Delivering good governance and continuous improvement

Areas of change & development from 2013/14 to 2014/15

Colour coding	Arrangements not in place	Arrangements being implemented	Arrangements in place
Direction of travel	↓ Position deteriorating	↑ Position improving	→ Position unchanged

Principle 1 Focusing on our purpose and on the outcomes for citizens and service users

Governance Area	Changes from last year	Direction of Travel
Communicating our Corporate Plan	We sought residents' views on the cuts that we are considering, to engage them more on how these cuts will impact on them and their communities and what can be done to lessen the impact	↑
Third parties and arms-length organisations	We have started to develop a framework to cover services provided by Council-funded service providers but this has been delayed. The framework will help to ensure that they have robust governance arrangements, and we will implement scrutiny arrangements to monitor their financial and operational performance.	↑
	We have reviewed the way we deliver services through our Town and Area Plans to improve clarity around the overarching policy intentions of the Plans and to improve the consistency in how they are developed and delivered. Improvements will also ensure that Plans are more strategic, provide clearer information on anticipated benefits and how impacts will be measured.	↑
Partnership governance toolkit	Although we have a comprehensive partnership governance toolkit, we are aware that not all partnerships use it. The above piece of work on Council-funded service providers will be extended to include partnership work.	↑
Service challenge process	This process has been highlighted as good practice through the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) recent annual report. *"Within the council there is keen interest and support from elected members. They play a key role in the exemplary 'service challenge' meetings where they question lead officers about the performance and impact of the council's services."*	↑
Strategic procurement	During 2014/15, Internal Audit has continued to monitor progress on its 2013/14 report on Construction Procurement and report it to Corporate Governance Committee. These reviews show that progress with improvement has been slow and several deadlines missed.	→
Project management framework	The programme and project management methodologies, and the Verto system are working well across the Council, with some real deliverables now being realised.	↑
Performance management framework	The Verto system has been developed and extended to incorporate the Council's performance management processes. We are able to integrate our service business plans with programme and project activities, thus being able to report using key dependencies, such as progress against outcomes or priorities.	↑

Principle 2   Performing effectively in clearly defined functions & roles

Governance Area	Changes from last year	Direction of Travel
Constitution – roles & responsibilities	To be updated following the Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services' progress report to Corporate Governance Committee on 25 March 2015.	
Partnership 'board' roles	Although we have a comprehensive partnership governance toolkit, it does not provide clear guidance on the roles of partnership board members. The above piece of work on Council-funded service providers will be extended to include partnership work.	↑

Principle 3   Promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating good governance through our behaviour

Governance Area	Changes from last year	Direction of Travel
Equalities	We have developed and produced a new e-learning module, which is in the process of being implemented across key customer-facing services.	↑
	Include outcome of IA survey on equalities awareness, whether improved or not	
Codes of Conduct	Code of Conduct refresher training was provided to elected members on 3 February 2015. The awareness raising strategy for employees has not yet been progressed.	↑
Anti-fraud & corruption	The anti-fraud & corruption draft strategy was considered by Corporate Governance Committee on 5 November 2014 but is still to be finalised.	↑
Whistleblowing procedures	Whistleblowing procedures have been revised but the new model constitution includes a new whistleblowing policy. The draft, which had previously been consulted upon with unions, need to be checked against this and redrafted where necessary for further consultation.	↑

Principle 4   Taking informed and transparent decisions and managing risk

Governance Area	Changes from last year	Direction of Travel
Research & intelligence	The Research and Intelligence Team and the Corporate Programme Office have been combined following a service restructure. This new team, in addition to business as usual activities, will focus on key change activities and will begin to develop a strategic platform for management information and reporting, enhancing decision making processes.	↑
Internal audit service	During the year, the Head of Internal Audit carried out the required self-assessment review to ensure that the service complies with the new Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. The resulting improvement plan will be reported to Corporate Governance Committee as part of the Annual Internal Audit Report 2014/15 and monitored by the Committee.	↑
Information management	A Corporate Information Team was formed during 2013 to address previously identified weaknesses. Since this time, significant improvements have been made, which has recently resulted in the Internal Audit opinion being reduced from amber (major) to yellow (moderate). However, we recognise that we still have a lot of work to do but have identified this in our Information Management Strategy.	↑

Principle 5   Developing our capacity and capability to be effective

Governance Area	Changes from last year	Direction of Travel
Member performance	Scrutiny Committees produce annual reports on their work to County Council but the Corporate Governance Committee's self-assessment previously highlighted that it had not formed part of this performance monitoring arrangement in recent years. During the year, the Committee's chair produced a report that will be presented to Council in line with the Scrutiny annual reports.	↑
Staff performance appraisals	We improved performance in 2013/14, with 89% of eligible employees receiving an annual appraisal. To date for 2014/15, 87% have been completed. (this will be updated before the final version)	↓
Modernisation agenda	The Modernisation Board has initiated several projects that create service delivery efficiencies and we have developed a Flexible Working Policy Statement and guidance that sets out how we expect employees to work in the future and also what support we can provide. Improvements include: • rolled out new IT equipment; • upgraded the Local Area Network and Wi-fi to support flexible working; • continued to review our office accommodation requirements; • agreed a hot-desk policy; • continued to roll out EDRMS to more services; • implemented Central Invoice Registration, which will reduce the number of invoices not paid on time and avoid late payment fines; and • developed a Customer Service Strategy to show how we will deliver excellent customer service.	↑

Principle 5 — Developing our capacity and capability to be effective

Governance Area	Changes from last year	Direction of Travel
Staff development	'Yr Hwb' cohort for 2014 was involved in a range of key projects, including: • Electronic Mailroom Business Case development; • Financial Inclusion Project E-Learning module; • Modernisation Programme stakeholder and communication events; and • work on Economic and Community Ambition Programme stakeholder events.	↑
Training benefits	More of our projects are being delivered from within services, benefitting as a result of the extensive project management training that has been undertaken over the past two years. This has resulted in a reduction of our Corporate Project Management resource, contributing to our resilience to change and our efficiencies.	↑

Principle 6 — Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

Governance Area	Changes from last year	Direction of Travel
Community engagement	We have improved our community engagement during the year and are committed to undertaking further initiatives in 2015. • An extensive engagement and consultation debate took place in 2014 to discuss the Council's budget proposals in light of the significant savings the Council was expecting to make. • In delivering Denbighshire's Single Integrated Plan (Supporting Independence & Resilience: Denbighshire's Wellbeing Plan 2014-2018) we extensively engaged with the community to establish our vision and priority areas.	↑
Business engagement	We have completed and initiated several actions that have either changed or will change our engagement with businesses. • Businesses endorsed the final Economic and Community Ambition Strategy. • We received positive feedback from the business community to a county wide 'Open for Business' event at the Royal International Pavilion in Llangollen. • Our Contract Procedure Rules now include community benefit clauses that promote the use of local business/labour/goods and supplies in all contracts. • Denbighshire's first Annual Business Survey was run during 2014, with 502 businesses taking part through a mixture of face to face, online and telephone engagement.	↑
	The Leader and Corporate Director for Economic and Community Ambition's plan to undertake annual visits to Business Groups and to the Top 10 businesses in the county have not progressed yet as we have given priority to supporting the Freedoms and Flexibilities budget efficiency process and reviewing the Economic & Business Development team.	→