

To: Members of the Performance
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 23 January 2025

Direct Dial: 01824 712554

e-mail: democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 30 JANUARY 2025** in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

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

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Pages 5 - 6)

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

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

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

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

To receive the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on the 28 November 2024 (copy enclosed).

10.05am – 10.10am

PART 2 - CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It is recommended in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that exempt information (as defined in Paragraph(s) 12 and 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act) would be disclosed.

5 CHRIST THE WORD (Pages 17 - 22)

To consider a confidential joint report by Education Service and GwE officers (copy enclosed) detailing the progress made to date in delivering the school post inspection action plan and the joint school support plan.

10.10am – 11am

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

6 UPDATE ON 2025/26 REVENUE BUDGET SETTING (Pages 23 - 32)

To consider a report by the Head of Finance and Audit (copy enclosed) updating the Committee on the Welsh Government's provisional funding settlement for local government for 2025/26, its implications for setting a balanced budget, and which seeks members' observations on the matters outlined in the report.

11am – 11.30am

BREAK 11.30am - 11.45am

7 LIBRARY SERVICE STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE 2023-24 (Pages 33 - 54)

To consider a report by the Principal Librarian (copy enclosed) which seeks the Committee's views on the Council's Library Service's performance during 2023-24 in relation to the Welsh Public Library Standards, along with its progress in developing libraries as places of individual and community well-being and resilience.

11.45am – 12.15pm

8 ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING THE ROLL-OUT OF THE NEW WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICE (Pages 55 - 66)

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Co-ordinator (copy enclosed) which outlines the proposed arrangements for the review and seeks the Committee to formally establish a mechanism for undertaking the review and receiving its findings and conclusions in due course.

12.15pm – 12.45pm

9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 67 - 92)

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.

12.45pm – 1pm

10 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

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

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Councillor Hugh Irving (Chair)

Councillor Gareth Sandilands (Vice-Chair)

Ellie Chard
Bobby Feeley
Martyn Hogg
Carol Holliday

Alan Hughes
Paul Keddie
Terry Mendies
Andrea Tomlin

Voting Co-opted Members for Education (Agenda Item No. 5 only)

Colette Owen
Neil Roberts

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information
Press and Libraries
Town and Community Councils

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(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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PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by video conference on Thursday, 28 November 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Ellie Chard, Bobby Feeley, Martyn Hogg, Carol Holliday, Alan Hughes, Hugh Irving (Chair), Paul Keddie, Terry Mendies, Gareth Sandilands (Vice-Chair) and Andrea Tomlin

ALSO PRESENT

Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets Councillor Gwyneth Ellis and Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy, and Equalities Councillor Julie Matthews.

Corporate Director: Governance and Business (GW), Head of Corporate Support: Performance, Digital and Assets (HVE), Insight, Strategy and Delivery Manager (RL), Planning and Performance Officer (EH), Scrutiny Co-ordinator (RhE), Senior Committee Administrator (Host) (KJ), Committee Administrator (RhTJ)

1 APOLOGIES

None.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Ellie Chard declared a personal interest in business item 6, 'Corporate Plan', in her capacity as a Local Education Authority (LEA) appointed governor on the Governing Body of Ysgol Tir Morfa, to which reference was made within Appendix 1 of the report on this business item.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No items of an urgent nature had been raised with the Chair or the Scrutiny Co-ordinator prior the commencement of the meeting.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 September 2024 were submitted. It was:

Resolved: that the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 September 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Matters arising: Page 6. 'Minutes of the Last Meeting': it was confirmed that four elected members had accepted the recent invitation, extended to all county councillors, to visit the Cefndy Healthcare and Manufacturing facility. All of those who had participated in one of the arranged visits felt it had been a valuable and informative experience. All had been impressed and felt encouraged by the work undertaken there.

5 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy, and Equalities alongside the Head of Corporate Support: Performance, Digital and Assets, and the Insight, Strategy and Delivery Manager presented the Corporate Risk Review, September 2024 report (previously circulated).

The report was an update on the September 2024 review of the Corporate Risk Register and the Council's Risk Appetite Statement. It also informed the Committee of the amended risk appetite statement regarding project financing which attempted to reflect the present financial environment. Therefore, it was suggested that it would be appropriate to amend the Council's 'cautious' risk appetite in relation to project financing to 'open'.

The Corporate Risk Register was developed and owned by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) alongside the Cabinet. It was reviewed twice yearly by the Cabinet at Cabinet Briefing. Following the February and September reviews, the revised register was presented to the Performance Scrutiny Committee and the Governance & Audit Committee. A summary of reviews was shared for information only to both committees ahead of their January and July meetings.

The Council currently had 13 Corporate Risks on the Register. Summaries of the conclusions following the latest review for this period were provided at the start of each risk in Appendix 2. No risks had been de-escalated during this review. However, a new risk, risk 53 (the risk that Transformational Programmes and Major Project benefits are not fully realised), was proposed to be added to the Register. This proposed addition would increase the total number of Corporate Risks on the Register to 14 risks.

Regarding the risk appetite, officers clarified that seven risks, 01, 21, 34, 45, 50, 51 and 52 (54%), were currently inconsistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement (appendix 3). Nevertheless, this was expected as the register contained the Council's most serious risks. Officers stated that it was timely for the Authority to review the Council's Risk Appetite Statement (appendix 3), which was last revised in April 2024, as the statement needed to reflect its appetite now reflecting on the key external factors (Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental) that influence an organisation along with internal dynamics and demands. An initial discussion had taken place at the Budget and Transformation Board in July 2024 and at the Corporate Executive Team (CET) in October 2024 to provide feedback on the appropriateness of the Risk Appetite Statement as it stood at that time.

The Committee was also informed that discussions at the Budget and Transformation Board and CET drew particular attention to the Council's cautious risk appetite regarding financial projects. As a result, it was proposed to move this risk appetite to "open" to provide a more appropriate framework to support the organisation's transformation to achieve financial sustainability and creative responses to residents' requirements.

Following the comprehensive introduction by officers, members discussed the following further –

- The committee queried the newly proposed risk, risk 53; Transformational Projects – the timeline for the transformational programmes or major projects to commence, be delivered, and the benefits realised, and when would they be presented to Scrutiny? Officers clarified that any capital projects would need to be discussed with the Capital Scrutiny Group and the Budget and Transformation Board (BAT) before the business cases would be sufficiently developed to be consulted upon with members. Performance Scrutiny Committee has been allocated the committee to consider transformational projects which formed part of the 'Influencing Demand and Digital' Workstream of the Transformation Programme with scrutiny proposal forms completed for scrutiny chairs and vice chairs consideration as business case development progresses and projects go for approval and into delivery. Once transformation projects had been approved their delivery, along with the benefits realised on implementation, would be regularly monitored via a suite of key performance indicators (KPIs). Officers were advised to submit the scrutiny proposal forms early as the Committee's work programme was already nearing capacity for the forthcoming calendar year.
- Whether the Council had been too late in identifying new risk 53 and adding the risks associated with transformation to the Register. Should this have been done earlier? Responding officers clarified that projects had been monitored for risks for a long time as all projects had a project risk register attached to them, these captured the risks at a project level. However, there was now a collective view that a new risk should be included on the Corporate Risk Register in order to highlight the risk posed to the Authority in general in relation to business transformation projects and the need to get them right. Whilst the pace of travel in relation to the projects was currently slow, it was increasing and therefore it was important that the sufficient regard and mitigation measures were put in place to monitor and manage the risks associated with them. National statistics and information would in the near future be used to when assessing and monitoring the risks associated with service transformation projects.
- Members queried whether the Council was too reliant on Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) statistics when determining Risk 11 relating to 'unexpected or unplanned event occurring'. Should the Council, for example, be using more data and evidence produced by the Emergency Planning Service? Officers confirmed that this needed to be strengthened, but regional, Wales and UK-wide data was used when assessing this particular risk. Officers were due to meet with representatives from the North Wales Counties – Regional Emergency

Planning Service (NWC-REPS) in the near future to discuss risk management in relation to unexpected or unplanned events.

- As risk scores did not seem to change or improve it was queried whether there was a statutory requirement for Scrutiny to consider the Corporate Risk Register on an annual or 6-monthly basis and if the Authority was permitted to compare itself against other local authorities in Wales or the UK? Officers confirmed that the Committee was not required to consider the risk register. However, identification of risks and their management was a key pillar of good governance and covered by legislation. The Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) had a statutory role to perform in ensuring the Council had appropriate risk measures in place, whilst Scrutiny's role was to examine the Authority's performance in managing all identified risks. It was therefore advisable that performance in managing risks was scrutinised on a regular basis as the Register was an integral document which formed a key part of assessing the Authority's corporate health. The objective of scrutinising the Register was to give members and officers assurances that all corporate risks were being effectively monitored. Making the document more visually appealing was difficult as all documents were required to be accessible to allow all citizens to be able to read or receive the information. Officers agreed to explore options for providing comparative data. However, this may be difficult as different authorities had different metrics of scoring risks and KPIs.
- Risk 34 relating to 'insufficient regulated care'— members enquired on whether the Council had confidence that sufficient controls were in place to manage this risk going forward? This risk continued to be a cause of concern. While it was being managed demand for care was continuing to rise whilst resources to provide the level of care required were proving difficult to source. This was a national problem and Scrutiny may wish to examine it in detail, including the costs of employing agency staff, by inviting representatives from Social Services to a future meeting to discuss the matter. With respect of staffing concerns and what steps were being taken to address recruitment and retention problems in Children and Adults' Social Care and other services across the Council, members were advised that the issues of recruitment were a broad issue not unique in Denbighshire. All departments and services were working alongside HR to get a detailed picture of the situation and the matter was due to be discussed thoroughly at March's meeting during the Recruitment, Retention & Workforce Planning item.
- Risk 50 – WG's commitment to eliminate profit from the care of Children Looked After, which could result in an unstable or unsuitable supply of placements and the mitigating actions being taken in an attempt to address this risk. Members were advised that recruitment and effective staff retention in a what was a very competitive market was key. The Committee was reassured that the Head of Children's Service was assessing the matter thoroughly and was studying all the information as it became available. It was difficult to provide definitive answers at present as the matter was continuously changing and developing. The latest information available indicated that both Welsh and UK Governments were currently considering delaying the implementation of the new legislation relating to eliminating profit from this sector until 2030. Members may therefore wish to consider

including the risk as a topic for inclusion on a Scrutiny forward work programme for a future meeting, vis the completion of a Scrutiny proposal form.

At the conclusion of a comprehensive discussion, the Committee:

Resolved: subject to the above observations and the provision of the requested information –

- (i) having considered and discussed the suggested amendments to the Corporate Risk Register as at September 2024, to confirm the amendments made including the inclusion of new risk number 53 as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report;***
- (ii) having regard to the status and risk appetite classifications and descriptions detailed in Appendix 3, along with the answers provided to the questions raised during the meeting, to confirm the appropriateness of the risk owners identified and the effectiveness of the risk controls put in place; and***
- (iii) acknowledging the present financial environment within which public services operated and having taken into account the Budget and Transformation Board (BAT) and the Corporate Executive Team's (CET) rationale with respect of amending the Authority's risk appetite in relation to financial projects, to support the recommendation to amend the risk appetite categorisation for financial projects from 'cautious' to 'open'.***

6 CORPORATE PLAN

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets alongside the Head of Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets and the Planning and Performance Officer introduced the Corporate Plan Performance Update: April to September 2024 (previously circulated). The report aimed to update the Committee on the Council's performance against its Corporate Plan from April to September 2024, including Strategic Equality objectives and the seven governance areas (corporate planning, financial planning, performance management, risk management, workforce planning, assets, and procurement). Regular performance reporting was part of the Council's values and principles. It was an essential monitoring requirement of the Council's performance management methodology and a statutory duty. Despite the current challenging financial climate within which local government was operating there was some excellent performance in some service areas, and staff were to be congratulated on these achievements in such challenging circumstances. Of course, there were other areas requiring improvement.

The report outlined progress against the Authority's performance objectives. These comprised of the Corporate Plan / Strategic Equality Objectives (which also formed the Council's Well-being Objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015) and the seven governance areas (as set out in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021).

The report also identified indicators or activities that related to Equality Objectives or contributed to the Welsh Language and Culture. The report also contained case studies to exemplify good work. The Strategic Planning Team were continually seeking further opportunities to improve the Performance Management Framework and Performance Update Reports.

Officers emphasised that it was not possible to highlight all significant points of interest included within Appendix 1. However, some positive highlights and areas which had shown improvement during April to September 2024 included:

- Reducing reliance on Bed and Breakfast accommodation to house homeless families; and
- According to the Welsh Government's Social Landlords' Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2024, Denbighshire was the highest-performing stock-holding council in Wales regarding tenants' overall satisfaction with Denbighshire Housing.

Officers stated that three improvement actions had been identified following discussions with services about current performance. The first two demonstrated the correlation between resources, performance, and risk. These were:

- performance relating to the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within the target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale), which had fallen short of the 95% target time for some years. The service continued to struggle with meeting the demands of the asset within the limited budgetary and staffing resources available, and a substantive discussion was needed about the prospects of improvement and what continuing poor performance was likely to mean given the expected increased impacts of flooding, landslips and heat risks on road condition and community connectivity.
- Linked to the previous reporting period's improvement action to keep our Corporate Plan commitments and performance expectations under continual review in the future, the next Corporate Plan Tract Review should consider the impact of reducing capacity and ceasing projects such as Llwybrau and how these would impact the Council's ability to deliver the Corporate Plan and outcomes.
- The need to publish details of the engagement network of people and groups with protected characteristics on the Council's website.

Members discussed the following further –

- Concerns were raised that the Council's performance in relation to some indicators and was not improving, or was worse than in previous reporting periods. What were the potential risks and consequences to the Council of not meeting thresholds for excellence and delivering aspects of the Corporate Plan? Officers clarified that the consequence was reputational damage to the Council but more importantly the detrimental impact on residents if performance was to continually deteriorate and priorities were not delivered. It was emphasised that the plan was a long-term plan and that it would take a while for all aspirations to come to fruition. The Plan's delivery was regularly monitored. Officers fully understood members' feelings and

concerns on the matter. However, they highlighted that making comparisons with previous plans delivered by former administrations was not as straight forward as it seemed, as they would not be comparing like with like, as so many elements had changed. The plan aimed to improve well-being. Whilst performance in some areas was considered a 'Priority for Improvement' other areas of performance was good. Officers also explained that the Council had set higher goals and thresholds rather than ones more easily achievable. It was also added that external factors similar to those faced by most local authorities made achieving targets more challenging.

- under the 'Greener Denbighshire' priority, the 'total carbon tonnage emissions' had increased instead of reduced in the last year, how was this being addressed, and would the requirements of the new Procurement Act have implications on performance against this measure in due course? This particular measure is based on a fairly crude methodology set externally, which we hope will become more sophisticated and reliable in time. Officers clarified that the Procurement Act was not expected to have a significant impact on carbon reduction targets. During recent months factors such as the coastal flood defence work had made the greener Denbighshire target harder to achieve along with the poor summer weather impacting on the effectiveness of solar panels in generating energy. However, specific service areas such as Fleet and street lighting were meeting their targets. All local authorities and public sector organisations were currently working together with a view to reducing carbon emissions via the supply chain. The North Wales Construction Framework was good example of how authorities worked together with a view to reducing carbon emissions when procuring construction work. The appointment of a De-Carbonisation Officer to work as part of the Procurement Service would also be key to success in this area.
- Officers confirmed that applying the team Denbighshire approach should in time help improve performance in areas that were currently struggling. No service or area operated in isolation. Applying a collective approach, with staff at all levels taking ownership of performance, would help support the Plan's delivery in the long-term. Management valued staff at all levels and acknowledged that they held the key to success.
- The Lead Member and officers agreed with members' views on the need to get residents more involved with the Council's work. There were a number of working groups currently working on how best to engage and consult with residents on various proposals. Whilst the Council's reputation had been damaged by the problems encountered with the roll-out of the new waste and recycling service, good work was going on throughout the Council and people needed to be more positive rather than negative.
- Regarding the gaps in the data highlighted, they were due to several factors, such as waiting for data from external sources and not receiving data ahead of publication dates. External sources were also experiencing challenges, similar to the council and could not source the data as they had previously.
- Confirmed that work was currently underway on how to improve the performance in relation to the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe with a specific focus on the quality of work rather than on a time sensitive target.

- A number of suggestions were put forward on how to make the documents more navigable, reader and user-friendly without compromising its accessibility to all.

Following an in-depth discussion, the Committee:

Resolved: *subject to the above observations, the provision of the additional information requested, and further work being considered on the format of the Performance Update Report, to acknowledge the Council's progress to date in delivering its Corporate Plan 2022-27 as detailed in the Corporate Plan Performance Update: April to September 2024 report (Appendix 1).*

7 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.

There were four items listed for the January meeting. These included progress report on Christ the Word School which had been deferred from the current meeting's agenda as specified in the report. The Scrutiny Co-ordinator was awaiting confirmation whether the Economic & Business Development Strategy would be available for examination at the January meeting. If not, it would be deferred to March's meeting. There were three substantive items for January regardless of the potential deferment.

Members were advised that following the recent meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) no scrutiny requests had been allocated to the Performance Scrutiny Committee. However, the committee would be asked to be the 'parent committee' to formally establish the task and finish group that would review the roll-out of the new waste and recycling service, and in due course to receive its report. A report to formally establish the task and finish group would be presented to the Committee in January 2025. The Committee:

Resolved: *subject to the inclusion of a report on the establishment and reporting arrangements for the 'Scrutiny Review of the Roll-Out of the New Waste and Recycling Service' on its forward work programme for the January 2025 meeting, to confirm the Committee's programme of future work.*

8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

The Chair and Vice-Chair informed the Committee that they had attended a series of Service-Challenge meetings during November. All these meetings had been extremely informative providing them with a good understanding of each Service's performance in delivering their services on a day-to-day basis, their contribution to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan, along with a valuable insight into the budgetary pressures they faced and the consequential impact on service-delivery. An early insight was also given into potential Service transformation projects currently under development, some of which were likely to be presented to Scrutiny for consideration in the near future. The final Service Challenge meeting was scheduled to be held in early December. More detailed notes of the meetings

would be available following the conclusion of the Service Challenge process.
Members:

Resolved: to receive the information.

Meeting concluded at 12.40pm

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 12, 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	30th January 2025
Lead Member / Officer	Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets / Head of Finance and Audit
Report author	Head of Finance and Audit
Title	Update on 2025/26 Revenue Budget Setting

1. What is the report about?

Updating the Committee on the Welsh Government's (WG) Provisional Funding Settlement for Local Government 2025/26 and its implications for setting a balanced budget for 2025/26.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Regular medium-term financial updates have been reported to the Committee throughout the year, as part of its role to scrutinise budget proposals as agreed with Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs earlier this financial year. The Council is legally required to set a balanced budget before the start of each financial year and to set the resulting level of Council Tax. Cabinet, at its next meeting on 18th February 2025 will consider a report to set a balanced budget and Council Tax for 2025/26. This report will then be considered by Council at its meeting on 20th February 2025.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 The Committee considers and provides feedback to Cabinet prior to the 2025/26 budget being set.

4. Report details

4.1 Provisional Funding Settlement for Local Government 2025/26

4.1.1 The Provisional Settlement for 2025/26 was received by the Council on 11th December 2024. The Council’s provisional AEF (Aggregate External Finance, which consists of the Revenue Support Grant [RSG], and our share of the non-domestic rates pool[NDR]) from WG for 2025/26 equates to £215.222m.

4.1.2 WG have produced tables so that funding levels in 2024/25 and 2025/26 can be compared on a like for like basis across all Welsh councils. The restated 2024/25 figure has been slightly amended by WG since its initial publication. The council’s 2025/26 funding compares with a restated 2024/25 AEF of £205.729m. A headline increase of £9.493m or 4.6%.

4.1.3 It is important to understand the detail behind the restated 2024/25 AEF, as it has an impact on 2025/26. Following the UK Gov budget in October 2024, Welsh Government allocated additional in year funding to Local Government, which is summarised in the table below.

2024/25 Adjustments to AEF	£m
Teachers Pay	0.619
Teachers Pensions	2.069
Non-teaching Pay	1.799
Total	4.487

This has been amalgamated into the base budget, but as this is a recent movement it has had the effect of increasing the funding in 2025/26 over and above the 4.6% quoted. The true impact of the provisional settlement is an increase of £14.427m or 7% (the Council’s 2025/26 funding compared with the original 2024/25 AEF of £200.795m).

4.1.4 Denbighshire’s increase compares favourably to the Welsh average of 4.3% and follows increases in pupil numbers and free school meals data being used in the formula to distribute funding. We must recognise though that there is also a corresponding increase in demand for services as a result.

4.1.5 Within the announced figure WG have advised the following:

- All pay increases for both teaching and non-teaching posts are included within the settlement.
- The costs of enabling authorities to continue to meet the additional costs of introducing the Real Living Wage (RLW) for care workers are included in the settlement.

4.1.6 The UK government's Autumn Statement referred to changes in rates and threshold for employers' National Insurance Contributions from 1st April 2025. The increase in contributions will impact on the costs of employees the Council directly employs and will also impact indirectly through increased supplier costs and, the cost of commissioned care from care providers in particular. The increase in the direct costs of employers' contributions is certain and will be included in the Council's cost pressures for 2025/26. An estimate of indirect costs will also need to be included. Some uncertainty remains around funding for this cost pressure from both UK and Welsh Governments; WG expect funding to be provided by UK government during the first half of 2025/26 financial year following assessment of costs of public sector workers in Wales. This means we will not know the position with regards to funding for the increase in employers National Insurance until after our budget for 2025/26 has been set.

4.1.7 The Final Settlement is expected in March. Given the range of increases (across different Councils) WG state that they are open to considering providing additional floor funding at final budget and this would protect council's that have received a lower percentage increase in funding. WG cannot guarantee that there will be no other changes between the provisional and final settlements, but do not intend to make changes to methods or data underpinning the distribution of the settlement.

4.1.8 The provisional settlement provides no indication of what future year settlements are likely to be, though the WG states it is expecting multiyear settlements following the UK government's Spending Review during the first half of 2025. They hope to be able to provide a more than one-year indicative local government settlement in future years which will assist medium term planning.

4.1.9 Part of WG Programme of Government commits to ensuring local authorities are not hampered by unnecessary bureaucracy. A programme of work to reduce the number of separate grants paid to local authorities continues to move grants into the settlement. As a result there have been 'transfers in' and 'transfers out' included in the draft settlement. Grant funding ceases to be ringfenced for a specific purpose or initiative, with any grant 'transferring into' the settlement alongside the ongoing responsibility to deliver that initiative. Homelessness grants have 'transferred in' which relates to the 'No-one left out' (NOLO) approach and the discretionary homelessness prevention grant.

4.1.10 In summary, whilst the increase in the settlement is above the planning assumption used in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is positive and welcomed it does not

resolve the financial challenges the council faces in setting a balanced budget in 2025/26, which will still require a combination of savings and increases in Council Tax.

2025/26 Budget Setting

4.2 Budget Pressures

4.2.1. Our medium-term financial updates reported to various committees throughout the year have explained that demand for services from our communities is growing and that the complexity of needs has intensified in areas such as education, children's services and adult social care. Whilst the headline rate of inflation has eased it continues to have an impact on the council by increasing costs of service delivery by exerting pressure on pay, commissioned care, food and fuel prices etc.

4.2.2. The current pressures being included in the 2025/26 budget total £21.325m. This equates to 8% of the 2024/25 budget and is the 3rd year consecutive year of pressures in excess of £20m. Details are listed in Appendix 1. Work continues on refining the budgetary pressures for inclusion with the final budget setting report, in particular on the adult social care budget.

4.2.3 The majority of the pressures faced by the Council are outside of its control, for example pay inflation is set nationally, the Council must also fulfil its statutory duties to provide demand led services such as social care, etc.

4.3 Setting a balanced budget in 2025/26

4.3.1 The current estimate of additional budget requirement for 2025/26 is £21.325m. This is more than the increase in funding the council will receive from the settlement from Welsh Government. A draft settlement of around 11% would have been required to fund all these pressures. Setting a balanced budget in 2025/26 will therefore still require a combination of savings and an increase in the level of Council Tax.

4.3.2 As previously reported the approach to setting balanced budgets over the next few years set out within the MTFS is the need to both identify savings and invest in transformational projects. To deliver savings in 2025/26, target percentage service reductions have been issued which services have been working towards achieving whilst balancing the impacts on service delivery, many of which are statutory. Early savings proposals were included in an update report to Council in November 2024 that Lead Members and Heads of Service considered sufficiently developed totalling £4m. Work has

been ongoing since to provide further savings for setting the 2025/26 budget, all of which will be considered by Cabinet and Council in February 2025 meetings.

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

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

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

As set out within the report.

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

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) was completed for each major savings proposal in setting the 2024/25 budget. All assessments were collated and reviewed by strategic planning and performance officers to highlight any themes and patterns emerging to provide regular updates on the aggregate impact in respect of each of the well-being goals and whether the savings were disproportionately affecting any particular protected group. These were collated to form an overall WIA of the combined budget reduction measures. This has been updated throughout 2024/25.

7.2. A similar process is being implemented for 2025/26 budget setting.

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

In addition to regular reports to the Governance and Audit Committee and Performance Scrutiny Committee the budget process has been considered regularly by SLT, Cabinet Briefing, Group Leaders and Council Briefing meetings. The School Budget Forum have been included in the proposals through-out the year. Trade Unions have been consulted through Local Joint Consultative Committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The Council, along with all other Welsh councils, has been facing unprecedented financial challenges. The aim of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan that has been reported regularly to different committees is to ensure that the Council delivers future balanced budgets. Setting out the details and implications of the WG provisional settlement in this report will help ensure that the Council is informed and prepared to set a budget at this challenging time.

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

10.1 The budget process itself is a risk management measure with the aim of identifying, assessing and agreeing budget proposals in a planned and timely way. Failure to agree these proposals without viable alternatives will risk not achieving a balanced budget for 2024/25.

10.2 A detailed analysis of risk and steps that will be taken to mitigate those risks will be provided in the final budget report to Cabinet in February 2025.

11. Power to make the decision

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

11.2 Scrutiny's powers with respect of these matters are set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7 of the Council's Constitution.

Budget Pressures 2025/26

The current pressures being included in the 2025/26 budget total £21.325m. This equates to 8% of the 2024/25 budget and is the 3rd year consecutive year of pressures in excess of £20m. Details are listed below:

Pressure	£m	Description
Pay	3.000	Non-schools April 2025 pay award estimated at 3.8% in line with Office for Budget Responsibilities estimate of wage growth for 2025/26.
Increase in employers NI contributions	2.733	Non-schools – directly employed
Pay Grading	-1.760	See paragraph below
Adult Social Care	4.165	Forecasts of increased costs updated in October 2024 currently being updated to reflect higher than forecast increases in real living wage and employers NI costs.
Childrens Services	4.284	Forecast based on current placements (Oct 2024) and estimates for inflationary uplifts. Assumes no additional residential placements.
Highways and Environmental Services	1.667	Increase in Recycling and Waste budget as agreed by Cabinet in October 2024 £1.067m. Increase in costs of delivering highways winter maintenance £0.600m.
Schools	5.586	This includes funding for teaching and non-teaching pay awards estimated at 3.8%, employers NI, and leisure service level agreements. Also, includes funding for 0.5% to cover the shortfall in September 2024 pay award.
Schools - Demography	-0.480	Reflect an overall decrease in September 2024 pupil numbers used in the schools funding formula.
Fire Levy	0.500	The North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is funded by a levy based on population is charged on all 6 North Wales councils. The levy is set by the Fire Authority, not by the councils, which ultimately must be paid. Current estimates are that the levy will increase by 7%.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)	0.500	Funding for CTRS transferred into the settlement several years ago and has not increased. Additional costs as a result of increases in council tax therefore requires funding.
Investment in Priorities	0.250	Impact of capital programme repayment of borrowing and interest costs – this pressure relates specifically to the Climate and Nature Strategy.
Other	0.508	Indexation on corporate contracts and costs
Transfers In / Out	0.372	Increases for NOLO and Homeless prevention less reductions for coastal risk management programme.
Total Pressures	21.325	

Pay Grading pressure. In recent years increases to the National Living Wage driven by high levels of inflation has had an impact on the Council’s pay structure. Grades have compressed at the lower end of the structure due to the removal of some spinal points and there is an increasing need to review the structure. The pressure whilst still included in the MTFP has been pushed back reflecting the commitment made by the national employers in recent pay negotiations to redesign the national pay spines and the time that may take. The Council recognises the need to review its pay structure, but it would not be feasible to complete that review when changes to the national pay spine are planned.

National Insurance contributions. The increase in employers’ national insurance (NI) contributions from April 2025 has been included as a cost pressure separately for directly employed non-schools employees and within the schools figure for employees directly employed by schools. As in the report work continues on refining cost pressures in social care which includes the impact of the increase in NI. Funding is anticipated from governments to cover the costs but has not been confirmed at this stage.

Work continues on refining the budgetary pressures for inclusion with the final budget setting report, in particular on the adult social care budget.

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	30th January 2025
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Emrys Wynne, Lead Member for the Welsh Language, Culture and Heritage/Liz Grieve, Head of Housing and Communities
Head of Service	Liz Grieve, Head of Housing and Communities
Report author	Deborah Owen, Principal Librarian
Title	Library Service Standards and Performance 2023-24

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The report highlights the Library Service's performance against National Standards

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 To provide information regarding the Council's performance in relation to the 6th Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards 2017-20 (extended for 21-24) and the progress made in developing libraries as places of individual and community well-being and resilience.

2.2 It should be noted that this report relates to Denbighshire's Library Service for the financial year 2023-24. The impact on performance of changes to the Library/One Stop Shop service is not expected to be manifest until June 2024, when opening hours were reduced.

2.3 New National Standards are expected to be established with the publication of the 7th Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards, which has a provisional implementation date of 1st April 2025.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That the Committee considers and comments on the performance against the 6th Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards and considers requesting a progress report in January 2026.

4. Report details

4.1. Welsh Public Library Standards

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-06/addendum-to-the-sixth-framework-of-welsh-public-library-standards-wpls-for-2023-2024-and-2024-2025.pdf>

- 4.2. The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 sets out the statutory duties of public library authorities to "provide a comprehensive and efficient library service" and makes it a duty of the Welsh Ministers "to superintend and promote the improvement" of public library services. To discharge this responsibility, the Welsh Government administers the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) to assess library provision and performance across Wales.
- 4.3. Library Services submit an Annual Report, noting performance for the previous financial year, to which Welsh Government Culture Division (WGCD) responds with an Annual Assessment Report. The most recent Annual Assessment Report covers 2023-24 and performance against the full 6th Framework 2017-20 (extended to 2024), and consists of 13 Core Entitlements and 7 Quality Indicators with specific targets. The report is attached as Appendix A.
- 4.4. Denbighshire has met 12 of the 13 Core Entitlements in full and 1 in part. Of the seven quality indicators which have targets, Denbighshire is achieving six in full and one in part. Please see page 2 of the Annual Assessment Report in Appendix A.
- 4.5. QI 4 Support for health and well-being. Met in full. This includes supporting the Reading Well scheme, designated health and wellbeing collections, and signposting to health and wellbeing services. All our libraries host weekly Talking

Points, providing people with the opportunity to have a face to face conversation with a Community Navigator.

4.6. QI 6 All static service points offer events/activities for users with special requirements. Met in full.

4.7. Total attendance at library events has increased by 25% since 2022-23 and Denbighshire is above the median for per capita event attendance (QI6). Events include reading groups, Craft and Chat; Knit and Natter; Paned a Sgwrs; English and Welsh reading groups; craft groups; author events; class visits; and Bookstart Rhymetimes. The service has a strong under 5s offer and Rhymetimes account for 45% of event attendances. The service offers activities and services for customers with particular needs, for example, providing SIM cards to people unable to afford their monthly top up through the National Databank scheme. During the winter months libraries were part of the Warm Welcome scheme, offering free teas and coffees to residents. Denbighshire Libraries worked with local organisation Making Sense Community Interest Organisation (CIO) on a memory box project for people living with dementia.

4.8. QI 7: Location of service points. Met in full.

4.9. QI 9: Up to date and appropriate reading material. Met in full.

Denbighshire meets the acquisitions rate target and is in the top quartile of Welsh library authorities for this measure. The percentage of the budget allocated to children's resources is above the median. 23,509 items were acquired in 23-24. This includes the individual titles made available via subscriptions to two digital download sites Borrowbox (eBooks, audiobooks and newspapers) and Overdrive (magazines) - a total of 12,243 titles. The total physical books and audiobook items purchased was 11,266.

4.10 QI 10: Welsh Language Resources. Met in full.

The service exceeds the target for per capita spend on Welsh language resources. It is above the median for per capita Welsh language issues which have risen by 14% since 2022-23 (QI10). 71% of Welsh language issues were for children's books.

4.11 QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications. Partially met.

Denbighshire still does not meet the targets for either total staff or qualified staff per capita. We have not met it since the libraries and one stops were merged. Most libraries in the service are one stop shops, and the majority of frontline, supervisory and managerial staff spend approx. 50% of their time on their Customer Services roles therefore only 50% of the staffing level is reported as library provision. This year Welsh Government is supporting a nominated member of staff to complete professional library training, so this should help Denbighshire to meet the target for qualified staff.

4.12 QI 16 Opening hours per capita, met in full.

The service meets the target for opening hours per capita and is above the median for this measure, however, going forward this will be affected by the reduction in opening hours in June 2024.

4.13 Authorities were also required to submit a narrative report including an impact to demonstrate the library has had on an individual, a commentary on the service's contribution to wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals, and to reflect on the future direction and plans for the library service. The narrative report for Denbighshire is attached as Appendix B.

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

5.1 The Library Service is a statutory responsibility of the Authority and its services contribute to a number of corporate objectives and themes, including a healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire; a learning and growing Denbighshire; a better connected Denbighshire; a fairer, safe and more equal Denbighshire; a Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language; and a well run high performing council.

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

6.1 There are no financial proposals associated with this report.

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

7.1 A well-being impact assessment has not been undertaken, as this is a performance report for information. The 6th Framework of Library Standards demonstrates how libraries have a clear contribution to make to the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

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

8.1 Performance Scrutiny in January 2024 considered the Library Services performance for 2022-23. The Library Service also went to a Special Scrutiny meeting in January 2024 regarding the proposed budget cuts. A Library Task Force was also set up, with the Cabinet Member and representatives from each Member Area Group (MAG), to review the model of the Library and One Stop Service in Denbighshire, with its first meeting in April 2024.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 As this is a report on historical performance there are no direct financial implications to this report.

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

10.1 As this report is on historical performance there are no risks associated with it.

11 Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000

11.2 Section 7.4.2(b) of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny may 'review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy, objectives, performance targets and / or particular service areas'.

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Denbighshire Annual Assessment Report 2023-24

This report has been prepared based on information provided in Denbighshire's annual return, impact statements and narrative report submitted to the Culture Division of the Welsh Government.

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Executive summary

Denbighshire reported meeting all of the 13 Core Entitlements in full through self-assessment. However, the independent assessor considers that the service has met 12 of the 13 Core Entitlements in full and 1 in part. Of the 7 quality indicators which have targets, Denbighshire is achieving 6 in full and 1 in part.

Attendance at formal training has increased, indicating that Denbighshire Libraries are working effectively with partners to offer relevant courses. The service also performs well in terms of active borrower numbers, event attendance, issues and Welsh language provision. However, virtual visits have declined. Denbighshire is due to carry out customer surveys in 2024, which will, hopefully, help in providing further information about customers' use of library services and their expectations. Whilst appreciating the challenges of budget cuts, the time allocated for staff training is a concern and it is hoped that this is something that will be addressed as part of the new library strategy.

- Attendance at formal training sessions has increased by 26% compared to 2022-23 (Q15).
- The number of active borrowers is increasing, and Denbighshire is in the top quartile of Welsh library authorities for this measure (Q18).
- Denbighshire is above the median for per capita Welsh language issues and Welsh language issues have risen by 14% compared to 2022-23 (Q110).
- The service has made efforts to preserve opening hours to date and is above the median for opening hours per capita (Q116).
- Denbighshire is in the bottom quartile of Welsh library authorities in terms of staff time allocated for training (Q113).

Performance against the standards

The standards framework comprises of Core Entitlements, quality indicators with targets, quality indicators with benchmarks and impact measures.

Core Entitlements

Denbighshire reported meeting all of the 13 Core Entitlements in full through self-assessment. The service provided detailed and helpful commentary within the return. Based on this, the independent assessor considers that the service has met 12 Core Entitlements in full and 1 in part.

- 1. Libraries in Wales are free to join and open to all.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 2. Libraries in Wales ensure friendly, knowledgeable and qualified staff are on hand to help.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**

- 3. Libraries in Wales provide access to a range of services, activities, and high quality resources in a range of formats to support lifelong learning, personal health and well-being, community participation, cultural experiences, recreation, and reading for pleasure.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 4. Libraries in Wales provide appropriate services, facilities and information resources for individuals and groups with special requirements.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 5. Libraries provide appropriate safe, attractive and accessible physical spaces with suitable staffed opening hours.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met.
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 6. Libraries in Wales lend books for free, and deliver free access to information, including online information resources available 24 hours a day.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 7. Libraries in Wales provide free use of the Internet including Wi-Fi, and access to digital equipment, in all service points.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 8. Libraries in Wales provide access to services, cultural activities, and high quality resources in the Welsh language.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 9. Libraries in Wales work in partnership to share catalogues and facilitate access to the resources of all Welsh libraries.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 10. Libraries in Wales work with a range of partners to promote and deliver services to new and diverse audiences, enabling more people to benefit from those services.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**

- 11. Libraries in Wales regularly consult users to gather their views on the service and information about their changing needs.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**
- 12. Libraries in Wales provide access to their library service strategy, policies, objectives and vision, in print and online, in a range of languages appropriate for the community.**
Self-Assessment: Fully met.
Independent Assessor: **Partially met ■**
This is because the service reports that the 2019-22 strategy has been extended, but this is not indicated in the strategy itself or the website. As a result, there are no measures of success over a relevant time period. The return states that the service 'plans to produce a new strategy in spring 2024, when the budget cuts and new opening hours have been implemented'.
- 13. Libraries in Wales provide support to help improve people's digital skills and confidence, including the use of e-government services**
Self-Assessment: Fully met
Independent Assessor: **Fully met ▲**

Quality indicators with targets

There are 12 quality indicators (QIs), of which 7 have constituent targets. Of these, Denbighshire is achieving 6 in full and 1 in part.

- QI 4 (a) Support for health and well-being, **met in full ▲**
 - i) Reading Well scheme, **met**
 - ii) Designated health & well-being collection, **met**
 - iii) Information about healthier lifestyles and healthy behaviours, **met**
 - iv) Signposting to health & well-being services, **met**

- QI 6 All static service points offer events/activities for users with special requirements, **met in full ▲**

- QI 7 Location of service points, **met in full ▲**

- QI 9 Up-to-date and appropriate reading material
Acquisitions per capita, **met in full ▲**

- QI 10 Welsh Language Resources
% of material budget spent on Welsh, **met in full ▲**

- QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications, **partially met ■**
 - i) Staff per capita, **not met**
 - ii) Qualified staff per capita, **not met**
 - iii) Head of service qualification/training, **met**
 - iv) CPD percentage, **not met**

- QI 16 Opening hours per capita, **met in full ▲**

Impact measures

The framework includes three indicators aimed at assessing the impact of library use on people's lives. These indicators do not have targets, and authorities are required to carry out user surveys for QI1 once over the 2022-23 to 2024-25 period. The summary figures (lowest, median and highest) are based on all authorities providing data in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 returns¹. Rankings reflect the number of respondents, where 1 is the highest scoring authority.

¹ Denbighshire did provide data, but as these related to surveys conducted in November 2018 and February 2020 (i.e. pre-Covid), they are not included in the comparison table as the figures cannot be meaningfully compared to more recent data.

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest	
QI 1 Making a difference					
b) % of young people who think that the library helps them learn and find things out:	N/A	68%	94%	99%	
e) % of adults who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	N/A	31%	89.5%	96%	
QI 5 b) % of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their purpose in attending:	Not provided	N/A	86%	98.5%	100%

Authorities are also asked to provide an impact statement describing the impact which the library service has had on an individual or on a group of individuals during the year. Denbighshire provided an impact statement which referred to the value of the Bookstart Rhyme Times sessions delivered by the dedicated Bookstart Team. Sessions provide an opportunity for the young children to become members of the library; foster a love of reading; and develop their speech and language skills. Attending the sessions also contributes to developing children’s social and emotional skills and confidence. Parents who attend enjoy socialising with other parents, which supports their well-being. A mother who has attended Bookstart Rhyme Time sessions with all of her four children over the past ten years commented: “...all of my children love reading and the library thanks to the encouragement you gave them... I really value the routine and the social contact and getting out of the house to a friendly face. It’s not all about the books!”

Quality indicators and benchmarks

The remaining indicators do not have targets but allow services to monitor their performance over time. The following table summarises Denbighshire position for 2023-24. Rankings reflect the number of respondents, where 1 is the highest scoring authority. Indicators ‘per capita’ are calculated per 1,000 population unless otherwise noted.

Performance indicator		Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest
QI 1 Making a difference					
a) % of adults who think that using the library has helped them develop new skills		N/A	17%	70%	90%
c) health and well-being		N/A	1%	66.5%	90%
d) enjoyable, safe and inclusive		N/A	90%	97%	100%
QI 2 Customer satisfaction					
a) 'very good' or 'good' choice of books		N/A	56%	91.5%	97%
b) 'very good' or 'good' customer care		N/A	86%	98.5%	99%
c) 'very good' or 'good' IT facilities		N/A	47%	87%	94%
d) 'very good' or 'good' overall		N/A	74%	98%	100%
e) users aged 16 & under rating out of ten		N/A	8.0	9.4	9.7
QI 5 User support					
a) attendances per capita	23	10/21	1	20	209
c) informal support per capita	329	2/18	12	137	449
QI 6 Attendances at events per capita					
	287	7/22	3	224.5	620
QI 8 Library use					
b) virtual visits per capita	354	17/21	158	743	7,851
c) active borrowers per capita	164	2/22	57	123	233
QI 9 Up-to-date and appropriate reading material					
b) % material budget children's resources	20%	7/22	12%	17%	26%
c) % material budget electronic resources	9%	15/22	4%	15.5%	49%
QI 10 Welsh issues per capita					
	1,246	3/22	161	631.5	2,725
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications²					
(v) a) total volunteers	4	N/A	0	15.5	358
b) volunteer hours	644	N/A	0	671.5	20,176
QI 14 Operational expenditure					
a) total expenditure per capita	£13,982	7/22	£6,046	£12,023	£24,685
b) % on staff,	62%	=15/22	50%	67%	78%
% on information resources	9%	=13/22	5%	11%	22%
% on equipment and buildings	5%	=7/22	1%	3%	27%
% on other operational costs	23%	=6/22	0%	16.5%	34%

Analysis of performance

The Core Entitlements and quality indicators can be divided into four key areas. This section of the report outlines performance under these areas.

Meeting customer needs (QI 1-2, 4-5)

The service meets the Health and well-being target (QI4) in full and libraries offer a weekly Talking Points service, run jointly by Denbighshire County Council and Betsi Cadwaldr University Health Board, where Community Navigators share information about help and support available in an area. Per capita attendance at formal training sessions is around the median and attendance has increased by 26% compared to

² Rankings are not included for volunteers as the implications of volunteer numbers are ambiguous.

2022-23 (Q15). The library service works with Cwmpas to offer a range of drop-in sessions, workshops and essential skills courses. Although the number of informal support sessions has declined compared to 2022-23, Denbighshire is still in the top quartile of Welsh library authorities for informal support per capita. No customer surveys have been carried out in 2022-23 or 2023-24, but Denbighshire is planning a survey for autumn 2024 when the budget cuts and changes in opening hours have been implemented (Q11/2).

Access and use (QI 6-8)

Total attendance at library events has increased by 25% since 2022-23 and Denbighshire is above the median for per capita event attendance (Q16). Events include reading groups, Craft and Chat; Knit and Natter; Paned a Sgwrs; English and Welsh reading groups; craft groups; author events; class visits; and Bookstart Rhymetimes. The service has a strong under 5s offer and Rhymetimes account for 45% of event attendances. The service offers activities and services for customers with particular needs, for example, providing SIM cards to people unable to afford their monthly top up through the National Databank scheme. During the winter months libraries were part of the Warm Welcome scheme, offering free teas and coffees to residents. Denbighshire Libraries worked with local organisation Making Sense CIO on a memory box project for people living with dementia.

The number of active borrowers has increased by 7% compared to 2022-23 and Denbighshire is in the top quartile of Welsh library authorities for this measure (Q18). Over 70% of reported library members are active borrowers. Adult book issues have risen by 12% and children's stock by 11%, and both are above the median. Electronic issues have increased by 9%, despite the cancellation of the library's Pressreader subscription, and the service is in the top quartile of Welsh library authorities for this measure. However, Denbighshire is below the national median for virtual visits, which have declined by 44% in comparison to 2022-23. The service reports that social media subscribers have increased slightly (2%).

Facilities and services (QI 9-10)

Denbighshire meets the acquisitions rate target and is in the top quartile of Welsh library authorities for this measure (Q19). The percentage of the budget allocated to children's resources is above the median, whilst the proportion spent on electronic resources is below the median. The service exceeds the target for per capita spend on Welsh language resources. It is above the median for per capita Welsh language issues which have risen by 14% since 2022-23 (Q110). The service reports that 71% of Welsh language issues were for children's books. During the Summer Reading Challenge the library service teamed up with Denbighshire Leisure to run a sports equipment loan scheme. It also loans footballs via the Alive and Kicking scheme.

Expertise and capacity (QI 13-14 &16)

Although the total number of staff shows an increase compared to 2022-23, Denbighshire still does not meet the targets for either total staff or qualified staff per capita. It is at the median for the former and slightly above the median for the latter (Q113). Staffing levels are due to be reduced in June 2024, which will affect next year's return. This includes one manager post which had been temporarily covered

since the Principal Librarian left in November 2023. Denbighshire is in the bottom quartile of Welsh library authorities in terms of staff time allocated for training, which has been limited as a result of budget cuts. There are a small number of volunteers, although it is noted that budget cuts have made it a difficult time to recruit and train volunteers. Denbighshire is above the median for total expenditure per capita (Q114). Opening hours remain stable, although the service anticipates budget cuts will lead to a reduction in opening hours in future years. The service meets the target for opening hours per capita and is above the median for this measure (Q116).

Strategic context

As part of the return, authorities are asked to report on how the library service is contributing to wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals. Denbighshire identified a range of ways in which it contributed to these priorities. These themes include:

- **Promoting the Welsh language** e.g. having Welsh speaking staff available in all libraries, offering a wide range of print and digital resources in the Welsh language, and hosting reading groups and author events.
- **Celebrating diversity** e.g. developing and promoting the LGBTQ+ History Timeline for Denbighshire including hosting a special event in Rhyl Library to promote LGBT+ History Month.
- **Promoting better mental health** e.g. highlighting the Reading Well collections and involvement in the local Dementia Friendly Towns initiatives.
- **Addressing social isolation** e.g. offering a warm welcome and activities to help people who may be lonely.
- **Providing digital support** e.g. helping people apply for blue badges, making tablets and Chromebooks available for loan, providing free SIMs and partnering to make digital courses available in libraries.
- **Becoming ecologically positive** e.g. introducing an electric van for the Home Library Service.

Future direction

Reporting on the authority's future direction and plans for the library service over the following year, Denbighshire notes that major budget cuts have impeded the progress of some projects and that, following a public consultation, library opening hours will change from June 2024. The service plans to conduct a full user survey in the autumn, with the results informing a new Library Strategy which will be in place by spring 2025. The library is committed to supporting the themes in the Council's Corporate Plan through various activities including: helping people get online; hosting job clubs; providing meeting spaces; promoting Reading Well resources; supporting well-being initiatives; and providing a safe, welcoming space for individuals. The service is investigating ways to deliver a programme of activities and events to re-engage the public and are planning an application for a Transformation Grant to refurbish one of its libraries.

Conclusion

Attendance at formal training has increased, indicating that Denbighshire Libraries are working effectively with partners to offer relevant courses. The service also performs well in terms of active borrower numbers, issues, event attendance and Welsh language provision. However, virtual visits have declined. Denbighshire is due to carry out customer surveys in 2024, which will, hopefully, help in providing further information about customers' use of library services and their expectations. Whilst appreciating the challenges of budget cuts, the time allocated for staff training is a concern and it is hoped that this is something that will be addressed as part of the new library strategy.

Impact statement and additional strategic narrative

1. The impact which the library has had on an individual, or on a group of individuals, during the year. Describe the use made of the service, and the difference that use made to the individual or group concerned. Indicative length 300 words (permission obtained)

Denbighshire Libraries have a dedicated Bookstart Team who run regular bilingual rhyme times in libraries and also do outreach work to ante natal classes etc. The sessions, which also include Makaton signing, give every baby the opportunity to develop an early love of sharing books and reading, and to become members of their local library. There are many benefits of developing a reading habit early in young families. Sharing books with children helps to develop a child's social skills and confidence, it supports the development of speech and language, it helps children develop empathy and encourages them to recognise and talk about their feelings.

The Bookstart Rhyme Times also have an important role to play in the mental health of new parents, giving them the chance to socialise with other mums and dads, as demonstrated by this feedback.

Mum, J, has attended Bookstart Rhymetimes with all of her 4 children over the last 10 years.

'I started bringing C when she was 11 days old because I know how beneficial Bookstart is for babies - all of my children love reading and the library thanks to the encouragement you gave them. C loves singing, dancing and reading thanks to the Bookstart team. We practice our Bookstart songs at home and it's lovely to hear her singing in English and Welsh. Her favourite thing is to sit down with a book and enjoy reading a story thanks to her ffrindiau. Also, I would say that having had PND with 2 of the others I really value the routine and the social contact and getting out of the house to a friendly face. It's not all about the books!'

2. Please provide a narrative that demonstrates how the library service is contributing towards wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals (indicative length: 500 words).

Denbighshire Libraries have an important role to play in promoting the Welsh language, with Welsh speaking staff available in all libraries and a wide selection of Welsh language books, newspapers and magazines, available in print and also digitally. Some of our libraries hold Welsh language reading groups, such as Sgwrs a Sangria in Denbigh Library and Cylch Darllen Llyfrgell in Ruthin Library. Other libraries hold Paned a Sgwrs sessions, to help people practice their Welsh in an informal setting. We also held a number of Welsh language author events, including An Evening with Sian Rees at Denbigh Library. Bookstart Rhyme Times help to

introduce young families to Welsh from an early age, encouraging them to consider a Welsh medium education.

In our libraries we celebrate diversity. We were instrumental in developing and promoting the LGBT History Timeline for Denbighshire and in February we held a special event in Rhyl Library to celebrate LGBT+ History Month. There were displays and stalls from a variety of organisations, such as the Gay Outdoors Club, British Transport Police, Making Sense CIO and the Unique Transgender Network. Jenny-Anne Bishop OBE, from Unique Transgender Network gave an informative talk about the history of gender services in Wales and there was an entertaining performance about the Ladies of Llangollen through the eyes of their faithful friend and housekeeper, Mary Caryll.

In terms of promoting better mental health our libraries continue to highlight the Reading Well collections and we are also involved with the local Dementia Friendly Towns initiatives. We worked in partnership with local community interest organisation Making Sense on a project to create 5 new memory boxes, and run a series of Memory Cafes in our libraries. They also ran training sessions for care home staff, to show them how to use the memory boxes and make them aware of resources available in libraries.



During the winter months all our libraries offered a warm welcome, extending our usual offer to make free teas and coffees available to people visiting the library, and we introduced new social activities, such as Craft and Chat and Knit and Natter sessions, in a bid to help people who may be lonely or isolated.

Our libraries have continued to provide digital support to those who are excluded, whether this is supporting people to apply online for blue badges and bus passes, making tablets and chromebooks available for loan, and also giving out free sims to people who can't afford their monthly top up. We have also worked with Llandrillo College and Cwmpas to make digital courses available in our libraries.

Denbighshire County Council is committed to seeking to become a Net Carbon Zero and more Ecologically Positive Council by 2030, so in February 2023 the library service introduced a new electric powered van to support the delivery of the Home Library Service, and to reduce our carbon footprint. The Home Library Service delivers books and audiobooks to people who cannot make it to a library due to ill health, disability or caring responsibilities.



Rhyl Library have been developing a bee friendly garden and during the summer of 2023 they created a bug hotel, teaming up with Working Denbighshire, an employability service which supports Denbighshire residents who are at risk of poverty.



Future Direction

Please provide a short statement about the future direction and plans for the library service (indicative length 200 words).

This has been a difficult period for the library service, as major cuts to the budget were announced in October 2023 and this meant that a lot of projects were put on hold. We didn't run a library survey, but a consultation was held on the proposed changes to the library opening hours in October 2023 and over 4500 responses were received. Lots of positive comments regarding the library service were received, including the following examples—

'I use Prestatyn Library on most days for information, company, warmth, and it is a complete lifeline for me. Please don't reduce its opening hours'.

'Prestatyn Library is, and has been, a focal point in this town for many years. We find a helpful and empathetic staff and the services rendered are considerably more varied than just handling and lending books. I believe even more variety can be provided in the future. Just one recent example is the provision of warm surroundings and a hot drink during the power crisis.'

'The new hours will heavily impact the local community in a negative way. The libraries are a hub, they are an escape that people use to relax and find comfort. The staff are the most welcoming people. Denbighshire will become a colder, less welcoming place without all the libraries being able to help those in need. A tragic loss and appalling idea. This will affect the most vulnerable in our communities.'

'This was the first group I joined after Covid and isolation. My mental health has improved greatly since joining. The staff are all friendly and helpful. I am partially sighted and cannot use a computer so this my library is my lifeline.

As I come to the book club on Thursday that is the day I come in. I would be isolated and have no help.'

We plan to build on this and carry out a full user survey in the autumn, once our new opening hours, which were introduced on 1st June, have bedded in. We will then use the results of this survey to inform our new Library Strategy, which we aim to have in place by spring 2025.

The Library Service contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan, which runs until 2027, and this will be reflected in the Library Strategy. The library particularly supports the themes 'A Prosperous Denbighshire' and a 'A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire', with activities such as helping people get online, supporting Working Denbighshire to hold job clubs in our libraries, providing a safe, welcoming space for individuals and community organisations to meet up, and continuing to promote the Reading Well resources. Talking Points also continue to run weekly in our libraries, a collaboration with the Red Cross, Denbighshire County Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, which provides an opportunity for people to find health and support in their local area.

We will investigate ways we can continue to deliver a programme of activities and events to encourage children and adults to re-engage with their local library, looking to work more with partners as we operate on reduced staffing and opening hours.

We are also planning to apply for a Transformation Grant to refurbish one of our libraries, to make better use of the space and make it more relevant to the local community.

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Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	30 January 2025
Head of Service	Catrin Roberts, Head of Corporate Support Service: People
Report author	Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Title	Arrangements for Reviewing the roll-out of the new Waste & Recycling Service

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. To outline the proposed arrangements for undertaking the review into the roll-out of the new Waste and Recycling Service.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To seek Performance Scrutiny Committee to formally establish a mechanism for undertaking a review into the planning, implementation and roll-out of the new Waste & Recycling Service and to receive the findings of the review in due course.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee:

- 3.1. considers the contents of the report and the draft terms of reference for undertaking the review (Appendix 1).
- 3.2. confirms the proposed arrangements for undertaking the review, as detailed in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of the report; and
- 3.3. agrees to receive the findings and conclusions of the review in due course.

4. Report details

- 4.1. On 3rd June 2024, the Council commenced the roll-out its new Waste and Recycling Service. This new system for collecting and dealing with domestic waste was introduced across the county simultaneously and as a result it constituted the biggest service change implemented by the Council since its establishment in 1996.
- 4.2. Within the first few weeks it became apparent that a large number of domestic waste collections were being missed or delayed on a regular basis, causing frustration and anger amongst residents. This resulted in elected members and the Council's call centre being inundated with queries and complaints. For these reasons, the Leader of the Council along with the Lead Member for Environment & Transport submitted a Scrutiny request seeking the Council's scrutiny function to examine in detail the problems created by the implementation of the new service, their causes, and the effectiveness of the response to mitigate the impact on residents. Several residents also contacted the Council seeking it to examine the new system's introduction and to examine matters relating to the Service's user-friendliness for residents with disabilities and/or protected characteristics.
- 4.3. The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) initially considered the scrutiny requests at its July 2024 meeting and decided that the matter did merit detailed examination. It was agreed that the Group would at its September meeting draw together a draft terms of reference for the review. In the meantime, whilst SCVCG members discussed with their respective political groups which issues or aspects of the roll-out they wished to see included in the review's terms of reference, officers were instructed to initiate enquires on the types of external support that may be available to support an in-depth review along with any associated costs.
- 4.4. At its September 2024 meeting the SCVCG considered two draft terms of reference documents. One compiled by Councillor Karen Edwards on behalf of the Independent Group, the other by officers produced solely as a basis for discussion to assist members in drawing up a terms of reference. Copies of representations made by the Plaid Cymru Group (the only Group not represented on the SCVCG) on what aspects they thought merited inclusion in the review were also shared with the SCVCG.

Following consideration of all documentation the Group instructed officers to collaborate with Councillor Karen Edwards to produce an amalgamated version of both terms of reference submitted, and to include in it other significant points raised during the discussion at that meeting. Upon completion this revised terms of reference document was to be circulated to all county councillors and members of the Council's Governance & Audit Committee (GAC) in advance of holding an all-member Council workshop to discuss arrangements for undertaking the review.

4.5. The all-member Council Workshop was held on 19 November, during which the draft terms of reference and potential arrangements for conducting the 'Review' were discussed. At the conclusion of that discussion a few minor additions, relating to risk management, well-being and equality impact assessments, were added to the draft terms of reference document. Following the all-member Council workshop, the SCVCG at its November meeting considered the feedback received during the Workshop along with the revised terms of reference document incorporating the amendments suggested at the Workshop. At the conclusion of its discussions the Group agreed to recommend the following approach for undertaking the review; that:

- a Task and Finish (T&F) Group be established for the purpose of undertaking the review.
- the T&F Group comprise of 12 members - with the aim of ensuring fair geographical and political representation on the T&F Group all Member Area Groups (MAGs) should be asked to appoint two non-current or former administration Cabinet members to serve on the Group (the legislation governing Scrutiny activities prohibits current Cabinet members from serving on any scrutiny inquiries or discussions. However, as this review will examine decisions relating to the roll-out of the new service which span the term of the current and previous Council administrations it is likely to look at decisions taken by both administrations, with both current and previous Cabinet members likely to be called to give evidence as part of the review. Therefore, if any member of the T&F Group was a member of the previous Cabinet they would have a prejudicial interest in any decisions taken by that Cabinet and would not be able to examine those decisions as part of the

review, hence why it is recommended that members of the former administration's Cabinet are not appointed to serve on this T&F Group).

- the T&F Group will appoint its own chair from amongst its membership. It will also agree its own workstreams, schedule of meetings, as well as whether it requires to seek and procure specialist independent advice or support.
- The T&F Group will be expected to conduct and conclude its review within a period of 12 months. If, as the review progresses, it becomes apparent that more time will be required in order to conduct a thorough review the T&F Group can request an extension to its timeline via a progress report to either the SCVCG or the Scrutiny Committee that established it.

4.6. To facilitate the formal establishment of a T&F Group to undertake the review, receive its findings, and communicate its conclusions to the wider Council membership and residents in due course, a Scrutiny Committee requires to be appointed as a mechanism for overseeing the process. The SCVCG recommended that Performance Scrutiny Committee be appointed as the designated committee for this purpose. The Committee is not expected to undertake the review, only to initiate its commencement and receive its report(s). The Committee is therefore asked to agree to the request and act as the formal reporting mechanism for the review.

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

5.1. An in-depth review of all phases associated with the roll-out of the new service will help identify any missed opportunities or shortfalls with the project planning, management and/or implementation stages. This will help inform future business or service transformation projects with a view to ensuring that Denbighshire is regarded as a well-run, high performing Council.

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

6.1. Scrutiny team staffing costs associated with the review will, where possible be contained within the Democratic Services budget. For additional costs, a commitment has been made that financial resources can be provided to procure any specialist

advice or support required by the T&F Group, subject to an evidence-based analysis of the anticipated value for money of procuring support.

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

- 7.1. No Well-being Impact Assessment (WBIA) is required for the purpose of this decision. As part of its review the T&F Group will examine the WBIA's compiled and revised during the planning, implementation, and roll-out stages for the new Service.

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

- 8.1. The SCVCG have been heavily involved with the drawing up of the proposed terms of reference, whilst all county councillors and members of the GAC had an opportunity to contribute to the terms of reference and proposed arrangements for conducting the review during the all-member Council Workshop in November 2024.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 Given the significance of this strategic change project, the number of residents that have been affected, county wide, it is important that the organisation learns from this experience. The proposals set out within the report to use existing resource as much as possible, whilst considering the costs and benefits of specialist advice to support the task and finish group is appropriate and proportionate.

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

- 10.1. The roll-out of this new Service, as it is a service used by all households in the county, represented the biggest service-delivery change executed by the Council to date. It is therefore imperative that any gaps in project planning, management, and/or delivery are identified, and lessons learnt with a view to mitigating any risks that may arise when planning future business/service transformation projects. This will help secure the delivery of quality services to residents whilst also safeguarding the Council's reputation.

11. Power to make the decision

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

Terms of Reference

Scrutiny Review of the Implementation of the new Waste and Recycling Scheme in Denbighshire

1. Introduction

The purpose of this review is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the new Waste and Recycling scheme in Denbighshire. This review will identify the key issues that affected the efficient and effective implementation. The review will seek to identify lessons that can be learned, in order to provide actionable recommendations to inform future transformational projects.

2. Objectives

Assess the planning and preparatory stages: Evaluate the initial planning & project management, stakeholder engagement, and readiness assessments.

Review the implementation process: Analyse the execution of any pilot studies, the roll-out, including logistics, communication, and resource allocation.

Identify key impediments: Determine the specific factors that hindered efficient and effective implementation.

Provide recommendations: Offer strategic and operational recommendations to inform the management of future transformational projects.

3. Scope of Work

The review will cover the following areas:

a) Assess Planning and Preparatory Stages

The effectiveness of the Council's project management arrangements and systems to assess risk management at project, Service, and Corporate levels.

Review the decisions made at key milestones of the planning and preparatory stages for the new system.

Review the effectiveness of the Council's governance of the project – to include both formal and informal scrutiny.

Assess the involvement of key stakeholders (e.g., local government, Welsh Government, residents and trade unions) in the planning phase.

Review the effectiveness of any feasibility studies or planning assumptions relied upon in the implementation, and whether due regard was given throughout the

service's development and rollout stages to equalities matters and the potential impact of the new service's introduction on residents with protected characteristics.

Review the effectiveness of external advice and professional consultancy support provided.

Evaluate the allocation and readiness of resources (financial, human, vehicles and general infrastructure).

Review the accuracy and sufficiency of data relied upon to inform decisions relating to the planning of the new service's introduction e.g. data regarding the green bin subscriptions, assisted collections, Trade waste and collections from unadopted roads.

b) Implementation and Delivery Processes

Review the extent to which the project management process provided final assurance of readiness prior to implementation and a go-live decision.

Review the logistics of bin distribution, collection schedules, and routing efficiency.

Review the effectiveness of communication strategies employed to inform and educate the public.

Assess the suitability of training provided to staff, at all levels, involved in the implementation of the new system.

c). Identification of Key Impediments

Technical Issues: Identify any technical issues encountered (e.g., container quality, vehicle suitability, depot location, staffing levels, how prepared staff were for the different way of working, how staff were allocated to rounds, capability of IT systems and accuracy of data).

Communication: Identify any technical issues encountered in the function of call centre and delays to residents being able to make contact via phone or website. Review the process by which communication from the call centre was passed onto the Service and identify any technical issues encountered in communicating with waste collection crews during their rounds.

Review the challenges encountered in adherence to relevant waste management regulations and standards.

d). Performance Metrics

Efficiency: Measure the efficiency of the roll-out process (time taken, cost efficiency).

Assess the extent of how the collection performance was monitored/managed and the effectiveness of mitigation measures put in place.

Assess the compounded impact of missed collections on performance and the extent the management of residents' expectations were managed.

Assess the impact the volume of waste-related calls to the call centre had with respect to the number of calls/enquiries to other Council services which were delayed or could not be processed.

Assess the difficulties associated with the implementation of the scheme on staff at all levels and elected members, and its impact on corporate confidence in future projects.

Review the financial and resource impact of the additional resources deployed to mitigate missed collections on the Council's finances and day to day business.

4. Methodology

An elected member Task and Finish Group, geographically representative of scrutiny members from all areas of the county (e.g. 2 members from each Member Area Group (MAG)) to identify relevant workstreams, gather, review and analyse evidence from various sources, including:

- Document analysis / review of data.
- To receive evidence (written and verbal) from key stakeholders, officers and staff members, residents, external advisors and consultants, including WRAP.

What information do we currently have?

- Planning, management and implementation data
- Project management information
- Complaints/Service enquiries data
- Collection routes data and maps – comparative data (including details of the time taken to undertake each waste collection round under the previous waste collection system and the new)
- Tachograph/Vehicle Data on times taken to complete each round pre and post change.

What information are we likely to need?

- Details of the route maps used for planning the roll-out and whether they were the latest information available (e.g. were new developments added to the maps during the planning stages for the roll-out in order to ensure the latest route data was available on go-live date)
- An analysis of whether the change of location of Waste Transfer Station impacted on the time taken to undertake each round etc (and if this had been factored into the original calculations)
- any advice sought and received from other local authorities, WLGA, WG, WRAP etc, in relation to planning and managing the roll-out of the new waste model, and whether it was used.

- details of any pilot projects undertaken ahead of the new service's implementation on collection times and the lessons learnt from those exercises.
- details of whether any assessments had been undertaken on the impact of the introduction of additional service collections (AHP, small electrical equipment, batteries) on collection times.

5. How to achieve this/Reporting & Governance of the Review

- Preliminary Report – to Performance Scrutiny Committee to outline establishment of T&F Group & its remit.
- T&FG to receive a report outlining the detailed methodology, workstreams and proposed timeline for review.
- Evidence gathering public meeting to inform future deliberations.
- T&FG to identify major and key issues upon which they commission external advice.
- Draft report to Performance Scrutiny Committee providing a comprehensive analysis of the roll-out process, identifying key impediments and preliminary recommendations for discussion, review and agreement prior to circulation to key stakeholders for comments and feedback.
- Final Report: Incorporate feedback from stakeholders on the draft report and finalise the analysis and recommendations, prior to submission to Performance Scrutiny Committee for final approval prior to the report being submitted to Full Council for endorsement of the recommendations.

6. Timeline

To be determined by the T&F Group

7. Budget

Once a detailed methodology and work plan has been agreed by the T&F Group the extent of the budget requirement for commissioning of external independent advice can be submitted for the appropriate authorisation / procurement.

9. Conclusion

The review aims to provide a thorough and objective review and analysis of the roll-out of the new waste model with a view that the final recommendations will help inform the planning work for future transformational projects.

10. Powers to undertake the review

- Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000
- Section 7 of the Council's Constitution

Notes:

1. The T&F Group will expect all officers and elected members to cooperate and respond to requests relating to the Review in a timely manner.
2. External bodies may be invited to participate in the Review, Scrutiny does not have the authority to compel them to engage.
3. All who participate with the review will be treated with respect and dignity.

DRAFT

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Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	30 January 2025
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 Performance 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.

Council processes and procedures for applying for high value grant funding

- 4.8 The above report was scheduled for presentation to the Committee at its March 2025 meeting. In response to a request from officers the Chair has permitted the deferral of its presentation to May's meeting (see Appendix 1 attached).

The deferral will facilitate the completion of a mapping, evaluation, and lessons learnt exercise aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the methods used by the Council to manage post-Brexit funding. By May, it is also anticipated that a clearer picture will emerge on how the funding landscape is evolving for the future.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.9 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

- 4.10 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 at its November meeting requested that this Committee consider the 'Arrangements for undertaking the Scrutiny Review of the Roll-out of the New Waste & Recycling Service'. This report will be discussed at the current meeting.
- 5.2 The Group's next scheduled meeting is on 20 January 2025. Any issues arising from that meeting that will have implications on this Committee's work programme will be reported verbally to members at the meeting on 30 January.

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: Any items entered in italics have not been approved for inclusion at the meeting shown 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/ Updated by
13 March	Cllr. Emrys Wynne	1. Internet and Telephony Connectivity in Denbighshire Invitation to be extended to a representative from Openreach	To consider the progress made to date, and future plans for: (i) increasing and improving/upgrading internet connectivity for all areas of the county (including the latest position in relation to Fibre Community Partnerships and the UK Government's Project Gigabit roll out along with any other potential support/voucher packages that may be available for businesses and residents to access); and (ii) the provision of support to communities and residents by the Council to help them access fibre/broadband and other digital communication channels with a view to making sure that vulnerable residents and rural communities aren't adversely disadvantaged	Support accessibility for all businesses and residents in the county to fibre broadband/telephony speeds that meet their individual needs, that will in turn support the delivery of the Council's corporate themes of 'a prosperous' county that is 'fairer, safe and more equal' as well as a learning and growing county.	Liz Grieve/ /Cath Taylor/Fran Williams/ Philip Burrows	April 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Julie Matthews	2. Recruitment, Retention & Workforce Planning	To provide details of: (i) the work underway to recruit, develop, support and retain staff (ii) interventions put in place to support and strengthen recruitment, retention &	Identification of potential future workforce pressure areas and the formulation of recommendations with a view to alleviating those pressures and secure the Council's ability to	Gary Williams/ Catrin Roberts/Louise Dougal	<i>July 2023 (rescheduled May, June & November 2024) (RhE)</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
			workforce planning across the Council; and (iii) identification of any hard to recruit services/positions across the authority and interim measures taken to alleviate the pressures caused within those services (Heads of Service for those services to be invited to attend to discuss the impact of staffing pressures on operational service delivery)	sustainably deliver its services in future		
	Leader	3. Economic & Business Development Strategy	To: (i) consult with the Committee on the draft new Denbighshire Economic & Community Ambition Strategy for 2024 onwards; (ii) detail how the current and proposed new Strategy dovetail with the work of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Welsh & UK Governments and other economic development partners to support the delivery of a thriving economy in Denbighshire; and (iii) outline the work being undertaken to mitigate against the potential outcomes identified in Risk 36 of the Council's Corporate Risk Register	Formulation of recommendations in relation to the new Strategy that will help secure the delivery, in partnership with all stakeholders, of a more prosperous Denbighshire that provides employment and business opportunities for residents to improve the quality of lives and support thriving, cohesive communities	Emlyn Jones/ Gareth Roberts/ James Evans	By SCVCG November 2022 (rescheduled November 2023, Jan, June & December 2024) (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
1 May	Cllr. Julie Matthews	1. Corporate Risk Register: February 2025 Review	To seek the Committee to review the risks facing the Council and the Council's risk appetite statement.	Determination of whether the Committee is satisfied with risk management within the Council and is assured that all identified risks are appropriately managed.	<i>Helen Vaughan Evans/ Heidi Barton-Price</i>	<i>May 2024 (RhE)</i>
	Leader & Cllr. Julie Matthews	2. Council processes and procedures for applying for high value grant funding (in the post-Brexit era)	To examine current Council processes and procedures for applying for high value grant funding and maximising the benefits of all funding opportunities on offer (incl. any lessons learnt from recent Levelling Up & Shared Prosperity Fund applications with a view to improving our processes for any future funding that becomes available)	Establishment of a simple, effective and easily adaptable funding application process which can be initiated immediately funding streams are announced to enable well-evidenced applications to be submitted within tight timescales, with a view to realising maximum benefit and impact for residents from each application submitted, and wherever possible mitigate the effects of budget pressures	Tony Ward/Gary Williams/ Emlyn Jones/Helen Vaughan-Evans (with input from Liz Grieve on learning from SPF funding)	By SCVCG November 2023 (RhE) (rescheduled January 2025 – RhE)
12 June	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1 Council Performance Self-Assessment 2024 to 2025 (year-end)	To present an update on the Council's performance against its functions, including Corporate Plan and Strategic Equality objectives	Identification of areas for improvement and potential future scrutiny	Helen Vaughan-Evans/Emma Horan	Rescheduled 03/10/24 (KE)
	Cllr. Emrys Wynne	2. <i>Library Service/One Stop Shop Provision (TBC)</i>	<i>To consider: (i) the initial findings of the Working Group established to measure the impact of the reduction in Library/OSS opening hours on residents, communities, and the authority; and</i>	<i>Formulation of recommendations on the best solutions for delivering a comprehensive citizen focussed service within the resources available for the future which supports the</i>	<i>Liz Grieve/Debbie Owen</i>	<i>January 2024 (reschedule June & November 2024) (RhE)</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
				(ii) <i>alternative proposals or solutions under consideration for enhancing and/or expanding service delivery going forward</i>	<i>delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan</i>		
17 July	Cllrs. Diane King & Elen Heaton	1.	Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	To scrutinise the content of the draft annual report to ensure it provides a fair and clear evaluation of performance and clearly articulates future plans	Identification of any specific performance issues which require further scrutiny by the committee in future	Nicola Stubbins/ Ann Lloyd/Rhiain Morelle/David Soley	May 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Elen Heaton	2	Cefndy Performance Report 2024/25	To consider Cefndy's annual performance report for the 2024/25 financial year, including the delivery of its financial, business and social well-being objectives	To ensure the future financial and business sustainability of Cefndy in order that it effectively supports the delivery of the Council's corporate themes of learning and growing; healthier and happier, caring; and prosperous Denbighshire	Ann Lloyd/Nick Bowles	July 2024 (RhE)
18 Sept	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1.	Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan Update	To examine the Council's progress in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan.	Early identification of any slippages in delivering the Strategy and/or pressures experienced with the Plan gives Scrutiny an opportunity to make suggestions or recommendations to Cabinet with a view to strengthening the Council's financial resilience	Liz Thomas	By SCVCG May 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Barry Mellor	2.	Climate & Nature Strategy	To monitor the progress made with the Strategy's delivery	An assessment of whether the Council will realise its	Helen Vaughan-	June 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
				ambition of becoming a Net Carbon Zero authority by 2030, identification of any slippages with the Strategy's delivery and the formulation of recommendations in order to address performance with a view to delivering the Strategy on time.	Evans/Jane Hodgson	
	Cllr. Diane King	3. Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation (School staff to be invited to attend) [Education]	To analyse the Local Education Authority and the county's schools progress in fully complying with the statutory requirements placed upon them under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.	Assurances that the Authority and its schools are complying with all of Act's duties ensuring that every pupil and student in the County is provided with the required support and opportunities to realise their full potential whilst ensuring that school-based staff are adequately supported and equipped to deliver the required support.	Geraint Davies/Ruth Thackray/ Joseph Earl	September 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Diane King	4. Promoting School Attendance and Engagement in Education (School staff to be invited to attend) [Education]	To detail the progress made in improving school attendance rates and educational engagement across the county's schools during the 2024/25 academic year following the introduction of the new template attendance policy and in line with WG Guidance (report to include illustrative data)	Assurances that all possible steps are being taken to monitor pupils' engagement with education, including the provision of appropriate encouragement and support for vulnerable and hard to reach pupils to re-engage with their education and to help them understand the long-term implications of not engaging. All of which should support the county's pupils to reach their full	Geraint Davies/Wayne Wheatley	September 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
				potential and the Council to deliver its corporate priority relating to a learning and growing Denbighshire		
6 November	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1. Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan Update	To examine the Council's progress in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan.	Early identification of any slippages in delivering the Strategy and/or pressures experienced with the Plan gives Scrutiny an opportunity to make suggestions or recommendations to Cabinet with a view to strengthening the Council's financial resilience	Liz Thomas	By SCVCG May 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Julie Matthews	2. Corporate Risk Register: September 2025 Review	To seek the Committee to review the risks facing the Council and the Council's risk appetite statement.	Determination of whether the Committee is satisfied with risk management within the Council and is assured that all identified risks are appropriately managed.	<i>Helen Vaughan-Evans/ /Heidi Barton-Price</i>	<i>May 2024 (RhE)</i>
2026						
January 2026	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1. Council Performance Self-Assessment Update (Q1 & Q2))	To present an update on the Council's performance against its functions, including Corporate Plan and Strategic Equality objectives	Identification of areas for improvement and potential future scrutiny	<i>Helen Vaughan-Evans/Emma Horan</i>	May 2024, rescheduled 07/10/2024 (RhE)
Sept 2026	Cllr. Diane King	1. Curriculum for Wales [Education] (School staff to be invited to attend)	To detail the progress made in relation to implementing and embedding the new Curriculum for Wales and provide an evaluation of the implementation process across all key stages, the	Assurances that all educational establishments and staff are fully equipped and trained to deliver the new curriculum, identification of any gaps or risks	Geraint Davies/James Brown/Ruth Thackray	September 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
			Curriculum’s impact on staff recruitment and retention, along with feedback from headteachers, teachers and school-based staff on their experiences of the implementation process and the advantages and/or disadvantages of the new Curriculum for learners.	associated with the provision and solutions to address them, with a view to ensuring that children and young people in Denbighshire realise their full potential in line with the Council’s Corporate Plan		

Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
<p><i>Learner Travel Measure (Wales)</i></p> <p>[Education]</p> <p><i>TBC – once outcome of WG Review available (possibly not until after Senedd elections in 2026)</i></p>	<p><i>To outline the conclusions of the recent Welsh Government consultation on the Measure and its implications for Denbighshire schools and pupils</i></p>	<p><i>Identification of potential changes to the Council’s learner travel policy and any associated costs and budget implications</i></p>	<p><i>Geraint Davies/Ian Land</i></p>	<p><i>January 2021 (rescheduled Sept 2022 & Jan & May 2023) (RhE)</i></p>
<p>Denbigh Health and Social Care and the Rebalancing of Social Care Agenda (now widened was Dolwen Residential Care Home (now to be considered as part of the future vision for health and social care services in the Denbigh area)</p> <p><i>Sometime during 2024/25 (tbc)</i></p>	<p>To review the future provision of services at Dolwen to meet the growing demand and complexity of need, whilst supporting people to live in a home that meets their needs and allows them to live an independent and resilient life.</p>	<p><i>Pre-decision scrutiny of the task and finish group’s findings and the formulation of recommendations for presentation to Cabinet with respect of the future provision of services at Dolwen with a view to ensuring that everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs and are able to live independent and resilient lives</i></p>	<p><i>Task and Finish Group/Ann Lloyd/Katie Newe</i></p>	<p><i>July 2018 (delayed due to COVID-19) (RhE)</i></p>

Information/Consultation Reports

Date	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
January 2025	Car Parking Fees	To provide information on the progress to date in achieving the estimated £700K increase from car parking fees	Mike Jones/Liz Thomas	July 2024 (RhE)
January/July	Corporate Risk Register Review – Risk Review Summary	To share with the Committee a summary of the conclusions of the 'light-touch' review of the Register	Helen Vaughan-Evans/Heidi Barton-Price	April 2024 (RhE)
Feb/May/Sept/November each year [Information]	Quarterly 'Your Voice' complaints performance to include social services complaints	<p>To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints and identify areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. The report to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe; (ii) how services encourage feedback and use it to redesign or change the way they deliver services; and (iii) details of complaints which have been upheld or partially upheld and the lessons learnt from them. <p>Report to include example(s) of complaints and compliment(s) received.</p> <p>Consideration of the information provided will assist the Committee to determine whether any issues merit detailed scrutiny</p>	Kevin Roberts/Ann Lloyd	September 2023 (RhE)
March 2025 [Education]	Elective Home Education	To provide data on the number of home educated pupils in Denbighshire along with information on current trends with respect of the number of families choosing to educate	Geraint Davies/Ruth Thackray/Jayne Williams	March 2024 (RhE)

		<i>their children at home and the measures in place to support those families and those wishing to return to mainstream education.</i>		
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Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
13 March	27 February	1 May	15 April (due to Easter B/Hs)	12 June	29 May

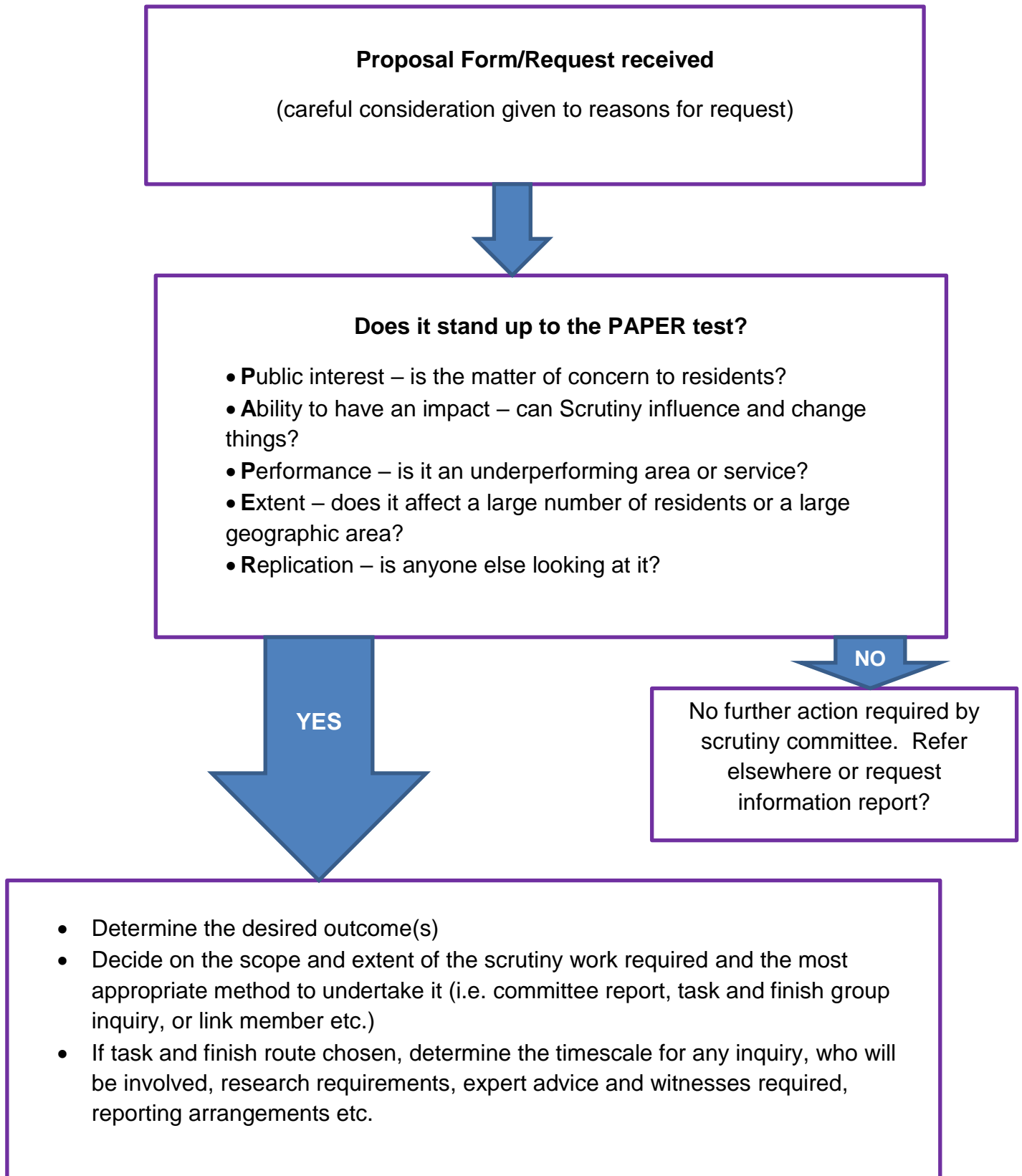
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Updated 15/01/2025 RhE

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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 themes? (if 'yes' please state which theme(s))	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
18 Feb	1	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, 17.12.24 KEJ
	2	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 rescheduled 12.12.24 from Jan to Feb
	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 DCC to adopt the interim position before it is sent to NRW.	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
	5	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, 22.10.24, 11.12.24 KEJ
	6	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 rescheduled 11.12.14 from Jan to Feb
	7	HR Policies: Sexual harassment Policy (new) , Foster Friendly Policy (new) , Redeployment Policy (revised)	To obtain Cabinet approval to adopt the 3 policies	Yes	Cllr Julie Matthews Lead Officer – Catrin Roberts / Report Author – Louise Dougal / Andrea Malam	18.12.24 KEJ
	8	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
	9	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
	10	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
25 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	End of School Improvement Agreement (GwE)	To approve the termination of the agreement to work in partnership with other North Wales local authorities in the context of the regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)	Yes	Cllr Diane King Lead Officer/Report Author – Geraint Davies	09.01.25 KEJ
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
29 April	1	Draft Local Toilet Strategy and Savings Proposal	To approve the Local Toilet Strategy	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer/Report Author – Paul Jackson / Hayley Jones / Kimberley Mason	14.10.24 KEJ
	2	Denbighshire's Economic Strategy	Outline of Denbighshire's new Economic Strategy & Action Plan		Cllr Jason McLellan	27.09.24 KEJ rescheduled

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
			and request for Cabinet to approve the final documents		Lead Officer/Report Author – Emlyn Jones / James Evans	13.12.24 from Feb to April
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
27 May	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
24 June	1	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
	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

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
29 July	1	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 Gray	04.12.24 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

FUTURE ITEMS 2025

18 Nov	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 Vaughan-Evans / Emma Horan	03.10.24 KEJ
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Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>18 February</i>	<i>4 February</i>	<i>25 March</i>	<i>11 March</i>	<i>29 April</i>	<i>11 April</i>

Updated 09/01/2025 – KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
28 November 2024	5. Corporate Risk Register	<p><u>Resolved:</u> <i>subject to the above observations and the provision of the requested information –</i></p> <p><i>(i) having considered and discussed the suggested amendments to the Corporate Risk Register as at September 2024, to confirm the amendments made including the inclusion of new risk number 53 as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report;</i></p> <p><i>(ii) having regard to the status and risk appetite classifications and descriptions detailed in Appendix 3, along with the answers provided to the questions raised during the meeting, to confirm the appropriateness of the risk owners identified and the effectiveness of the risk controls put in place; and</i></p> <p><i>(iii) acknowledging the present financial environment within which public services operated and having taken into account the Budget and Transformation Board (BAT) and the Corporate Executive Team's (CET) rationale with respect of amending the Authority's risk appetite in relation to financial projects, to support the recommendation to amend the risk appetite categorisation for financial projects from 'cautious' to 'open'.</i></p>	Lead Member and officers informed of the Committee's recommendations.

	<p>6. Corporate Plan</p>	<p><u>Resolved:</u> <i>subject to the above observations, the provision of the additional information requested, and further work being undertaken on making the Performance Update Report more navigable and reader-friendly, to acknowledge the Council's progress to date in delivering its Corporate Plan 2022-27 as detailed in the Corporate Plan Performance Update: April to September 2024 report (Appendix 1).</i></p>	<p>Lead Member and officers advised of the Committee's recommendations.</p>
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