against the future risk of flooding in the county; and</i></p> <p><i>(ii) that a Member Scrutiny Proposal form be issued to the relevant Committee members for completion with a view to inviting representatives from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to a future meeting to discuss flood related matters.</i></p>	<p>Lead Member and officers advised of the Committee's recommendations.</p> <p>Scrutiny proposal form issued to the relevant Committee members for completion.</p>
	6. Ambition North Wales Board Annual Report 2023/24	<p><u>Resolved:</u> <i>subject to the above observations, to receive and endorse the progress made by the Ambition North Wales Board during both Quarter 4 and the 2023/24 financial year in delivering the third year of the North Wales Growth Deal.</i></p>	<p>Lead Member, relevant Council officers and Ambition North Wales Board representatives advised of the Committee's recommendations.</p>
	7. Safeguarding Adults in Denbighshire Annual Report 2023/24	<p><u>Recommended:</u> <i>subject to the above observations that the Committee acknowledge the importance of a corporate approach to the safeguarding of adults at risk and the responsibility of the Council to view this as a key priority area.</i></p>	<p>The recommendation has been conveyed to the Lead Member and relevant officers.</p>

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