



Annual Performance Review 2014-15

Corporate Plan / Project Register / Outcome
Agreement / Statutory Performance Framework

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FOREWORD

Each year we publish a report to review our performance and to evaluate how successful we have been in delivering real benefits for our communities. This report is a review of our performance during the 2014/15 financial year.

2014/15 represented the third year of the council's Corporate Plan for 2012-17. It remains the most ambitious plan the council has ever had and there is continued commitment to deliver on the priorities it sets out, despite continuing harsh financial settlements from the Welsh Government. We know that some of our priorities will take several years to deliver, and we realise that the full benefits of our Corporate Plan will be realised beyond 2017.

The council has continued to make progress with its priorities during 2014/15. However, there are still key areas that we have identified for improvement, and we will be working hard to address these. According to the indicators used by the Welsh Government to evaluate local government performance, Denbighshire's performance remains excellent, with 20 in the top half of Welsh authorities and 14 in the top quartile. We also have the fewest number of indicators in the lowest half. We improved or maintained our position in 22 indicators, but declined in eight. We continue to monitor and challenge performance through our established service challenge process as well as through Scrutiny Committees.

Alongside our continuing improvement activities we are preparing ourselves for important new legislation that will change the way we deliver services in the future. The Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act are prompting us to think even more creatively in how we work with partners and communities in achieving the 'Wales We Want' in an environment of a shrinking public sector. We are confident that we are in a strong position to make positive changes while maintaining a focus on making our services better.



Dr Mohammed Mehmet, Chief Executive

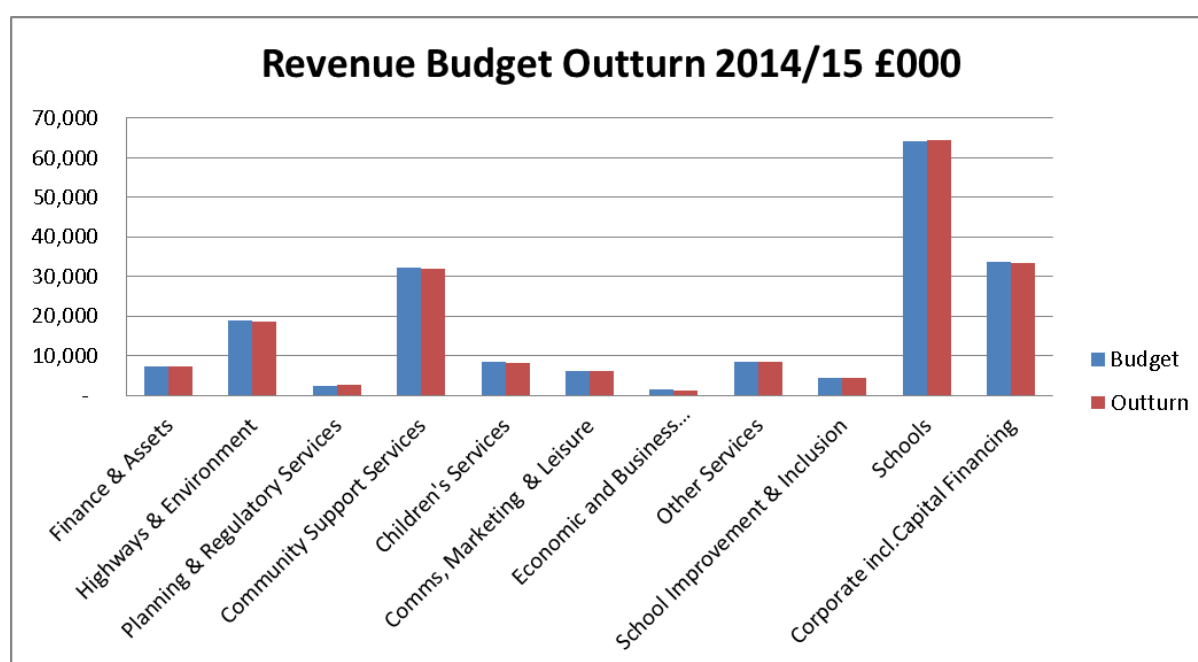
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The council sets a revenue budget each year. This revenue budget covers the costs of the services the council provides, and is paid for by service users, Welsh Government Grants, Council Tax, and Business Rate payers. For 2014/15, the gross revenue budget was £280.9 million.

As part of the ongoing austerity measures, the funding available to Local Government was restricted and the Council had to identify £8.5m of savings to balance the budget.

All services underwent budget challenges to identify areas for savings and to explain how these could be achieved while protecting frontline services. We used this information as the basis to develop a Medium Term Financial Plan, which sets out how the council will make these savings and takes account of known and likely changes to the council's budget settlement. Prior to approval by County Council, the savings were agreed with Heads of Service and Lead Members, presented to Member budget workshops and circulated to staff.

The table below shows where the Council spends its money:



By the end of the year, including schools delegated budgets, the council spent £1.075m less than it budgeted for on services and corporate budgets. The year-end position helped make possible a net contribution to Earmarked Reserves of £5.3 million.

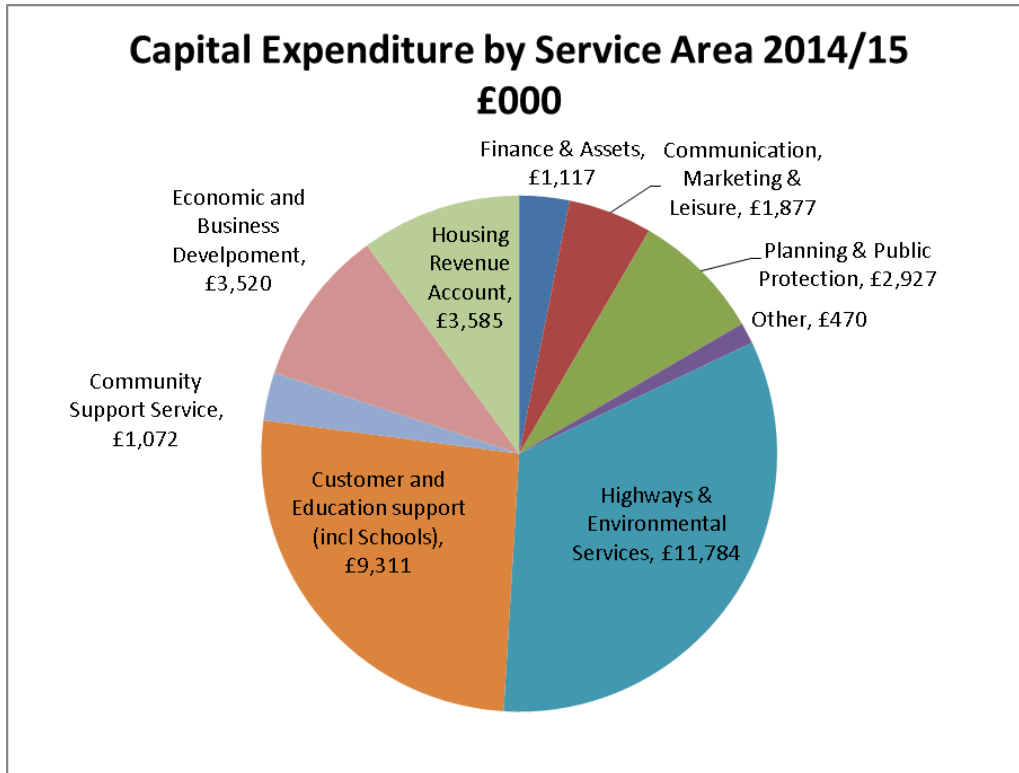
There will be significant reductions in the Council's funding for future years with a 2015/16 savings target of £8.3m and similar targets in each of the two following years. Taking this into account there is now a revised budget setting programme for 2015/16 and beyond, termed Freedoms and Flexibilities. We are asking all services to consider all of their functions, statutory and non-statutory to develop proposals to save the authority money. All proposals will be discussed at Member workshops, and all appropriate consultations with staff, the public and other stakeholders will be undertaken prior to savings being recommended for approval.

In 2014/15, we invested an additional £0.750m in our priorities, allocated as follows:

Area	£'000
Modernising Education – 21st Century Schools	650
Highways – Road Improvements	100
Total	750

During 2012/13, the council agreed an ambitious Corporate Plan which aims to deliver investment of currently £125.9 m in schools, social care facilities and roads in the coming five to seven years. External funding will contribute to the overall cost of investment in schools and roads, but the Plan relies upon internal resources to fund borrowing and to provide cash. Such a significant investment will help improve key services but does not come without risk, and therefore measures are in place to continually assess the delivery and affordability of the Plan. During 2014/15 we contributed additional cash resources of £4.9m towards the Corporate Plan. The expenditure on the plan was £10.6m including highways and the new Rhyl High School.

Capital investment in council assets amounted to over £35.7 m in 2014/15, which included £3.6 million spent on improvements to the council's housing stock.



INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overall assessment of the performance of Denbighshire County Council during 2014/15, and contains sections on the following elements of our work:

1. The council's Corporate Plan 2012-17, and progress in delivering our corporate priorities.
2. The council's project register and progress in delivering key projects that support our corporate priorities.
3. The council's progress in delivering on our Outcome Agreements with the Welsh Government (designed to demonstrate how we contribute to national priorities).
4. The council's performance in relation to the National Strategic Indicators (used by the Welsh Government to evaluate local government performance in Wales).
5. The conclusions from audit and inspection work from our external regulators.

KEY

The following contains information that will help you to understand the analysis of our progress, particularly in relation to our priorities.

Each priority has one or more "outcomes", which describe the benefits we aim to deliver for our communities. We use a selection of "indicators" to help us understand whether we are making progress with delivering these outcomes. Indicators do not directly measure the performance of the council, as most indicators are outside of our full control and tell us about the external environment. However, indicators are useful and important because they help us to understand whether outcomes for our communities are getting better or worse.

Each outcome also has a selection of "performance measures" which measure the success of the council's work in relation to that outcome. Each indicator and performance measure is given a status that describes the current position. The status tells us how good the current position is, and the colours below represent the following definitions.

Each outcome also has "improvement activities", which are projects and actions designed to contribute to the delivery of the outcome. We monitor the delivery of these activities by providing a "delivery confidence". The same four colours are used to mean the following:

THE COLOURS

Colour	Action/Project Status	Measure Status
Green	On Target	Excellent
Yellow	Experiencing Obstacles	Good
Orange	At Risk	Acceptable
Red	Compromised	Priority for Improvement
Blue	Complete	Not applicable
Postponed	Deferred	Not applicable
Withdrawn	Not a priority	Not applicable
To be removed	Not applicable	Proposal to delete this measure

THE EVALUATION

- The default methodology for performance evaluation is where the upper quartile reflects the transition to Excellent, and the Wales median reflects the transition to a Priority for Improvement.
- This is true for most except our education attainment indicators, where the 'best in Wales' reflects the transition to Excellent and the Wales median reflects the transition to a Priority for Improvement.
- The default position for project reporting is documented in the project management methodology, summarised above (Action Status).

THE CORPORATE PLAN

This is the summary position for each Outcome in the Corporate Plan at 31 March 2015. The overall evaluation for each Outcome has been determined by taking account of the indicators, performance measures, and improvement activity.

DEVELOPING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Outcome 1	ACCEPTABLE
Outcome 2	ACCEPTABLE
Outcome 3	ACCEPTABLE
Outcome 4	GOOD
Outcome 5	ACCEPTABLE
Outcome 6	GOOD

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE IN EDUCATION & THE QUALITY OF OUR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Outcome 7	ACCEPTABLE
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IMPROVING OUR ROADS

Outcome 8	GOOD
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VULNERABLE PEOPLE ARE PROTECTED & ABLE TO LIVE AS INDEPENDENTLY AS POSSIBLE

Outcome 9	GOOD
Outcome 10	EXCELLENT

CLEAN AND TIDY STREETS

Outcome 11	EXCELLENT
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ENSURING ACCESS TO GOOD QUALITY HOUSING

Outcome 12	ACCEPTABLE
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MODERNISING THE COUNCIL TO BE EFFICIENT & IMPROVE SERVICES FOR CUSTOMERS

Outcome 13	GOOD
Outcome 14	ACCEPTABLE

LOCAL ECONOMY HEADLINE INDICATORS

SUMMARY

The overall position for this cluster of indicators is Orange: Acceptable. Indicators relating to the survival rate of new businesses tell a positive story, while household incomes and the Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) claimant rates – two important elements – remain a cause for concern.

Median Household income was £23,762 in 2014/15, slightly down from £23,866 the year before, and generating a Red status. One of the aims of this priority is to increase the number of higher-salaried jobs in the county, and work under Outcomes 2 (Supported and Connected Business) and 3 (Opportunities for Growth) in particular lends itself to this goal. It's likely that results will take some time to come through, though.

Denbighshire has made particularly good progress in terms of business demography (new businesses, and the one and three year survival rates of existing businesses). Although an improvement was expected, the county's position has improved at a rate greater than other counties, and has gone from being Acceptable (or worse) to now being Excellent. Reasons for this are unclear, but we do note that a dip in performance during 2013/14 did not follow the national trend (especially in terms of a three-year survival rate), so may not have been indicative of a long-term trend. Work under Outcome 2 (Supported and Connected Business) is likely to improve and consolidate the viability and sustainability of new businesses in the county.

The turnover of Denbighshire-based businesses continues to improve from an Acceptable position to a Good one (£2,231 million). The JSA claimant rate continues to be a Priority for Improvement, despite a reduction in the proportion of our population in receipt of this support (3.65% in 2013/14, compared to

It is interesting to note that the percentage of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants in rural areas is much lower than the county average (see Outcome 5). Therefore it can be assumed that a large proportion of the county's JSA claimants are based in our more urban, deprived areas. There is much national and European investment into the Tackling Poverty agenda, but it is felt that the programmes lack strategic oversight and influence in Denbighshire. To improve upon this, in 2015/16 Denbighshire County Council will establish a Tackling Poverty Group made up of Members and Officers. They will first meet in September 2015, and it is hoped their targeted activity will help improve the performance of these indicators.

2.68% in 2014/15): on average, the rest of Great Britain has seen a steeper reduction in JSA claimants.

OUTCOME 1

Infrastructure for Growth

SUMMARY

The status of this Outcome is Orange: Acceptable. Data would suggest that the Broadband supply is not meeting demand, and although work to prepare strategic employment sites for development is progressing well, there is still much to do. This is to be expected, given the long term nature of the project.

The availability of Superfast Broadband in the county is comparatively poor, at 29.5%, although the 2014 Business Survey results suggest that 80% of responding businesses engage in e-commerce. Furthermore, Ofcom reports that Broadband take up is 71.8%, which supports the view that Denbighshire residents and businesses embrace online business. We could further speculate that a significant proportion of those businesses would use Superfast Broadband.

It should be noted that the provision of broadband infrastructure is the responsibility of the Welsh Government and British Telecom; Denbighshire's efforts are focussed on encouraging business uptake and use, with the aim of gaining competitive advantage. In order to do this, there is a project underway entitled Digital Denbighshire, the aims of which include: to encourage more local businesses to embrace the online marketplace and capitalise on its advantages, mainly via promotional communication; to establish the digital needs of business, identify gaps in the county, and facilitate solutions (whether this be via lobbying organisation such as Superfast Cymru, or implementing local actions).

As part of our Digital Denbighshire project the Economic & Business Development Team led a successful Vodafone Rural Open Sure bid for Loggerheads Country Park, creating mobile phone access for over 230,000 visitors, the visitor centre staff, café, and local pub businesses. The 3G signal available on site now allows visitors to download information about other places to visit in Denbighshire, helping to suggest alternatives that encourage visitors to explore further afield, spreading the benefit from this honey pot location.

STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT SITES...

...are areas that are not considered economically viable without Council intervention. They are sites in areas of greatest demand, and able to support sustainable development, but with significant constraints.

During 2014/15:

- Development barriers were removed at Station Yard, Denbigh, securing developer interest. Approximately 120 jobs are expected to be delivered.
- Land issues, Title and occupation constraints addressed at Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn. The site is now ready for market, and a development brief has been agreed.
- Accommodation found for tenants from Canol Y Dre, Ruthin. The tenants were Council services that were using the site. Vacant possession has now been secured, enabling development or sale.

The project to prepare business sites for development across Denbighshire’s eight Priority Strategic Employment Sites is a considerable one, yet is only in its infancy. In order to track whether the project is progressing as expected, interim measures have been developed that will assess our status at key points on the road to development: firstly the removal of barriers to developments (i.e. ensuring legal clarity regarding who owns the land), and secondly whether planning permission to develop the land has been applied for and approved.

80% of the land on these sites is now free of barriers to developments, which means that businesses are able to apply for planning permission if they wish. 31% of the land has planning permission approval, but only 8% of the land is actually developed. Now that the land is ready for development, a project to promote inward investment, ‘Locate In Denbighshire’, is set to get underway.

STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT SITES, CONTINUED...

- Proposal to Colon Denbigh designed the site, barrier to present
- Cilmedw have been the land local der

OUTCOME 2

Supported and Connected Businesses

SUMMARY

The status for this Outcome is Orange: Acceptable. The status of the small number of Indicators and Activities associated with this Outcome varies

considerably, so this is considered a fair reflection of the position.

It became evident during the course of 2014/15 that the performance and project management of the procurement-related activities required improvement.

To remedy this, in January 2015 the procurement section was transferred to a different Head of Service, and a new post was created to oversee a procurement transformation programme.

Detailed planning will be developed and articulated during 2015/16, so we hope to see improved focus and performance during the next financial year. Anticipated benefits and their performance thresholds might also alter as a consequence.

Businesses reported high satisfaction levels with the ease of access to business advice and support (91%), though satisfaction with the quality of advice and support offered was lower (74%). There is a project underway with the aim of improving the quality of advice. The strategy for achieving this is to establish the current issues and/or gaps and facilitate improved co-ordination and provision of advice among partners. Communication is an important strand, so

changes to the way DCC uses the web and social media to support business will be implemented, and there will be provision for some capital grants.

A Business Bootcamp was held in March 2015, offering business advice and support sessions that focussed on delivering training targeted at business needs, as identified through the Business survey. Examples include digital marketing skills, HR issues, and one-to-one business advice.

The 'Better Business for All' project is about ensuring that the council's regulatory services adopt a more business friendly approach to their operations, ensuring that - as far as possible - regulation is proportionate, consistent, accountable, transparent and targeted. This Better Regulation

pilot is the first of its kind in Wales. Although in its early stages, three Business Support Seminars were held during the year to help businesses with their food safety and food standards (labelling) issues. These seminars were attended by 68 people from 46 food business and were well received, with one business owner commenting "Really helpful. The training provided me with reassurance and clarity".

OUTCOME 3

Opportunities for growth

SUMMARY

The overall position for this Outcome is Orange, Acceptable.

Performance of our tourism businesses appears to be Excellent, with revenue increasing by over 25% from the previous year to £427.64 million. Such growth is consistent with the reported increase of the number of full time jobs that the tourism sector reports, rising 16% to 6162.

Nevertheless, our comparative position in terms of the number of businesses in the tourism sector is only Acceptable, which suggests there is scope for the market to develop further, and the associated economic benefits to be maximised. Denbighshire projects that will facilitate this include the development of a Tourism Growth Plan, and work on the provision of Coastal Facilities, (primarily to replace Rhyl's Sun Centre). Both of these projects are progressing well, as is the redevelopment of Prestatyn's Nova centre (due to open in November 2015).

We can't yet report against the position of the county's Growth Sectors because the project to identify these sectors and devise a marketing strategy is still to be developed. Original deadlines have passed, but the creation of a post dedicated to Growth Sectors in the Economic & Business Development team has created the capacity to press ahead with this work in 2015/16. Milestone dates are likely to change, but the work remains a priority and progress will be made during the next financial year.

RHYL WATERFRONT

Following soft market tests as to whether private sector interest in developing Rhyl's waterfront existed, an open and robust competitive process led to Neptune Developments being awarded a contract on the basis of an ambitious but deliverable plan.

Plans include a 'hospitality zone', featuring a 4,000 sq metre venue for concerts, trade shows and sporting events.

Investment will be worth £41 million, and is expected to generate at least an additional 900,000 visits per annum.

OUTCOME 4

High quality skilled workforce

SUMMARY

The overall status for this Outcome is Yellow, Good. Most indicators also reflect this Good position, with a few being Excellent. However, the level of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants between the ages of 18-24 is still higher in Denbighshire than the national average.

The percentage of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training is 2.1% for the 2013/14 academic year, which equates to 26 young people. This position has improved considerably on the preceding year, taking our relative status from Priority for Improvement to Good.

Attainment in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) at level 2 and level 3 is considered Good across the county, with 93% of students gaining some accreditation at level 2 (GCSE), and 54% at level 3 (A-level). National data is not available on this subject, therefore we are currently unable to benchmark.

Our Business Survey has not highlighted issues with unfilled vacancies due to lack of unsuitable candidates, nor difficulties in recruiting staff with the right skills.

The rate of self-employment in the county is also high in the national context, which is encouraging. However, the rate of JSA claimants aged 18-24 is still a Priority for Improvement, despite a reduction from 8.1% to 5.48%. Last year, Denbighshire's position was far below the

To complement more strategic work at a regional level, skills development initiatives led the Economic & Community Ambition (ECA) Board to identify and focus on local issues, via discussion with local business, and employer engagement with schools. The Pathways + project, to be delivered in 2015-16, was commissioned by the ECA Board to help our young people be well equipped for the world of work, and make good career choices. The project will focus on:

- Engaging 50 local employers in increasing awareness of local employment opportunities / skills needs;
- Delivering a range of enterprise and employability activities in schools
- Providing engagement opportunities for young people and employers
- Signing up 35 local employers to provide high quality work experience

Acceptable threshold. We are now closer to performing at an Acceptable level, but better outcomes are required.

The apparent suitability of residents' skills but the persistent high level of JSA claimants could lead to the conclusion that there is an issue with the availability of jobs in the county. This is why encouraging business growth and attracting new businesses to the county are key goals of the Economic and Community Ambition programme's work.

OUTCOME 5

Vibrant towns and communities

SUMMARY

The overall position for this Outcome is Orange, Acceptable. Although some indicators illustrate strong performance, indicators for deprivation are at intervention level, and worsening.

Occupancy rates of town centres are relatively high across the county, but town centre businesses do not report future confidence.

Residents' Survey questions regarding people's satisfaction with their local town centre have been omitted from this year's report, as the survey is only undertaken once every two years. The survey is to be repeated in summer 2015, and the results will be included in 2015/16's report.

A new Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) was published in 2014 (it's published once every three years). The percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs – geographic areas with a population of 1600 people) that fell into the 10% most deprived in Wales has increased from 10% in 2011 to 14%. Long term problems associated with poverty persist. Their root cause must be tackled, and the aforementioned Tackling Poverty Group (see Headline Indicators section) to be established in 2015/16 will help this.

The number of LSOAs with a claimant count higher than the British average remains Red, and our position is worsening. Likewise, the number of LSOAs with a median income below the Welsh average is Red, Priority for Improvement, and worsening.

Bucking that trend is the percentage of JSA claimants in rural areas. Our relative position here is Excellent, and improving. Consideration will be

TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP

The Economic & Business Development Team helped secure [Town Centre Partnership](#) funds for Prestatyn from the Welsh Government, enabling a range of initiatives including:

- Better access to the town centre
- Development of a town centre app for use on smartphones
- Improvements to the high street to encourage night time economy growth
- Tackling the appearance of key properties
- Events and promotional activities to encourage footfall

given as to whether this fact, coupled with the status of the WIMD indicators, suggest that we should focus our efforts in those areas with deprived wards.

Indeed, much work has been focussed and delivered in Rhyl during 2014/15, under the Rhyl Going Forward program. Work to create an improved harbour and foot/cycle bridge is complete, as is phase 3 of the coastal flood defence scheme. Gerddi Heulwen is the name that the community living in the West Rhyl Housing Improvement Project area gave to the green space that was created there. It was officially opened at the end of March 2015.

Works underway in the town include the development of Rhyl Waterfront, the conversion of the former Honey Club to a Premier Inn, and a major new build to replace the current Rhyl High School with a building that is fit for delivering 21st century education.

It is acknowledged that Rhyl town centre is one of the least well developed in the county, and addressing this will be a priority action area in the future.

OUTCOME 6

Well-promoted Denbighshire

SUMMARY

The overall status for this Outcome is Yellow, Good.

This Outcome is primarily concerned with activity that will support new inward investment. Two projects are underway, the aims of which are to better market Denbighshire as a place to invest in, and to ensure that subsequent enquiries are followed up well in order to maximise likelihood of investment.

The Marketing Campaign has been late getting started, hence its Orange, Acceptable status. It's likely that key milestones and deadline dates will be revised to more accurately reflect what can be achieved with the capacity available. It's important that the Council is ready to handle those enquiries well before embarking on its marketing campaign, and the necessary preparatory work is underway.

As part of our regional inward investment promotion work local businesses and parts of Denbigh and St Asaph Business Park featured in video clips on the [#7NorthWales](#) inward investment promotion site.

It should be noted that two indicators have been withdrawn during the last year. These were: 'The percentage of residents satisfied with their areas a place to live', and 'The percentage of residents reporting they are likely to move out in the next five years'. This is because the goal of the Outcome has evolved to focus on promoting Denbighshire as a place to do business, rather than as a place to live.

OUTCOME 7

Students achieve their potential

SUMMARY

The overall position for this outcome is Orange: Acceptable. We are using a higher benchmark for excellence for educational attainment where 'Green: Excellent' is the best in Wales.

There has been improvement in all education attainment indicators identified for this outcome in 2013/14 academic year, Denbighshire ranking second in Wales for pupils achieving the level 2 threshold or vocational equivalent at Key Stage 4. The smallest improvement was made in pupils achieving the Core Subject indicator in Key Stage 2, for which we remain in the top-half of authorities in Wales.

The number of deficit places as a percentage of the overall total primary school places in Denbighshire is considered to be a priority for improvement. This is due to the increase in pupil numbers in the primary sector, leading to a shortage of places. It is also worth noting that there is an increase in the percentage of surplus places in secondary schools at present due to a reduction in the number of pupils in secondary school. This is not expected to rise until 2018, and these issues are being closely monitored as part of Denbighshire's Modernising Education Programme.

Nevertheless the Modernising Education Programme has continued to deliver significant projects to improve school buildings and facilities across the county, including the extension, remodel and refurbishment of Ysgol Y Llys, Prestatyn; and the extension and refurbishment of Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy area school, Cynwyd site. Work was also started on the extension and refurbishment of Bodnant Community School, Prestatyn; and significantly the new Rhyl High School build. Both of these are expected to be complete by

The Ruthin Area Review has been impacted by the decision by the Education Minister to not allow the closure of Llanbedr School, concluding that the council had failed to consult adequately with the Diocese. The council has since reopened its consultation.

mid-2016. There has also been a great deal of progress on the design work for the extension and refurbishment of Ysgol Glan Clwyd, aiming to start construction in November 2015.

The percentage of pupils (including those in local authority care) who leave compulsory education, training or work-based learning without an approved external qualification is among the best in Wales. Two key projects going forward in Denbighshire will be TRAC and Pathways+. TRAC is a regional project led by Denbighshire County Council which seeks to support young people aged 11-19 disengaging with education and at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training). Pathways + will prepare and up-skill young people for work through mentoring and work experience opportunities.

Secondary school attendance has recovered beyond last year's decline, and just beyond the excellent position in 2011/12. However, attendance improved more in the rest of Wales, leaving us below the median for both authorised and unauthorised absence, so it continues to be a priority for improvement. Where our rank position in Wales for authorised absence has worsened over the last three years, it has improved for unauthorised absences. Considerable work has been put in with schools to address the issue of attendance, focusing the work of our Education Social Workers in a different way, and ensuring that there is an attendance plan in place for each school. Fines for non-attendance, which are to be introduced by the Welsh Government, should also have an impact here.

The Education Service will maintain the rigour of its monitoring of GwE, the regional School Improvement Service, to ensure Denbighshire's priority areas are effectively addressed to improve the attainment of children & young people in our schools.

CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT

Denbighshire's Curriculum Enrichment initiative provides Denbighshire children and young people, through open dialogue, the opportunity to 'co-construct' their learning journey creatively. The initiative engages and enthuses students through relevant creative learning activities, workshops, masterclasses, events and mentoring schemes, to enhance and improve well-being, attendance, behaviour and levels of attainment. The Service is attracting leading creative practitioners with a UK and international profile covering the full spectrum of the curriculum; engaging, exciting and enriching the lives of our children and young people. For more information, visit www.denbighshireenrichment.com

OUTCOME 8

Residents and visitors to Denbighshire have access to a safe and well-managed road network

SUMMARY

Overall, the current position for this outcome is Yellow, Good.

The road condition indicators are compared with a group of similar rural local authority areas in Wales. Despite an improvement, our non-principal (B) roads are still considered a priority for improvement. Both our principal (A) and non-principal (C) roads, however, have improved, with our overall final position for the percentage of A, B and C roads that are in overall poor condition being best in group for 2014/15.

It should be noted that the national indicators focus mainly on A and B roads and use of these indicators to determine priorities did not properly reflect the public's perception of the local road network. Following

that conclusion, by Members, the service began to measure condition in a different way with a 'road condition assessment score' that would mirror the concerns of our communities and our Members. The system is now used to prioritise which schemes should be undertaken, with Members consulted on the proposals via Member Area Groups (MAGs).

In 2014/15 we reorganised our Streetscene service to make it more customer focussed, and the feedback received to date has been overwhelmingly positive, with compliments outnumbering complaints.

Also, in the interests of efficiency and modernisation, Streetscene moved away from using COMMS (the system previously used to create this percentage figure) and introduced the new Symology system. Unfortunately the old system was withdrawn before the new system was ready to take over. These issues have now been addressed and a new report has been built into Symology that allows the service to accurately monitor performance in relation to damaged roads. This being the case, reliable figures will be available from Q2 2015/16 onwards.

Resources have to be rationed in this service area, but the service is working to switch the focus of spend from reactive to proactive work across all of its road categories. Budget reductions will, however, continue to have an adverse impact.

A policy was implemented in 2014/15 to improve the percentage of planned dropped-kerbs delivered along key routes within the year. At the end of 2014/15, a high percentage, 92% completion of works had been achieved and this was considered to be at an acceptable level.

OUTCOME 9**Vulnerable people are able to live as independently as possible****SUMMARY**

The overall position for this outcome is Yellow, Good.

Within this outcome we pledged to reduce the number of adults who needed residential care during the year by 200 (overall), from 815 in 2012 to 615 by 2017. The total for 2014/15 was 697, which means we are making good progress towards our ambition. The number of adults supported in residential care on 31st March 2015 was 499, down from 579 on 31st March 2012.

The rate of delayed transfers of care from hospital to home increased from 0.54% in 2013/14 to 1.27% in 2014/15. However, performance remains at an Excellent level and within the top quartile for Wales. The increase in the rate is as a result of increases in admissions to hospital, creating pressures for the provision of domiciliary care at discharge. Work is continuing with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to ensure discharge arrangements are improved.

In July 2014, we launched a new Single Point of Access service (SPoA), assessment, and care coordination for preventative and rehabilitation work for adults across Denbighshire. This includes the provision of information, signposting to general community services, and the integration of a range of intermediate care and short-term health and social services. The Single Point of Access (SPoA) is part of a staged approach to a fully integrated health and social care community service model that will eventually incorporate longer term community support, in-patient bed-based care, and a full range of council services aligned to an ageing population.

Telecare is a range of equipment that uses sensors and an alarm system that is plugged into the telephone socket. This alerts a carer or a monitoring centre when a person needs help or something has been detected such as gas or smoke so that an appropriate response can be instigated. By the end of 2014/15, there were 1,626 people with Telecare in Denbighshire, which is up from 1,550 at the end of the previous year.

We continued to explore options to develop additional extra care housing schemes during 2014/15, and we have had positive discussions with a number of potential partners in relation to a number of possible developments. We are confident that significant progress will be made

INTERNAL CHANGES

Some significant structural changes were made or planned during the past year.

Following a review of the council's senior management structure, Housing Support Services have joined with Adult & Business Services to create a new service which we have called 'Community Support Services'.

The name of the new service reflects our focus on 'community' (a key part of our sustainability strategy) and on 'support' (a key part of the move away from prescribing care and towards supporting independence).

during 2015/16, and that work will begin on one or two new schemes in the coming year.

Reablement is short-term support which is designed to develop people's confidence to manage as many tasks as possible on their own rather than having other people do things for them. Last year, we provided reablement support to 346 people, including 325 people to help them return to their own home from hospital. Of these 346 people, 207 required no further support from social services following the reablement support.

We are currently working hard to modernise social services in Denbighshire, and this will lead to a fundamental change in the way that adult social care is provided in future. These changes are required in order to respond to the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, and also to respond to the changing expectations of people within our communities.

For many years, adult social care has been about what social services can do for people when they begin to have difficulty with day-to-day personal tasks. When a person's care needs become more complex, the response in the past has often been to offer that person a place in a residential care home. The response of social services has often resulted in people becoming more dependent on other people and services instead of helping people to regain or retain their independence. Most people tell us that they do not want to live in a residential care home when they get older, but to live in their own home and be supported to be as independent as possible for as long as possible. We have therefore create a new vision for adult social care called "Supporting Independence in Denbighshire".

We are changing the way we work, and we will change the type of conversations we have with people when they contact us for support. Instead

of us focussing on what people can't do, and what we can give them to help with a specific task, we will have a discussion about what really matters to them and what outcomes they would like to achieve in relation to their health and wellbeing. We are calling this a "What Matters" conversation.

We will focus on a person's strengths, and what other support might be available to them, like from family or friends, for example. We may also be able to tell people about things that are available in their local community to support them. If appropriate, we may suggest a period of re-ablement, which is short-term support designed to develop people's confidence to manage as many tasks as possible on their own rather than having other people do things for them. Basically our approach is to support people to remain active and independent for as long as possible, rather than become dependent on others.

During the planning and implementation of these changes, it has become apparent how substantial these changes are. Although we have been providing training and support for our staff to help them adjust to this new way of working, we should not under-estimate how significant these changes are for them. That said, the general response to the training has been really positive, and the early signs are that staff are enthusiastic about the new approach. However, making these changes requires a whole-system approach, and it therefore requires independent sector social care providers and our health and third sector partners to change as well. We are therefore working with all stakeholders to coordinate these changes. It also requires our current service users, and the general public within our communities, to change their expectations about what adult social services will provide in future. We are trying to do this through a programme of press releases, and we will also be making more use of social media in the coming months and years. What has become clear is that this is long-term change, and it may be several years before the new approach is fully embedded.

OUTCOME 10

Vulnerable people are protected

SUMMARY

The overall position for this outcome is Green, Excellent.

The national performance indicator relating to adult protection, ‘The percentage of cases where the risk has been managed or removed’ achieved 100% in 2014/15, which relates to referrals that were completed during the year. Although many referrals will take less than a year to complete, they are spread throughout the year and as a result completed referrals in the year will not necessarily equate to the number of reported referrals meeting the threshold, as some referrals will be received or completed outside the reporting period.

During 2014/15, there were 73 vulnerable people referred to us, where we undertook an investigation into their circumstances via the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) process. We effectively worked with these people and agencies to ensure that the risk was fully managed for all of the 73 referrals investigated.

However, this figure doesn’t tell the full story as many more people are referred to us because of concerns about them. To enable us to make sure that we can respond appropriately, we have introduced a system that places the responsibility for looking at these referrals across a wider group of senior professional staff. A training programme is currently being implemented to support these staff in this new role which will help to ensure that there is a much faster response to concerns raised.

A great deal of work has been undertaken to enhance the council’s approach to safeguarding, which has included the establishment of a Corporate Safeguarding Panel to identify and address safeguarding concerns. The council’s Safeguarding Policy has also been communicated to staff, as well as training delivered to help them identify and effectively deal with safeguarding issues in their work.

There are ongoing issues with quality of referrals and provision of information by external agencies that are adding to the existing pressures for front line managers, and creating delays in finalising decisions in relation to protecting adults at risk of harm. We are in the process of recruiting an

CARE LEAVERS

In 2014/2015 we celebrated several achievements for Care Leavers. We currently have five care leavers at University, two of whom are studying Teaching and Law respectively.

We have had one young care leaver who has started an Officer's Cadetship with the Merchant Navy.

We hope to celebrate more success in future with the 'When I'm Ready' scheme, which allows care leavers stay in a stable placement for longer and, as the scheme name suggests, move when they are ready.

additional Safeguarding Manager and a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Co-ordinator to support front line managers in dealing with this. The Local Safeguarding Adults Delivery group is monitoring the situation and reporting to the Regional Adult Safeguarding Board on the wider external information issues. In the meantime, regular review of the situation by Service Managers is ensuring that risks to individuals are being managed.

In 2014/15 322 people from across the social care workforce attended POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) training, which is a 27% increase on the number of people attending training the previous year. In addition to this, 107 staff from across the council attended training through our new corporate safeguarding training programme.

The percentage of child referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months has continued to improve, decreasing from 17% in 2013/14 to 15% in 2014/15. This represents 101 re-referrals out of 670, down from 133 out of 773 referrals the previous year. The fall in the number of referrals reflects the hard work that has been undertaken by the council to provide preventative services and intensive intervention when people first become involved with the service.

The percentage of initial core group meetings due which were held within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference has also improved, and is no longer considered to be a priority for improvement. This improved from 91% in 2013/14 to 93% in 2014/15. This represents nine cases that were not seen within 10 days, but this was due to a decision by the Child Protection Coordinator to delay for justifiable reasons.

The percentage of child protection reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year fell

slightly from 100% to 99.6%. One review was not carried out within timescales.

Despite the improvements we made during 2014-15, the council needs to continue to reduce the number of looked after children who experienced three or more placements during the year, and to try to ensure that any exceptions to this are for positive reasons.

The council also needs to improve the proportion of statutory visits to looked after children that take place within timescales.

OUTCOME 11

To produce an attractive environment for residents and visitors alike

SUMMARY

The overall position for this outcome is Green, at an Excellent level.

Data for the rate of fly-tipping in the county per 1,000 fell slightly in 2014/15, but remains high in the context of Wales, with 2,024 incidents being recorded. We believe we are reporting this indicator differently from other councils because we include incidents that we identify ourselves through our street cleaning activities, in addition to incidents reported by the public.

The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within five working days improved to 97.48%.

The Cleanliness Index, which formed part of the National Service Improvement dataset was discontinued in 2014. This has been replaced with the Keep Wales Tidy Cleanliness Indicator. The data for 2014/15 is currently awaited and will allow us to compare ourselves nationally.

Our response to resolving untidy land incidents improved to a 'good' level, with 64% being resolved within 12 weeks in 2014/15. In addition, four of the 'top 20' eyesore sites were addressed during the year.

The rate of fixed penalty notices issued (all types and dog fouling) also improved by 5% and 2% respectively, both remaining at an Excellent level with a total of 3,685 notices (all types) served in 2014/15 (233 of which related to dog fouling).

DOG FOULING

During 2014/15 we strengthened our tactics to deal with dog fouling issues which included: providing free dog bags, engaging with dog owners, receiving and passing on valuable information regarding hotspot areas providing greater focus for enforcement officers.

Officers from both Public Protection and Environmental Services have been highlighting areas of foul in public places with yellow dissolvable chalk spray to warn the public not to be caught out by stepping in it. This also helps our Streetscene Officers quickly identify the foul for clearance.

The enterprise has proved very successful. There has been a noticeable drop in complaints in the Rhyl area, which is where the initiative started.

OUTCOME 12

The housing market in Denbighshire will offer a range of types and forms of housing in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of individuals and families

SUMMARY

The overall status of this Outcome is Orange, Acceptable. The real test of 'quality' housing is housing that meets people's needs. We recognise that this means a mix of council, social landlord, private rented and owner-occupied housing, and a Housing Strategy is being developed to reflect this. All council housing will be brought up to a good standard. We will build, demolish, and renovate where necessary, as we understand that quality neighbourhoods also require quality housing.

The revised Housing Strategy is underway. A Lead Members Steering Group has been established and regular meetings held to provide input into the emerging Strategy. A key theme in the Strategy is to develop and implement a clear programme for the delivery of affordable housing with partners. The final Strategy will be reported to Council in October 2015.

The definition for 'the current supply of affordable housing' has been reviewed to include all properties which are made available for affordable housing during the year, including new builds, conversions and acquisitions, which is different to the definition provided against the National Strategic Indicator (NSI) – PLA/006. A revised indicator, 'The additional supply of affordable housing, including social housing, provided during the year' will replace two indicators that referred to both for 2015/16 onwards. Thresholds have also been reviewed.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The projection for affordable completions for this year up to April 2016 is 38.

Out of the last nine years, Denbighshire has exceeded the Wales average on six occasions against the National Strategic Indicator (NSI). That said, we accept there is more we should be doing to increase the total number of houses being built in the County and consequently the total number of affordable housing.

This is clearly reflected in the emerging Housing Strategy.

In the percentage of additional affordable housing units provided during the year (as a percentage of all additional housing units), performance has declined to the bottom quartile in Wales. The performance of 23% has derived from 69 houses being built during the year, 16 of which were affordable. Even though this performance is reported against the National Strategic Indicator for 2014/15, it relates to data from 2013/14. This is due to the way Welsh Government report against this indicator. Actual data for 2014/15 is 60% (74 out of 122 housing units being affordable).

Denbighshire remained one of the top performing authorities in 2014/15 for the time taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant with an average of 178 calendar days.

In 2014/15 there was significant improvement in the percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within the 8 week timescale which improved to 92%, from a Priority for Improvement level in 2013/14 to one of Excellence.

The Former North Wales Hospital Development Brief and the Bodelwyddan Key Strategic Site Development Brief were both approved by Planning Committee in May and July 2014 respectively.

Regarding the percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months (98.4%), with the Housing (Wales) 2014 Act and new statutory prevention duties widening the definition of 'prevention', this is the last time this particular measure will be reported. We have maintained excellent performance in this area by effectively and proactively engaging with the Private Rented Sector (primarily) to help households avoid the worst traumas of homelessness and its inherent

HOUSING STRATEGY

The Council's approach to housing strategy and policy has strengthened by combining strategy and policy development in one service area: Planning and Public Protection.

Planning policy and housing strategy teams have merged to form the Strategic Housing & Planning Team. This enables development of a clearer policy for affordable housing.

Officers in the new team are working closely with Property officers (including Council housing) and finance to deal with affordable/ social housing issues, and maximise opportunities by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to provide more affordable/ social housing.

social consequences, e.g. interruption to children's education. Households have either moved smoothly across to alternative homes, or from emergency accommodation into new tenancies where the quality of housing has, in many cases, been an improvement on their former residences.

The number of potential homeless people assisted to find a home was 127. The Council invested £48,382 in returnable security deposits to procure tenancies for 127 households, ranging from single people (many of whom were disabled or with other complex issues), to extended families spanning several generations. A new Tenancy Sustainment Team has been set up using a combination of existing resources and a central government grant to expand this work further.

OUTCOME 13

Services will continue to develop and improve

SUMMARY

The overall status for this Outcome is Yellow: Good. Denbighshire County Council, again, received no formal recommendations for improvement from the Wales Audit Office; nearly all projects (90%) were on-track; and 100% of our Outcome Agreement Grant was awarded by Welsh Government. During the year, all three Modernisation projects due a post-implementation review received one.

Two indicators with a Red: Priority for Improvement status are from the Residents' Survey that was conducted in 2013, which was repeated in summer 2015 (analysis of those results will be available during quarter 3 2015/16).

The proportion of complaints that were replied to within timescales dipped in the final quarter of 2014/15 (15 out of 92), despite a reduction in the overall number received, generating a Red: Priority for Improvement status. This is being taken seriously by Council Officers, and was reported to Performance Scrutiny in July 2015 for further direction.

YOUR VOICE

The Council uses each complaint as an opportunity to learn and improve. The Communication, Marketing & Leisure department has taken a proactive stance to pre-empt issues. Examples include:

- Engaging with local residents, businesses and elected Members over the construction works at the Nova Centre. No complaints have been received.
- Consulting Members and customers about the fitness suite extension at Denbigh Leisure Centre to influence types of equipment and the layout of the fitness suite.
- Sportzone activity (school holiday club) has been re-marketed with detailed promotional material and a guide for parents. This provides information on the scheme and reduces the instance of negative issues.

OUTCOME 14

More flexible and effective workforce supported by cost efficient infrastructure

SUMMARY

The overall status for this Outcome is Orange: Acceptable. We are continuing to better exploit technology to improve efficiency and reduce costs. There has been investment in hardware and software that is enabling staff to work in new ways to better enhance the customer experience. There are some challenging projects underway that will continue to support this in the future. It will take time before the benefits can be fully realised. For instance, a second internet feed will increase bandwidth and therefore our resilience.

Staff feel they have the skills to do their job effectively and the Council's Modernisation programme is progressing well. We are preparing for the rollout of Outlook in 2015/16, which will improve communication throughout the council and support the modernisation of ICT infrastructure that has taken place during this corporate plan. More staff feel equipped for agile working but this remains Orange because we want more Officers to work on a more agile basis, reflecting that the overall agile working programme of work is in its infancy. In all, the fact that the work is progressing as planned is encouraging. Modernising the way we work is enabling us to reduce our running costs by making better use of our office space and by decreasing our business mileage, and this will have a positive environmental impact.

We are unable to provide information for carbon emissions at present due to a major issue with the new British Gas billing system. This issue is affecting the majority of Welsh authorities. British Gas are working on fixing the errors but it is

BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Flexible working enables social services to provide a better service, as staff can access information, regardless of their location.

Response times will be faster due to the reduction of delays in communication.

Practitioners can spend more time in the community with clients as opposed to travelling or sitting in the office. This means that we have been able to reduce the number of offices we work from, which in turn protects front-line services as less is spent on office accommodation.

[Video Case study on flexible working](#)

taking quite some time. The 21st Century Schools programme of work will have great impact on carbon emissions, and the programme is progressing well.

We have been counting the percentage of all transactions with the Council made online, and it appears to be stabilising at 26%, increasing significantly since 2013. This will increase as Digital Choice is implemented. Alongside this project we are analysing incoming mail to the Council to inform our approach to mail in the future. We will start to deliver change in 2016/17.

The Electronic Document and Record Management System project scope has been placed under review to ensure priorities are agreed and delivered. A proposal for the future rollouts will be presented to the Modernisation Board in September 2015.

Sickness absence and completion of staff performance appraisals remain concerning and both have a Priority for Improvement (Red) status. HR Business Partners are aware of the sickness levels being high across a number of services and we have started to tackle some of the issues in those services. In 2015 we will appoint an Occupational Health & Attendance Advisor who will be working with middle managers to help them manage their sickness levels, targeting hot spots etc. In regards to performance appraisal completion rates, these are now monitored on a monthly basis to keep services better informed.

PROJECT REGISTER

CORPORATE PROJECT REGISTER SUMMARY, AS AT 31 MARCH 2015

CORPORATE PROGRAMME: ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AMBITION

Rhyl Harbour: Bridge, public square, quayside building and extended quay wall	ORANGE
Construction Procurement North Wales	GREEN
Digital Denbighshire	GREEN
Supportive Procurement Phase 1	RED
Rhyl Coastal Facilities Phase 1	GREEN

CORPORATE PROGRAMME: MODERNISATION

Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMs)	YELLOW
Electronic Invoicing & Central Invoice Registration	GREEN
Denbighshire Telephony	GREEN
Outlook Rollout	GREEN
Domino Migration	GREEN
Windows 2003 Migration	GREEN
Digital Choice	YELLOW
Flexible Working	ORANGE
46 Clwyd Street Closure	GREEN

CORPORATE PROGRAMME: MODERNISING EDUCATION

Rhyl New School	GREEN
Bodnant Community School Extension and Refurbishment	YELLOW
Extending Secondary Welsh Medium Provision - Ysgol Glan Clwyd Extension & Refurbishment	GREEN
Welsh Medium Primary's North Denbighshire - Ysgol Twm o'r Nant	YELLOW

PROJECT REGISTER

CORPORATE PROGRAMME: MODERNISING SOCIAL SERVICES & ENHANCING WELLBEING

Service Inclusion Review	GREEN
Single Point of Access	YELLOW
Vulnerable People Mapping	YELLOW
Intelligence requirement for Children's & Family Services	YELLOW
Intermediate Care Fund	GREEN

RHYL GOING FORWARD

West Rhyl Housing Improvement Project	GREEN
The Honey Club, Rhyl	GREEN

SERVICE: BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT & MODERNISATION

i-Share	GREEN
Denbighshire's T&CC Devolution and Empowerment project	GREEN
Vodafone Online Billing	GREEN
2 nd Internet Feed	GREEN

SERVICE: CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Capturing the voice of children, young people, and families	GREEN
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SERVICE: COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

PARIS 5.1 upgrade	YELLOW
Cefndy Capital Investment	GREEN
Welfare Advice Modernisation Project	GREEN

SERVICE: CUSTOMERS & EDUCATION SUPPORT

School workplace transport	YELLOW
Capita Regional MIS	ORANGE

PROJECT REGISTER

SERVICE: FINANCE & ASSETS

Office Accommodation Review	GREEN
Excellent Housing	ORANGE
3 County Procurement Services	RED
PROACTIS e-sourcing rollout	GREEN
Payroll/HR Integration	GREEN

SERVICE: HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Residual Waste (North Wales Collaboration)	GREEN
Loggerheads Traffic Congestion Initiative	YELLOW
Foryd Harbour Blue Bridge Abutment Strengthening	YELLOW
Corwen Flood Risk Management Scheme	GREEN
East Rhyl Flood Defence	YELLOW
Rhyl Promenade Railings	GREEN
West Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme Phase 3	GREEN

SERVICE: PLANNING & PUBLIC PROTECTION

Former North Wales Hospital Denbigh	YELLOW
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OUTCOME AGREEMENT

The council, like all councils in Wales, has developed a set of five Outcome Agreements with the Welsh Government. The Outcome Agreements set out how we will work towards improving outcomes for local people within the context of the Welsh Government's national priorities. The amount of grant that is awarded is judged according to two components:

1. Standards of corporate governance, as reported by the Auditor General for Wales (worth 30%).
2. Outcomes achieved (worth 70% of the available grant).

There are no statutory recommendations by the Wales Audit Office that apply to Denbighshire, nor is the authority under any statutory intervention. We are therefore expecting full payment of the corporate governance element (30%).

Our self-assessment for 'outcomes achieved' currently suggests the potential for the loss of two points due to some missed targets.

Provisional Overall Score	Self-Assessment
8 out of 10	Excellent

We expect to receive confirmation shortly of the Welsh Government's assessment, but we remain confident of securing the 8 points required for the full Outcome Agreement grant for 2014/15.

Outcome	Self-Assessment	Provisional Score
1. Growth and sustainable jobs: Improving our infrastructure	Fully successful	2 out of 2
2. Education: Improving school attainment	Fully successful	2 out of 2
3. 21st century health care: Ensuring people receive the help they need to live fulfilled lives	Partially successful	1 out of 2
4. Welsh homes / Supporting People: Improving quality and increasing the supply and choice of housing	Partially successful	1 out of 2
5. Tackling poverty: Poverty and material deprivation	Fully successful	2 out of 2

NATIONAL STRATEGIC INDICATORS

Denbighshire's performance in the statutory indicators is excellent, with 20 in the top half of Welsh authorities and 14 in the top quartile. We also have the fewest number in the bottom half. We improved or maintained our position in 22 indicators, but declined in 8.

NSI	Indicator	DCC	Quartile	Improvement
1	EDU/002i - School leavers with no qualifications (%)	0.00	1	↑
1	EDU/002ii - Looked after school leavers with no qualifications (%)	0.00	1	↔
2	EDU/003 - Pupils achieving the KS2 CSI (%)	86.61	2	↑
3	EDU/006ii - Pupils receiving a Welsh teacher assessment in Welsh at KS3 (%)	20.23	1	↑
4	EDU/011 - Average qualification points score	562.77	1	↑
5	EDU/015a - SEN statements issued in 26 wks (inc. exceptions) (%)	100.00	1	↔
5	EDU/015b - SEN statements issued in 26 wks (exc. exceptions) (%)	100.00	1	↔
6	EDU/017 - Pupils achieving Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh (1st language) and maths (%)	55.64	2	↑
7	**HHA/013 - Homeless prevention (%)	98.45	N/A	↑
8	LCL/001(b) - Library use, per 1,000 population	5798.86	2	↓
9	LCS/002(b) - Visits to sports facilities per 1,000 population	8044.83	3	↑
10	PLA/006(b) - Additional affordable housing units provided (%)	23.19	4	↓
11	PSR/002 - Delivering Disabled Facility Grants (average days)	178.22	1	↑
12	PSR/004 - Vacant private dwellings returned to occupation (%)	22.15	1	↑
13	SCA/001 - Delayed transfers of care, per 1,000 population 75+	1.27	1	↓

14	*SCA/002a - Older people helped to live at home, per 1,000 population 65+	43.84	4	↓
14	SCA/002b - Older people in care homes, per 1,000 population 65+	19.30	2	↑
15	SCA/019 - Adult Protection Referrals - risk managed (%)	100.00	1	↔
16	SCC/002 - Looked after children changing school (%)	21.78	4	↓
17	SCC/004 - Looked after children with 3 or more placements (%)	9.88	3	↑
18	SCC/011b - Children seen alone by a social worker at initial assessment (%)	54.87	2	↑
19	SCC/033(d) - Former looked after children in contact with the authority at 19 (%)	100.00	1	↔
19	SCC/033(e) - Former looked after children in suitable accommodation at 19 (%)	88.89	3	↓
19	SCC/033(f) - Former looked after children in education, training or employment at 19 (%)	55.56	3	↓
20	SCC/037 - Average qualification points score for looked after children	438.50	1	↑
21	SCC/041a - Eligible, relevant and former relevant children with pathway plans (%)	83.33	4	↓
22	STS/006 - Fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days (%)	97.48	2	↑
23	THS/007 - Concessionary bus pass holders aged 60+ (%)	82.46	3	↑
24	WMT/004(b) - Waste sent to landfill (%)	14.32	1	↑
25	WMT/009(b) - Local Authority collected municipal waste prepared for reuse, recycling and composting (%)	65.87	1	↑

* SCA/002a does not take into account Denbighshire's ambition to meet people's need through reablement and community services rather than managed care. Good performance should be low in this indicator. Denbighshire's performance has therefore improved in relation to both our and Wales' ambition to reduce formal support to individuals, and should therefore be seen as being in the top quartile.

**Reference to comparative information for HHA/013 has been removed, which is in line with Welsh Government's approach. This indicator should not be compared between local authorities due to doubts about the consistency of data provided.

Declining Indicators

Performance declined in the following National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) and Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) in 2014/15:

Indicator	2013/14	2014/15	Narrative
SCA/001 - Delayed transfers of care, per 1,000 population 75+	0.54	1.27	The rate of delayed transfers of care has increased, however, performance remains at an excellent level and within the top quartile. This is as a result of increases in admissions to hospital creating pressures for the provision of domiciliary care at discharge. Work is continuing with BCU to ensure discharge arrangements are improved.
SCA/002a - Older people helped to live at home, per 1,000 population 65+	50.34	43.84	Performance remains in the bottom quartile. NB. This indicator does not take into account Denbighshire's ambition to meet people's need through reablement and community services rather than managed care. Good performance should be low in this indicator. Denbighshire's performance has therefore improved in relation to both our, and Wales', ambition to reduce formal support to individuals and should therefore be seen as being in the top quartile.
SCA/007 - Care plan reviews completed in time (%)	93.80%	88.30%	Care plan reviews have declined in performance, however, remain in the top quartile and our focus remains on ensuring that the review is high quality rather than just being on time.
SCA/020 - Adult clients supported in the community (%)	85.40%	83.99%	Performance has slightly declined and remains within the 3 rd quartile. The planned reduction in numbers of people supported in the community has decreased faster than the numbers living in care homes due to the long term nature of the latter arrangements.
SCC/002 - Looked after children changing school (%)	8.10%	21.78%	The percentage of looked after children changing school has increased and has dropped from an excellent level, top quartile to the bottom quartile. There are good reasons for school moves in all of the cases and are not considered a priority for improvement.
SCC/025 - Appropriate statutory visits (%)	89.00%	88.30%	Performance has decreased by less than 1% since 2013/14. Sustained efforts took place over 2014/15 to monitor and improve performance on statutory visits. Work is currently ongoing to implement the monitoring of LAC statutory visits directly from PARIS, including the testing of functionality to send practitioners automated reminders of stat visits due.
SCC/033(e) - Former looked after children in suitable accommodation at 19 (%)	93.80%	88.89%	Performance has declined to 3 rd quartile. The 88.89% in 2014/15 relates to 8 out of 9. These cases are due to explainable circumstance and are not considered a priority for improvement.

SCC/033(f) - Former looked after children in education, training or employment at 19 (%)	81.30%	55.56%	Performance has declined from an excellent, top quartile position to 3 rd quartile. The 55.56% in 2014/15 relates to 5 out of 9. These cases are due to explainable circumstance and are not considered a priority for improvement.
SCC/041a - Eligible, relevant and former relevant children with pathway plans (%)	90.90	83.33	Performance has declined to the bottom quartile. 2014/15 - 83.33% completed. This equates to 5 out of 6 pathway plans completed within timescale. 1 was completed out of timescale. The young person in question came into our care as a teenager and was not encouraged by their family to work with the Service. It is evidenced that the social worker took time to engage with the young person regarding the process, ultimately leading to a meaningful plan that had received input from the young person, but unfortunately out of timescale.
SCC/045 - Reviews carried out within timescales (%)	94.60%	89.81%	The drop in performance is due to issues with the timely completion of LAC Reviews. This was due to a combination of having two IRO vacancies, illness, cancellations and some administrative issues which have now been resolved. Performance has improved in the first quarter of 2015/16.
PLA/006(b) - Additional affordable housing units provided (%)	49.00%	23.19%	Performance has declined to bottom quartile. The performance of 23% has derived from 69 houses being built during the year (denominator); 16 of which were affordable (numerator). Even though this performance is reported against the National Strategic Indicator for 2014/15, it relates to data from 2013/14. This is due to the way Welsh Government report against this indicator. Actual data for 2014/15 is 60% (74 out of 122 housing units being affordable). The projection for affordable completions for this year up to April 2016 is 38. Out of the last 9 years, Denbighshire has exceeded the Wales average on six occasions. That said we accept there is more we can/should be doing to increase the total number of houses being built in the County and consequently the total number of affordable housing. This is clearly reflected in the emerging, draft Housing Strategy.
STS/005b - Cleanliness of highways (%)	100%	95.5%	The results are based on random samples of roads, so a natural statistical variation is to be expected, and is entirely normal. It is still a very high percentage score.
LCL/001(b) - Library use, per 1,000 population	7827	5798.86	New automatic counters have been installed in libraries, and we're not entirely sure of their accuracy. Also, Rhyl Library staff are reporting much quieter periods since key shops such as Marks & Spencer and Next left the High Street to relocate to Parc Prestatyn. Rhyl's library is going to be refurbished, and the cashiers and a new One-Stop Shop will be located there. It is hoped this might boost public visits, but it should be noted that our position is still 'Good' when benchmarked nationally.

EXTERNAL REGULATION AND INSPECTION WORK

Like all councils in Wales, our work is scrutinised by external regulators to ensure that we use public money efficiently and effectively to deliver benefits for our communities. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) has an annual programme of audit and assessment work which it undertakes in the council, and the conclusions from all this work are brought together in an Annual Improvement Report. Other regulators undertake further work relating to specific service areas, and the main ones are Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW). A summary of the main conclusions from recent external audit and assessment work is provided below. Please note that there has not been an Estyn inspection of the authority in 2014/15.

WALES AUDIT OFFICE

Each year, the Wales Audit Office reports on how well each council is planning for improvement and delivering their services. The latest Annual Improvement Report for Denbighshire was issued in July 2015, and contained no new recommendations for improvement. Overall, the report concluded that the Council continued to make progress in delivering improvements in all of its priority objectives, and its track record in delivering its financial objectives mean it is well placed to secure continuous improvement in 2015-16.

The report contained only two Improvement Proposals. The WAO expects the Council to do something about them and will follow up what happens. The Improvement Proposals are:

- Ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear for the achievement of the new affordable housing objective.

DCC Response:

The Council has taken a number of actions to address the issue:

Restructure – the Council's approach to housing strategy and policy has been strengthened by combining strategy and policy development in one service area – Planning and Public Protection.

Establish an Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group

The Task and Finish Group considered a range of affordable housing issues in depth and agreed a series of clear recommendations for actions aiming to improve the delivery of affordable housing and

simplify policies. These actions will form part of Denbighshire's Housing Strategy Delivery Plan, which will sit alongside the emerging Housing Strategy.

- Review its working practices against the recommendations in the Auditor General's 2014-15 Local Government National Reports, and implement improvements as necessary. (Local Government National Reports cover areas such as Scrutiny, young people classed as NEET, and Environmental Health Services.)

DCC Response:

In future the lead Head of Service will produce a report for committee (whichever is appropriate) on DCC's response to it. The Service Challenge process will also pick up on relevant national studies and highlight relevant recommendations.

Other key findings from the auditors' work included:

1. The use of performance standards continues to promote a consistent culture of ambition across the Council's services.
2. Limited progress has been made in addressing the underperformance in the provision of affordable housing but the Council has helped prevent many people from becoming homeless.
3. The Council has improved the performance of its Human Resource service.
4. The progress of initiatives to support the Denbighshire economy has been inconsistent, but improved arrangements are likely to support the Council's ambitions.
5. The Council is making good progress in committing its Discretionary Housing Payments and improvements in monitoring since April 2015 will help to clarify their impact.
6. The Council has good financial management arrangements with no immediate shortcomings.
7. The Council's risk management arrangements are robust and fit for purpose.
8. The Council produces well informed balanced evaluations of its performance.
9. The Auditor General issued audit certificates stating that the Council had discharged its duties under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.
10. On 28 November 2014, the Appointed Auditor issued an Annual Audit Letter to the Council. The Letter summarises the key messages arising from his statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 as the Appointed Auditor and his reporting

responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice. It confirmed that, on 30 September 2014, he issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's financial statements

CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE WALES (CSSIW)

An annual review of Council Social Services performance is undertaken by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW).

Areas of Progress

- Creative programmes established to meet the emotional well-being of older adults and the adult male population.
- Early consolidation of the practice-based team approach to early intervention model for vulnerable children and their families.
- Implementation of innovative schemes to support the emotional well-being of younger and older adults.
- Use of consultation with adults and their families to feed into the design of services and quality of life for adults especially those with long-term and complex needs.
- Social care and health practitioners are working together more closely to provide assessment and support for people at risk of deteriorating health, including those with complex needs and their families.
- The council began limited weekend working with BCUHB, including the provision of a social worker and also health and social care support workers, to deliver initial packages of care to people leaving hospital.
- Citizen-directed planning and support and partnerships increasing the range of opportunities and choices for older people.
- Annual review performance of those with long term and complex needs.
- Embedding locality practice teams to provide early intervention and support to children and families during unsocial hours and at time of greatest need.
- Appointment of Education Liaison Officer for Looked After Children, and increase in the number of children receiving care plans during their first placement, and completion of permanence plans at second review.
- Reablement service outcomes for people.

Despite being extremely positive overall, this report also contained a number of specific areas for improvement. These challenges and areas for improvement are highlighted below, alongside an analysis of progress made during 2014/15.

Areas for improvement

1. Evaluate the quality of life and outcomes for people with learning disabilities living in the many supported living services.

- Person Centred Planning (PCP) reviews are undertaken with service users across all settings within the learning disability service, including the individuals living in supported houses / community living. On an annual basis the findings from these reviews are summarised under the headings: what's working / what's not working / what's important for the future. These findings are evaluated and consideration is then given at the PCP Steering Group to how best to respond to some of the findings. In the past this has resulted in development of new services, learning lessons, and changing the way we deliver support. A social work post has now been established to specifically review the support delivered to individuals within supported living services with particular focus on delivering outcomes for individuals.
- We are currently reviewing the way in which we monitor and support the supported living arrangements with a view to being more outcome focused. The aim is for individuals to be enabled to progress as far as possible within the limits of their disability. To this end we are reviewing some of the monitoring roles currently in place with a view to becoming less bureaucratic and enabling staff to support individuals to achieve their outcomes.

2. Increase rates of assessment and support for carers.

- As highlighted earlier in this report, during 2014/15 we increased the number and percentage of carers who were offered (and then had) an assessment or review of their needs in their own right, and also the number and percentage of carers who went on to receive a service.

3. Following changes to leadership and the staffing infrastructure, ensure that the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) process is operated in a timely, consistent and authoritative manner across the authority

- Monthly meetings are being held with locality Designated Lead Managers (i.e. team managers and senior practitioners) to discuss the role, share good practice and problem solve.
- A meeting took place in January 2015 to discuss the content of the POVA level 6 training in order to target the areas identified via the POVA audits, and by the team managers and senior practitioners themselves.

- An audit of a sample of POVA cases is carried out on a quarterly basis to monitor compliance with the Wales Interim Policy and Procedure and ensure consistency of approach. Actions identified via audit are monitored via the monthly meetings with locality managers.

4. Defining a clear strategy and research process for listening to and capturing the experiences and outcomes for children and young people, especially around the recently re-shaped early intervention and children and families support services and in services to looked after children

- Early conversations have taken place with Glyndwr University with a view to strengthening the social care students' research base (core business for the university but working in partnership with social care to maximise learning and development for both organisations). Consideration will be given to the potential for Denbighshire to become an established research organisation and support will be sought from the university to assist with key evaluation activities. It is also the intention to work closely, and reach an agreement with, Public Health Wales to integrate intelligence approaches within each organisation.
- The Voice of the Child project aims to utilise the various multimedia and social media tools available to us in order to improve levels of engagement and consultation with children, young people and their families. We have carried out extensive research into current best practice in this area, and into the potential innovative methods of communication and engagement. We have also consulted with our key stakeholders to understand what methods of communication they currently use, and what the barriers to engagement currently are. The project is still in an early phase, but some new products have already been launched, such as a Facebook page and Twitter account for Children & Family Services. Future plans for 2015/16 include looking into the benefits of creating 'closed' Facebook group for looked after children and foster carers; revising the process for how children and young people participate in their looked after reviews; and the use of blogs, briefing videos, audio recordings and podcasts.

5. Information provided by the council could be further enhanced through the use of mobile technology such as apps and with the preparation and publication of easy-read on-line versions being so that they are accessible to children but also to those who find reading difficult

- A new project has been established in the service that is looking at how to improve the engagement of children, young people and

families in our service delivery and how we can improve our processes for capturing, hearing and responding to their voice. Children, young people and families will be actively involved in this project and there will be an increased use of mobile technology and social media in our approach to engagement and involvement. This project is also linking very closely with a task group that has been set up by the Regional Safeguarding Children's Board (RSCB) Local Service Delivery Group that is looking at strengthening the voice of children and young people in safeguarding processes and activities. The outcomes framework pilot will complement this well with regards to a different conversation with children and families that is focussed on the identification and achievement of personal outcomes.

6. Being clear about the type of services families are signposted to if they do not meet the assessment threshold in order to access the Children and Family Service (only 10% of all assessed meet the threshold).

- Team Around the Family and the wider Families First programme is our primary source of support for those families that do not meet the threshold for the Service and there is a clear pathway for families in accordance with their fluctuating needs with a strong focus on supporting families to be independent and resilient and thus not dependent on statutory services.
- The new Children and Family Support Gateway is a key development that covers the spectrum of need from information and advice through to child protection and children in care. The Gateway's further development will include improved signposting to Family Information Service and under the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) will become the Information, Advice and Assistance response which will develop a more comprehensive knowledge base about the range of services.

7. Evaluating the new intervention methods used and assessing the impact upon the quality of life for children and their families.

- The pilot of the national outcomes framework will help to identify more personal outcomes for children in these areas and will be incorporated into practice.

8. Improved outcomes for looked after children, in particular health, dental and educational outcomes and employment opportunities. Increase the council's support to looked after children through

employment and apprenticeship opportunities and information on rights and entitlements.

- New arrangements have been put in place to increase the completion of health assessments and registration with health practitioners with the appointment of a full time nurse specifically for looked after children (LAC). The LAC nurse post has greatly assisted with the health checks aspect, as this post is less focussed on process and more focussed on improving outcomes for individual children. Performance improvements are now starting to show, with 73.5% of the required health assessments for Looked after Children being undertaken during 2014/15, compared to 38.4% in 2013/14. The focus on personal education plans has seen an improvement in performance up to 100% during 2014/15, up from 22.2% the previous year.
- The focus of attention will now be on monitoring the effectiveness of the new arrangements and for ensuring there are robust arrangements in place within Health and Education in order to ensure that the service is not solely reliant on one or two dedicated post holders.
- The availability of employment and apprenticeship opportunities across the Council/County are explored as and when young people require placements, and the 14+ team report that there is positive engagement from the range of Council services in providing options. Avenues and opportunities are continually explored through the Corporate Parenting Forum.
- A review of the impact of the waking hours family support service is to be undertaken as a priority in the 2015/16 business plan.

9. Improving placement stability for looked after children

- As discussed earlier in the report, 9.9% of children looked after had three or more placements during 2014/15, which is a slight improvement from 10.4% during 2013/14. Performance in relation to this is constantly monitored throughout the year to ensure we respond in a timely way to concerns. The service provides narrative on planned and positive moves for young people and continues to train foster carers so that a range of placements can be offered. Placement support meetings are held following placement disruptions and feedback on all placements are monitored through the quality assurance framework in order to ensure all learning is gleaned and acted upon.
- A project is underway to expand the range of foster care placements that are available for looked after children with disabilities who require

short break placements. The progress of the project is being monitored through the Disability Services Transformation Programme.

WELSH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER

The Welsh language Commissioner produced its Annual Monitoring report in July 2015, looking back at 2014/15.

The Commissioner reported that, during 2013-14, the Council commissioned an independent audit of the Welsh language in Denbighshire. A report was drawn up in 2014/15 which submitted 90 recommendations to the authority. The Council intends to respond to the audit formally in 2015, and draw up an action plan.

The Welsh Language Commissioner also made the following recommendations:

1. Provide an update on formalising monitoring of third party compliance via an annual report from the procurement department.
2. Provide an update on the work that the Council commissioned from Deeside College to design a training pack for staff.
3. Provide an update in terms of identifying language champions in order to promote the Welsh language.
4. Explain why information was not collected regarding the ability of the 1972 employees whose linguistic skills are unknown.