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# Annual Performance Review

**2017-18**

**Corporate Plan / Project Register /  
Statutory Performance Framework**

This document is also available in Welsh, and may be available in other formats on request



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## LANGUAGE SIGNPOST

This document may be available in other formats on request:

Os ydych angen gwybodaeth bellach, gofynnwch os gwelwch yn dda i rhywun yr ydych yn gwybod sydd yn siarad Cymraeg neu Saesneg i ffonio 01824 706291

If you need further information, please ask someone you know who speaks English or Welsh to telephone 01824 706291

Jeżeli potrzebują państwo dalszych informacji, proszę poprosić kogoś, kto mówi po angielsku lub walijsku żeby zadzwonił pod numer 01824 706291

اگر آپ کو مزید معلومات درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی انگریزی یا ویلش زبان جاننے والے اپنے کسی واقف کار سے کہیں کہ وہ آپ کی جانب سے فون نمبر 01824 706291 سے رابطہ کریں۔

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Se você precisar de nova informação, por favor pergunte alguém você sabe quem diz o galês o'r inglês para telefonar 01824 706291

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مزيد من المعلومات ، يرجى الطلب من شخص ما تعرف من يتحدث الإنجليزية أو الويلزية الهاتف 01824706161

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We welcome correspondence in Welsh. There will be no delay in  
responding to correspondence received in Welsh.

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## FOREWORD

Each year we review our performance and evaluate success in delivering real benefits for our communities. This report is a review of our performance during the 2017-18 financial year.

County Council elections in May 2017 resulted in a new team of elected Members, and it was during this last year that the council agreed a new five-year Corporate Plan for 2017-22, with 2017-18 representing the first year of that plan. We're very proud of this plan, which has been developed within the context of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Based on thorough research of the strengths, challenges, and future risks and opportunities for our communities – coupled with extensive and in-depth conversations with our residents and professional colleagues – success in delivering this plan should ensure our communities have the ingredients to support people to live independent and fulfilled lives in the future.

The plan sets out our priorities for the five-year period, and this report evaluates our progress so far. We know that the priorities will take several years to deliver, and we realise that the full benefits of this plan will be realised beyond 2022. We also know that we can't deliver this alone. This is a plan for our communities, and its scope has not been limited to that which is in the Council's 'gift' to deliver. Therefore, working with residents, public sector partners, not-for-profit sector colleagues and the private sector will be important if we are to achieve our goals. You can read more about our approach to delivering against our plan by reading the Sustainable Development section under each priority.

Previously, in addition to our Corporate Plan, the Council has had a separate Strategic Equality Plan. With the focus on well-being for all that runs through our Corporate Plan, we've now integrated the two, demonstrating that equality work is a key principle through our day-to-day work, rather than a separate activity. Again, you can read commentary on how we are delivering for people with protected characteristics in the Equalities section under each priority.

I am pleased to say that we have made good progress with our priorities during 2017-18, and have laid the foundations for further success by adopting a programme management approach to delivering our Corporate Plan. This will see that we stay focussed on our long-term goals, take collective responsibility for the actions we take and our approach to those actions, and regularly check that the direction we're taking remains relevant and sufficiently ambitious.

I am proud to say that in recent years Denbighshire has consistently been one of the highest performing councils in Wales, according to the indicators used by the Welsh Government to evaluate local government performance. Despite 2017-18 being a year of significant change - a new Council, a new Corporate Plan, and the departure of one Chief Executive that has given me the opportunity to join this organisation – not only is our aim to continue being a high performing Welsh council, but also to focus on the impact we’re having on the day-to-day lives of our residents.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Greenhalgh'.

Judith Greenhalgh  
Chief Executive at Denbighshire County Council



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hugh H Evans'.

Councillor Hugh Evans  
Leader of the Council

## GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

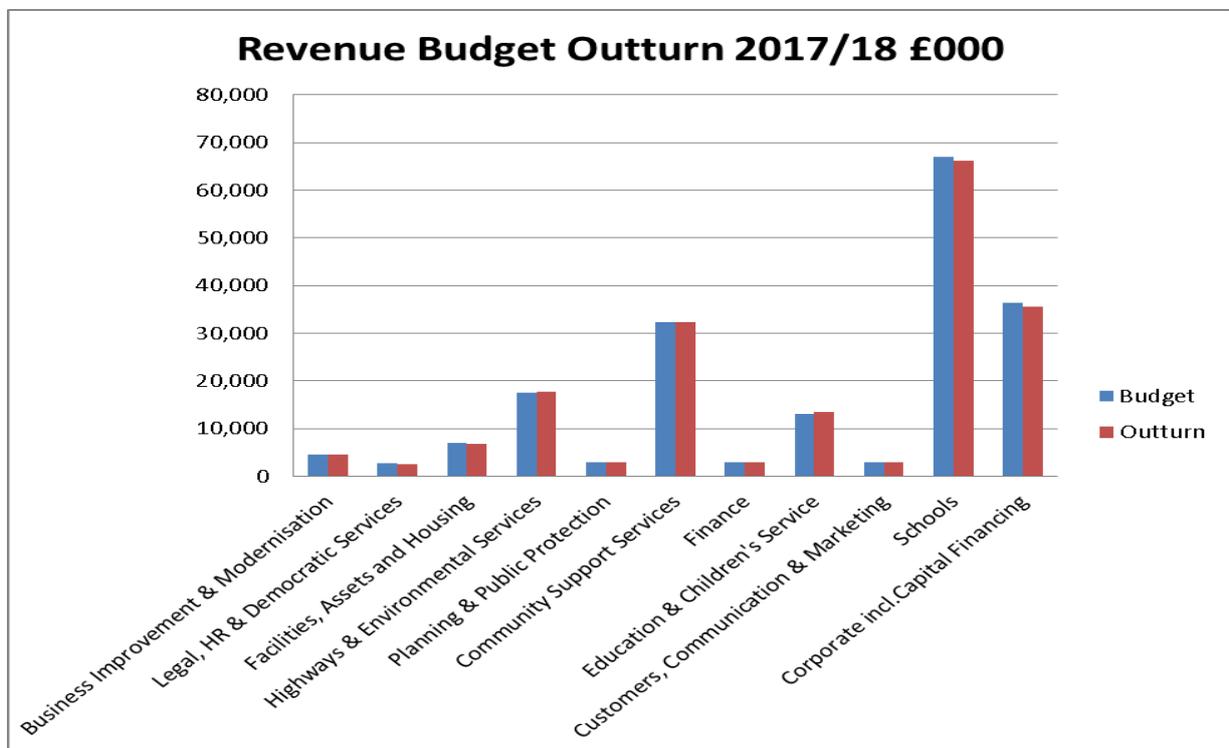
Acronym	Meaning
BCUHB	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
C&DCSP	Conwy & Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
DCC	Denbighshire county Council
NEWCIS	North East Wales Carers Information Service
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
PASS	Pupil Attitudes to Self and School
WIMD	Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation
STEAM	Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor
DFG	Disabled Facilities Grants
CET	Corporate Executive Team
PAM	Public Accountability Measures
eFSM	entitlement to Free School Meals
DFG	Disabled Facilities Grants
WAO	Wales Audit Office

## 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 Welsh Government Grants, Council Tax and Business Rate payers and service users. For 2017-18 the gross revenue budget was £296.5m.

As part of the ongoing reductions to public spending, the funding available to local government has continued to reduce and the council had to bridge a gap of £4.4m to balance the budget. The council identified £1.4m of corporate savings and a planned cash contribution of £2.1m from the use of balances and a specific budget mitigation reserve. This meant that services were protected as much as possible, and they contributed £0.9m in efficiency savings.

To deliver its budgets for 2017-18, the council underwent a rigorous budget process to identify areas for savings and cuts. We asked all services to identify efficiency savings amounting to 1% of their net budgets. In the autumn a series of meetings involving Cabinet members and Heads of Service considered the budget proposals, service reserves and further possible savings. All this information informed the 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 a series of Member budget workshops and circulated to staff and trade unions. The table below shows where the council spends its money:



By the end of the year the Council spent £1.1m less than it budgeted for on services and corporate budgets, including schools delegated budgets. Service balances at year-end were £0.407m. Although it remains a difficult financial period for schools, investment in school budgets in 2017-

18 (which more than funded inflationary pressures) and the close working relationship between the Council and schools in producing robust three year financial plans, has resulted in an improved financial position for schools. (Schools reported an in-year underspend of £0.713m resulting in a net deficit balance of £0.343m.) During the year the Council made a net contribution to a budget mitigation reserve. This is part of the council's ongoing budget strategy.

There have continued to be reductions in the council's funding. However, due to the use of cash from the Budget Mitigation Reserve and General Balances (£2.0m) and the identification of savings from corporate contingency budgets (£3.0m), the level of efficiencies required from services for 2018-19 has been kept as low as possible (£1.6m). The budget process for 2019-20 and beyond is also underway. After the planned use of general balances (£1.4m) an initial budget gap of £7.5m was identified. A Budget Board has been set up to help plan the Council's response and approach to this challenge, and currently approximately £3.9m of efficiencies and savings have been identified and proposed.

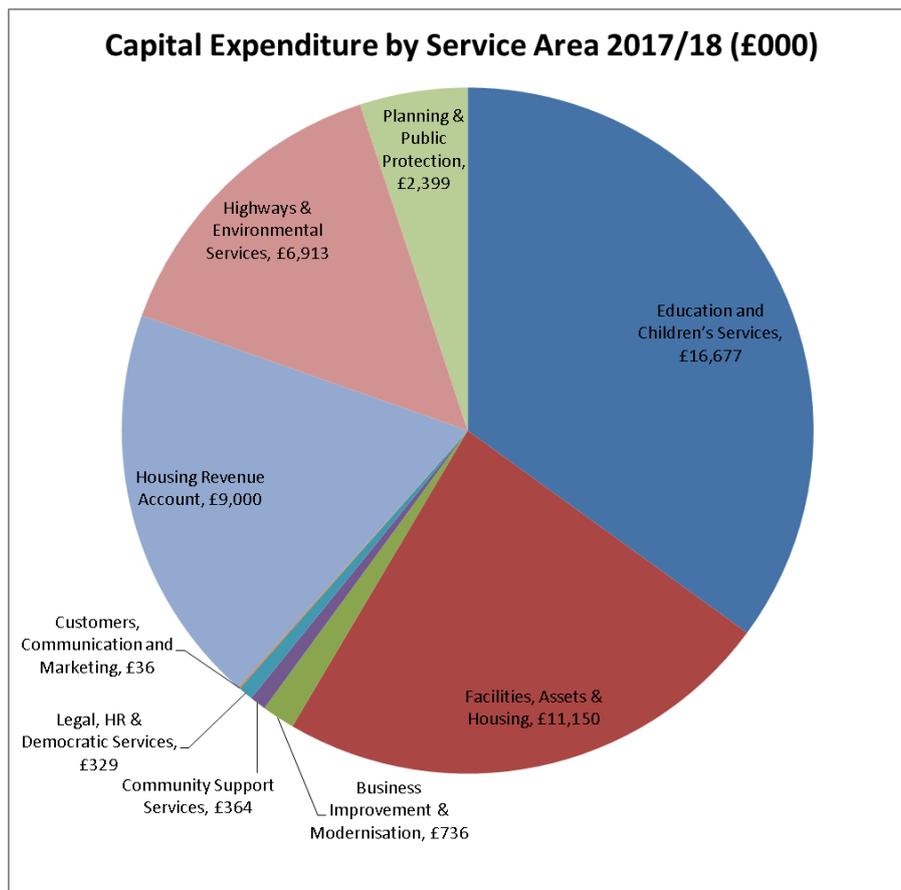
During 2017-18 the council continued its commitment to delivering the 2012-17 Corporate Plan, which aimed to deliver significant investment in schools, social care facilities and roads. Expenditure on Corporate Plan projects was £16.8m in 2017-18, which included £7.9m on the two Ruthin schools at the Glasdir site; £3.2m on Ysgol Glan Clwyd; £1.4m on the Faith School in Rhyl (Christ the Word Catholic School), and £3.0m on highways maintenance and bridges. While the current five-year Plan ended in 2017-18, it was always envisaged that some of the major investment projects within it would be delivered over a longer timeframe; therefore planned investment of £41m will roll forward into the next two years. These projects include two further schools in the Ruthin area, and completion of the new faith school in Rhyl.

Following Council elections last year, the council approved the new Corporate Plan 2017-22: 'Working Together for the Future of Denbighshire', which builds on this track record of delivery. The overall ambition of this Plan is to ensure that Denbighshire is a place where residents and businesses are well connected and resilient; where young people have opportunities for affordable housing and acquire skills and jobs to lead successful and fulfilling lives, and where we can all enjoy an attractive and protected environment. Like the last plan, this Corporate Plan contains specific actions that will be delivered over five years. Perhaps even more importantly though, these actions are designed to have an impact beyond the next five years with future generations in mind.

This Corporate Plan sets out our ambitious but deliverable priorities for the next five years. Some of these priorities will require significant capital investment, others revenue funding, and some may be delivered at no additional cost. We think we need to invest somewhere in the region of an additional £135m in our corporate priorities over the next five years, if we are to achieve all that we'd like. To pay for the capital investment identified, we will need to commit revenue budget and cash to the priorities. During 2017-18 we identified £0.5m of our revenue budget for 2018/19 and £1m cash to support the new corporate priorities. Future annual budget allocations will be required, but it is recognised that this will be difficult to achieve as the council's total budget reduces.

Although £135m is a large sum, the council would not have to provide all of this money itself. We expect that grants from the Welsh Government will be available to help fund the planned work to improve our schools and flood defences. We also plan to use income from housing rent to help fund the new council housing. In reality, we think that the council may have to contribute around £71m of the £135m.

With these levels of additional investment, we must deliver drastic improvements. If we are successful – and we believe we will be – Denbighshire will be fit for the future, and continue to be one of the best places in the UK to live, learn, work and visit. Total capital expenditure across council service areas is shown below:



## INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overall assessment of the performance of Denbighshire County Council during 2017-18, and contains sections on the following elements of our work:

1. The Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22: A narrative on the progress in delivering our corporate priorities including the current status and programme progress. Included in each corporate priority subsection there are also case studies, sustainable development and diversity and equalities information included.
2. Key principles in all that we do: Sustainable Development, Equality & Diversity, Welsh Language, and how they are woven into general council business.
3. The council's project register, and progress in delivering key projects that support our corporate priorities.
4. The council's performance in relation to the Public Accountability Measures (PAMs), which are used 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 is articulated as an "outcome", which describes 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 contribution 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 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 that provides context for outfor performance evaluation is where performing at the Wales upper quartile or above reflects the transition to Excellent, and performing at the Wales median or below reflects the transition to a Priority for Improvement. Performance half way between these points are categorised as either Good or Acceptable.
- Where national data is not available, we have taken a local view on what excellence looks like.
- The default position for project reporting is documented in the project management methodology, summarised above (Action Status).

This is the summary position for each Outcome in the Corporate Plan at 31 March 2018. The overall evaluation for each priority has been determined by taking account of the indicators, performance measures, and improvement activity.

For each priority there are two pieces of commentary:

- *Performance Status* provides narrative and an assessment of what the indicators tell us about our communities at present;
- *Programme Progress* sections outline how projects identified in support of each priority are developing.

The *Performance Status* gives an indication about how things are in our communities at present. Having recognised these are areas in which we want to improve during the life of this Corporate Plan, we wouldn't expect to be performing well in relation to these indicators at the present time.

The Programme of work we have in place to address these indicators should have a positive impact over time, so progress in this area is important. The *Programme Progress* status for each priority reflects this. The status will inform readers of whether the projects are being delivered on time, to cost, and to quality. This is an important area for Scrutiny to consider.

It's possible to have a poor *Performance Status* but a strong *Programme Progress* status. As we progress towards the completion of this Plan, we'd anticipate that both would match positively (i.e. both would be at least Good).

In addition to the *Performance Status* and *Programme Progress* this report details case studies, commentary on how the Sustainable Development principles are being applied, and the progress made toward achieving our diversity and equality agenda. Case studies included in this report highlight the positive progress made toward achieving the corporate priority actions and the tangential benefits that come with a progressive corporate plan. The diversity and equality achievements in this report describe the actions taken by Denbighshire County Council toward achieving a fairer, more involved and more cohesive community in Denbighshire.

SUMMARY POSITION OF CORPORATE PLAN AT 31 MARCH 2018

Priority	Performance Status	Programme Progress Status
<b>Housing:</b> Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs	ACCEPTABLE	GOOD
<b>Connected Communities:</b> Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links	ACCEPTABLE	GOOD
<b>Resilient Communities:</b> The Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience	PRIORITY FOR IMPROVEMENT	GOOD
<b>Environment:</b> Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity	ACCEPTABLE	GOOD
<b>Young People:</b> A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so	PRIORITY FOR IMPROVEMENT	GOOD

## HOUSING: EVERYONE IS SUPPORTED TO LIVE IN HOMES THAT MEET THEIR NEEDS

### Summary

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It is recognised that there is a need to ensure housing is available to meet the needs of Denbighshire residents, and that this is an important factor in retaining or attracting young people to live in the area. During the last Corporate Plan we made a commitment to develop housing availability, and we want to continue to expand on those successes over the course of this new Corporate Plan.

### Performance Status

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#### Acceptable

An additional 196 homes were delivered in Denbighshire during 2017-18, 63 of which were affordable. This is on target with the Corporate Plan's aspiration of delivering an additional 1,000 homes over five years, 260 of which are to be affordable.

Responses to the Residents' Survey 2018 will inform us of satisfaction with regard to the standard and availability of housing within the county. Results are anticipated to be reported on later in 2018.

The Additional Council Housing Developments project involves using the funds within the Housing Revenue Account to support investment in the provision of 170 additional homes for social rent. The project is currently on target with an anticipated start for the first developments in Rhyl and Prestatyn to begin in September 2018. This will involve the construction of energy efficient homes, demonstrating integration between this and the Environment priority.

There were 1,289 people on the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) list at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. Work will be done to compare this performance and track trends in order to establish performance thresholds.

147 in total Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and Major Adaptations were completed during 2017-18, enabling people to better maintain their independence and continue to live safely in their own homes. This is an increase of 23 on the previous year. These efforts have reduced the specialist housing waiting list, however some long term complex cases will take more significant efforts to resolve.

A total of 1,088 people have been supported into homes that meet their needs during 2017-18. This can be a combination of people at risk of becoming homeless and adults needing placements to support community living.

### Good

A total of seven projects are currently planned in support of this priority. Some are completely new, others are important projects that were already underway and will now be monitored by the Corporate Priority Programme Boards, with progress being reported via quarterly performance reports.

Business Cases have been brought to the Board covering: Extra Care Housing; the building of 170 council homes (with the first seven homes to start construction in September of this year); the provision of 260 affordable homes, and bringing 500 empty properties back into use. These are now live projects, with construction of the Extra Care complex of 71 units in Middle Lane, Denbigh being overseen by Grwp Cynefin (the tender process for the

construction contract is currently underway). Ruthin's Awelon site will feature over 30 new extra care homes, with planning consent anticipated in September, ahead of construction starting in June 2019.

Projects that are being scoped out during the next few months include one around the provision of specialist housing to support people with disabilities and low-level support needs, an additional supply of private sector homes, and also supporting young people to access suitable and affordable homes.



Proposed living apartments on the derelict Middle Lane buildings in Denbigh

### Additional housing

Welsh Government awarded additional funding (£914k) in March 2018 to deliver affordable housing in Denbighshire. This is in addition to the annual grant funding award. This grant funding is being used to fund a range of affordable housing schemes in Denbighshire to be delivered by 2022 including:

- 20 properties at Prestatyn Police Station – mixture of houses and flats;
- Around 40 apartments for older people at the site of the former Grange Hotel, Rhyl;
- 74 extra care homes at Lon Ganol, Denbigh;
- Rural affordable homes: two at Cynwyd and two at Rhewl
- 28 apartments and four houses in Rhyl;
- Large house for homelessness priority cases;
- Five affordable empty homes across the County;
- Five homebuys across the County – assisting people to purchase their own home;
- Five Rent to Own properties in Rhyl – providing opportunity to rent at market and then purchase the property.

### Homelessness prevention

In August 2017 Ms B was brought to the attention of the Homelessness Prevention Team by her landlord who had served her with an eviction notice for arrears and failing to keep the property she lived in habitable. Our Tenancy Sustainment Officer met with Ms B and her Landlord at her property. At this meeting it became clear that Ms B had more than just financial issues. We therefore enlisted the support of a Social Worker, Family Aid Worker and Family Support Worker.

Ms B responded positively to our intervention and engaged fully. Using discretionary housing payment and a request to the Vicar's Relief Fund, steps were made to bring Ms B out of arrears. The Family Aid Worker worked hard with Ms B to improve the standard of the property and had all the rubbish removed to the satisfaction of the Landlord. The Family Support Worker then became involved and - on top of supporting the children with food hampers and Christmas presents - she also supported Ms B with tackling her debt problems.

Eight months, later Ms B has no rent arrears and her landlord has not enforced the Section 21 notice. Overall, a successful case whereby homelessness has been prevented through effective team work from different teams within Community Support Services.

### Housing

Our Corporate Plan outlines our commitment to increase the supply and accessibility of housing to people with protected characteristics, particularly those of age and disability. This is due to the valuable *involvement* of residents and professionals during the County Conversation work. As part of this response we must *collaborate* with Registered Social Landlords, private landlords, and homebuilders.

We are committed to raising the energy efficiency standards of our current housing stock, pledging that all will achieve an energy efficiency rating of 'C'. This pledge *integrates* with our Environment priority, and will also *prevent* the risk of fuel poverty for our residents.



Proposed housing development in Prestatyn

By managing a diversity of housing stock and creating acceptance for alternative living Denbighshire County Council endeavours to facilitate everyone's right to a safe and secure place to live.

### **Living in your own home for longer**

The Housing department is currently carrying out a review of its Older People's provision to gain a clearer understanding of tenants' potential needs, such as Telecare provision, adequacy of equipment, level of support and suitability of current sheltered stock.

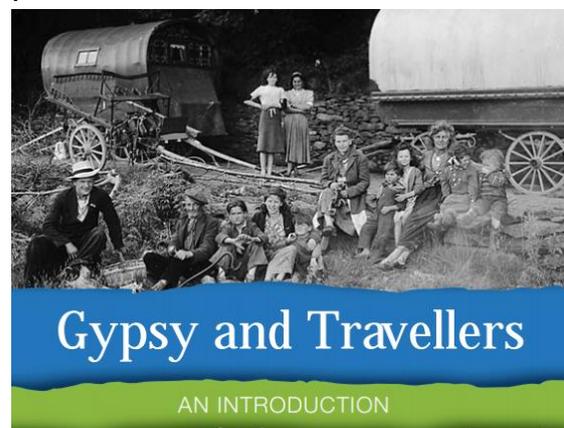
### **Making housing work for the community**

The inclusion of Community Benefit clauses in all major works tenders supports provision of long term community resilience in the form of local employment and training opportunities. This is particularly sustainable through the North Wales Construction Framework, which gives the potential for longevity of employment across a large number of projects.

### **Homes for communities in need**

We now have six Syrian families living in the county. The families are housed in county wide locations. Several other private rented sector properties are at different stages of advancement and completion in joining the scheme, and it is hoped we will have another three families residing in the county by later in 2018, taking the total up to nine.

We have produced a myth buster leaflet to challenge commonly held misconceptions and negative stereotypes that exist around the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller culture. This is published on our website and has been shared with the local media and staff. We support delivery of appropriate accommodation for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller residential and transit sites, as identified in the Needs Assessment. We have been working with representatives from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to progress the delivery of the proposed residential and transit sites, and have appointed a project manager and a project team who have begun to identify possible locations for the sites



Denbighshire introduction to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

## CONNECTED COMMUNITIES: COMMUNITIES ARE CONNECTED AND HAVE ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES LOCALLY, ONLINE AND THROUGH GOOD TRANSPORT LINKS

### Summary

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Denbighshire understands that access to goods and services is key to maintaining people's independence. However, depending on where you live, this is not always easy. During the course of this new Corporate Plan, Denbighshire will make it a priority to ensure that communities throughout the county are connected and have access to goods and services.

### Performance Status

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#### Acceptable

The contact with the council online has been broadly stable lately (there was a spike in December 2017 due to electronic reporting of pot holes during adverse weather). A project to make more council services available and accessible online will be developed.

Four indicators are used to assess the condition of our roads: the percentage of principal (A); non-principal (B); and (C) roads that are in overall poor condition, plus a combination of all three 2017-18.

The percentage of principal (A) and (C) roads that are in overall poor condition is anticipated to be 'excellent' when compared to the performance of our 'family group' of similar local authorities during 2016-17. This will be confirmed once national data is published in October/November 2018.

5.1% of non-principal (B) roads 2017-18 in overall poor condition (280 kilometres were surveyed with 14km identified as being in poor condition). Although an improvement on the previous year, 5.1% is considered to be a 'priority for

improvement' based on the condition of roads in our 'family group' of similar local authorities. Denbighshire ranked 8th in the 'family group'. Our position when compared against all of Wales is 16<sup>th</sup>.

4G mobile network signal on our roads is improving slowly. As at January 2018, 33.65% of A and B roads in Denbighshire had mobile 4G signal, an increase of 18.936% since December 2017. This is better than both the Wales average (32%) and average coverage in Welsh rural areas (24%). The percentage of A and B roads (all operators) in the UK for rural areas was 33% as at January 2018.

Notwithstanding this improvement, this remains a priority for improvement because there remain - across the county - too many areas with no 4G coverage by all operators.

Current superfast coverage (> than 30mbps) in Denbighshire was at 90.5% on 24 April 2018. In terms of rank, out of all 650 constituencies in the UK, Vale of Clwyd was 395th, Clwyd West ranked as 557th and Clwyd South as 513rd. We have

slipped further in terms of coverage when ranked against other UK constituencies since the last period, and the pace of improvement in Denbighshire is slower (a 0.1% increase since January 2018). This is therefore an important topic of focus.

The overall likelihood of digital exclusion in Denbighshire is extremely high, measuring at 9 on a 9-point scale (with 9 indicating the highest likelihood). The score is based on a combination of the following digital and social indicators: infrastructure, the number of people who have never been online, Basic Digital Skills; Basic Digital Skills used; age; education; income and health.

8 of 58 of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Denbighshire are among the 10% most deprived in Wales in terms of Access to Services (WIMD) (2014). Typically, the LSOAs that perform poorly in this category don't usually feature other deprivation factors. Llandrillo is the most deprived in Denbighshire in terms of access to services, and the 7th most deprived in Wales overall.

We are developing a business case to better enable people to travel to work, education and services, which should have a positive impact on this situation, though it will take time to put the corrective measures in place. The first step is to produce a business case. This work is scheduled for completion in the next 12 months, and will involve significant work with partners and residents in order to ensure the business case is based around users' needs.

We are developing a business case to improve infrastructure to make it easier to stage events, recognising that organising and attending community events is beneficial both for individual well-being, community cohesion, and increasing local leisure spend. This project therefore also integrates with the Community Resilience and Environment priorities.



Rhyl Air show 2017

There are six projects currently planned that will help communities in Denbighshire to become better connected.

We are developing a project brief to better enable people to travel to work, education and services. The project is aiming to make active travel the most attractive travel option for local journeys, whilst securing sustainable and viable public transport with better links to strategic employment sites and services, including health services. The project will require significant work with partners and communities to ensure long-standing issues with transport can be resolved. There will be a focus on community travel, making travel easier (cashless payment for instance), and Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure.

We are also investing in roads and bridges. Our aim is to see current road condition performance maintained (as highlighted above). In addition to road condition, the project will achieve three key benefits. The benefits are to:

- Reduce reactive maintenance, which is always more expensive and time consuming than planned maintenance. Delivery of this programme will therefore assist in limiting this waste of resource (i.e. pot-holes).
- Reduce the success rate of third party claims raised. If our roads are in a poor condition we are at risk of litigation.
- Reduce the number of bridges with weight restrictions so more traffic can travel around easily.

Project Briefs have been brought to the boards for initiatives that will: ensure council information is accessible online; reduce digital exclusion, and make superfast broadband and mobile networks available to everyone. The latter of these projects will focus on encouraging community-led projects, improving digital infrastructure of areas of social housing, and removing barriers that prevent network providers from using public sector assets to extend the reach of their infrastructure.

We are developing a project brief to improve infrastructure to make it easier to stage events. Communities told us during our County Conversation how much they value local events and the project is considering ways we can invest in fixed and mobile infrastructure that can benefit local communities wanting to hold their own events. We also want to make Denbighshire an attractive place for promoters to hold big events. This project therefore integrates with the Community Resilience and Environment priorities.

Despite work starting on these projects now, due to the level of complexity inherent in all they're likely to take two-three years to deliver.

### **Universal Credit assistance delivered in libraries**

The roll out of Universal Credit has seen libraries working closely with other public and third sector partners to provide the best possible service for claimants. As well as the Assisted Digital service, libraries also refer claimants to other key support services, particularly Citizens' Advice. We have introduced the Refernet system across the county to process referrals, and Skype facilities have been set up in Llangollen so that people can video-conference Citizens Advice advisors.

### **Connected support for a digital future**

Due to ill-health which reduced his mobility, Mr G lost his job as a factory labourer and he struggled to return to work. After remaining unemployed for several years and attending a number of required placements, Mr G was referred to Working Denbighshire's OPUS Social Care Mentor.

Mr G started to realise that he had some very useful office skills and that he could be proud of his achievements. Through one-to-one engagement with the mentor at Rhuddlan library, Mr G completed ECDL level 2 and a foundation course as an IT Technician. He attended an interview and started volunteering at a local voluntary organisation, participating in training and planning his future. He has worked out for himself that his potential earnings would be more worthwhile than being on benefits and the social interaction of his new role is strengthening his motivation to work.

### **Everyone is coming to Denbighshire**

The economic benefit of tourism in Denbighshire is continuing to grow. The latest STEAM economic impact figures show that in 2017 tourism brought £490.35million into the local economy, an increase of 2.3 per cent on 2016, and of 70 per cent since 2007. Last year tourism supported 6,231 jobs in Denbighshire, while 5.93m people visited the county (an increase of 25 per cent since 2007) for a total of 11.58m days. The number of visitors to the coast increased to 3.16m, as did the number of visitor days spent (6.92m) and the number of staying visitors (900,000). In total, last year there were 1.5m staying visitors who contributed a total of £331.46m to the economy in 2017, a 50 per cent increase in staying visitors compared to 2007. Denbighshire County Council continues to support tourism via strong partnership working in North Wales to capitalise on the growing tourism market. The council also runs projects to upskill staff working in tourism related businesses to improve the visitor experience, and creates new tourism leaflets and promotional films to reach wider audiences, as well supporting key events and festivals such as Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod.

As a council, Denbighshire has recognised the importance of staying connected. This means investing in the technologies that will keep our communities connected in the *long-term*, and is why we are working with the Welsh Government's Superfast Cymru project.

We also recognise that connectivity is complex. While we want to improve travel infrastructure in Denbighshire, we also recognise that some people may want to remove the need to travel at all, by accessing goods and services (or working) online. Through *involving* people in the County Conversation we know some residents may not feel confident, or lack the skills or means to access services online. For this reason, all of our Corporate Plan projects are managed together as a programme to ensure we plan in a joined-up way that maximises opportunities.

During late 2017 we concluded a consultation on the draft plans to improve walking and cycling routes in the county through new active travel routes. Active Travel means walking and cycling (including electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters) for everyday short-distance journeys, such as journeys to school, work, or for access to shops, services and bus/rail stations. By investing in active travel we are encouraging people to adopt healthier lifestyles and lower carbon transport (*prevention* of further problems, and *integration* of complementary goals), and we'll work in *collaboration* to design this solution.

Keeping our communities connected allows everyone to have a voice. Whether this means the ability to access the internet, reach a meeting or communicate in their chosen language. Denbighshire County Council is making steps toward equalising people's access to their communities and the global community.

### **Networking within the community**

Community Development Coordinators are officers who have been working with residents and community groups to expand the use of our network of resource / community centres. These officers are working to make these centres vibrant hubs for communities, and will be key to providing a wide range of activities to develop capacity within communities and create opportunities to reduce social isolation. Whether part of a retirement complex or part of a wider estate, we want activities to bring communities together.

### **Digital Exclusion**

People with protected characteristics are more likely to be digitally excluded, and it is likely the projects in this priority will need to understand the causes of digital exclusion in Denbighshire. This may require targeted interventions.

### **Accessing your community through your chosen language**

We continue to monitor the percentage of people reporting they were able to communicate with us in their preferred language. Currently service users for Community Support Services report 97% positive response in terms of being able to communicate in their preferred language.

### **Physical access to your community**

Dropped kerbs are probably the most visible way that our Highways team works to improve access, and this is directly linked to the Supporting Independence in Denbighshire and wellbeing agendas. It also feeds directly into the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) FG Act 2015 This is something we would like to develop further (subject to available resources).

## RESILIENT COMMUNITIES: THE COUNCIL WORKS WITH PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES TO BUILD INDEPENDENCE AND RESILIENCE

### Summary

In Denbighshire we aim to promote people's health and well-being and encourage them to remain as independent as possible. In order to do this we need to work with everyone in the community, to ensure that there are strong support networks in place and ensure people have more involvement in decisions affecting their future well-being. At the same time we will continue to make sure that people at risk of abuse or exploitation are safeguarded.

### Performance Status

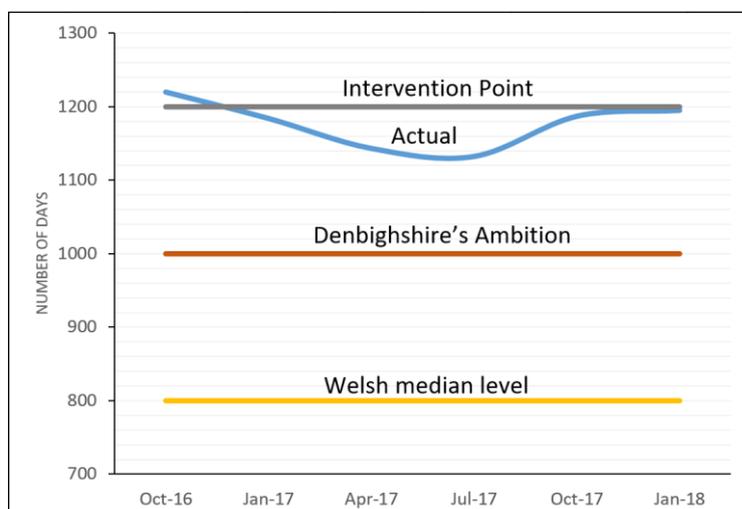
#### Priority for Improvement

Although a proportion of the indicators for this priority are either counts or will not be known until the results of the Residents' Survey 2018 are available, there are some important indicators where there is much to achieve before performance will be deemed Acceptable. Therefore the status at present is a Priority for Improvement.

The percentage of people reporting they have received the right information or advice when they needed it is at an Acceptable level, slightly higher than the

Welsh average at 81.7%, based on the national survey.

The average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes for the year remained at 1,195 days and is showing as 'priority for improvement'. Although this is high in relation to the Wales average (800), it is understood that Denbighshire has a high average age population so it has been agreed that Denbighshire's average should not exceed 1,200 (this figure will be reviewed annually). Over the next



This plot shows the average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes (Blue).

Banded shades show the agreed intervention point for Denbighshire of 1200 (Grey) and the ambition to reduce to no more than 1,000 days on average (Orange).

three years we aspire to reduce this figure to below 1000 days.

We have and continue to work to reducing the number of new admissions to residential care homes through the use of both modern and traditional care packages in the home, and by working with people to maximise their independence. Overall, this means the number of people we support in residential care has diminished, but will take a number of years to bring the total to an acceptable level due to the long term nature of the services already being provided.



Proposed living apartments, Middle Lane buildings in Denbigh

Carers play a pivotal role in supporting vulnerable people to live at home. They often support people with complex and long term care needs, and this can be a challenging and demanding role. Carers contribute 96% of care in the community in Wales (Carers Wales), so looking after their well-being is vital to deliver sustainable social services. A breakdown in the caring role due to a reduction in the carer's resilience is often a precursor to

significant packages of care. In Denbighshire, the recent annual Have Your Say survey asked carers whether they felt supported in their caring role. Only 56.5% answered positively (compared to a national average of 67.8%). Furthermore, of 525 assessments of known carers, only 119 (23%) went on to have a support plan. This suggests there is much to do to better support carers and address the taboo of identifying as a carer and accepting the support that's on offer. A project to address this is in development at the moment (see details in section Programme Progress below).

In order to improve performance there are a number of initiatives in place under this Corporate Priority: work to support carers, provision of extra care housing (*integration* with the Housing priority), and the enabling and early prevention projects that include greater access to information that supports people's independence and resilience (e.g. Dewis Cymru), and creating seamless health & social care services.

New questions have been developed in our Residents' Survey 2018 to inform us of the percentage of people who agree 'My local area is a place where people will pull together to improve the local area'. Driven by this aspiration, we have published Community Development web pages, offering communities advice and guidance on a plethora of subjects to support their planned activities.

Further questions inform us of the percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area. Coupled with a question on the use of the National Principles of Engagement within version 2 of our Well-being Impact Assessment, there will be a mechanism in place to report which projects have considered these principles, reflecting the fact that we are committed to enabling and putting into practise earlier *involvement* of service users in service design. During 2017-18 our Engagement Portal was developed and will soon be available to enable residents and partners to engage with policy and project design and delivery.

Domestic abuse is a community safety issue that has negative implications not just on its direct impact on victims, but also (and particularly) affecting children, often triggering issues of poverty and adverse childhood experiences that have repercussions into adulthood. The number of recorded incidents of domestic abuse are much increased since last year. Her Majesty's Inspectorate visited all Police forces in England and Wales in 2016 and found that crime reporting could be improved, and this increase could be due to the new capturing crimes methods on the police system.

The number of repeat offenders of domestic abuse has ranged from 20 persons to 28 persons. This figure counts repeat adult offenders of two or more domestic crimes in a rolling 12 month period.

It's important to note that many of the projects under this priority put in place *preventative* measures that should have a positive effect on the trends of these indicators. However, they are influencing and enabling in their nature (rather than delivering tangible outputs), and we must be conscious that the assumptions we've made could pose a risk to our achieving our goals (e.g. we assume that if advice is made available online our residents and/or those supporting them will access and follow this advice). For these cases it will be important to follow-up post-project implementation to check the impact of our interventions.

Of the six projects currently identified in support of this priority, two are already being delivered: Supporting people to plan and shape their communities, and People are involved in shaping and improving services (see section on Indicators above).

A business case has been developed for the project to support carers, and it is recognised that this topic is a particularly emotive one. We will therefore endeavour to ensure that we share our ideas early on in order to support involvement. The project will further develop support for carers (including young carers) living with - or caring for - a citizen in Denbighshire - in order to improve their well-being. The project will draw in support from the authority's key business areas in order to identify priority actions to broaden the range of support available to carers. The project will also identify actions in relation to current commissioning of carer's services and operational processes.

Project briefs for tackling domestic abuse (through awareness for staff and young people), and enabling information that supports resilience and independence to be accessed are being developed.

A significant project is that of designing seamless health & social care services in the form of Community Resource Teams. Denbighshire is working in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) to deliver this project, with BCUHB being the lead delivery partner. The aim of the Community Resource Teams is to deliver comprehensive, flexible and responsive multi-agency and multidisciplinary community health & social care services, which are easily and seamlessly accessible from the citizen's perspective. There are four priority areas for development: Rhyl, Prestatyn, Denbigh and Ruthin.

### **Consolidating care to keep families together**

A 58 year old carer caring for his wife with memory loss and multiple health problems approached the council with feelings of guilt and stress for struggling with juggling work and his caring role. Support from Denbighshire has enabled him to implement a support budget that provides more flexibility, and gain control over his wife's package of care through use of day care and residential respite in a more effective way. The carer also received professional counselling via NEWCIS (North East Wales Carers Information Service). With more structured support and counselling the carer was able to have better work life balance and his stress and anxiety levels were reduced. Even when his wife's symptoms changed for the worse the couple were able to remain together within their own home environment.

### **Local Arts Project for people living with dementia and their carers**

'Lost in Art' by Denbighshire County Council has been named Best Local Authority Arts Project Encouraging Community Cohesion. Lost in Art is a visual arts project for people living with dementia and their carers. The aim of the project is to explore the role of visual arts in addressing issues that can affect people with dementia, including social isolation, confidence, communication and quality of life. The project was developed with the support of the Arts Council of Wales and the Dementia Services Development

Centre at Bangor University and its Dementia and Imagination research project. There are two groups running in Denbighshire at present one in Rhyl and the other at Ruthin Craft Centre.

### **Bringing information out to the community**

As a result of an informal discussion with an elderly lady at a "Talking Point" event, a Community Navigator was able to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular issue of one couple's struggle with mobility. By attending the event the lady was referred to a Social Care Practitioner who was able to advise and refer the couple for suitable mobility aids and guide them through a Blue Badge application. The Community Navigator also explained that the lady's husband (as a veteran) could be referred to The Royal British Legion if he wanted. The couple - who were previously unaware of the options available - were grateful for a referral to be made. The couple felt that the service provided via the Talking Point attended was "wonderful and amazing".



It's under this priority that we are enthusiastically responding to the *Involvement* principle with an Engagement project that intends to both strengthen our approach to managing the engagement processes, and also move towards more of a co-production type of model that will see residents being involved with shaping services much earlier than is usually the case, and in an ongoing manner. Developments here will lay the foundations for stronger involvement in general.

A number of projects that are planned will require a *collaborative* approach, namely: improving support for carers, integration

of health & social care, and tackling domestic abuse. All are also driven by a desire to *prevent* further need, and are thus *long-term* in nature.

Denbighshire County Council also supports Dewis Cymru in their goal to provide a place for information about well-being in Wales. Dewis Cymru is a single point of information for an *integrated* network of over 6,000 local and national services aimed at maintaining personal wellbeing. By supporting this service we hope to help people work out what matters to them, and to give them information and services to help with their well-being.



**Dewis Cymru**  
Cael dewis a chymryd rheolaeth

As part of Denbighshire County Council's Interim Strategic Equality Plan 2016-18 we said we would implement service user participation developments in social care and community support services. This was done to encourage participation within our communities and develop and support strong support the networks and make a more resilient community within Denbighshire. To realise improvements to diversity and equality and make more resilient communities Denbighshire has achieved the following:

### **Resilience through more independent people**

Staff from Denbighshire County Council's Strategic Leisure team were recently awarded the "Insport" Development Bronze Award by a panel of leading sport professionals. The Insport Development programme is part of the broader Insport project, which aims to support the physical activity, sport, and leisure sectors delivering inclusively of disabled people.

### **Resilience through safer communities**

As a result of a review of the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) process to safeguard victims at high risk of murder or serious harm across North Wales, the Conwy & Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership (C&DCSP) Domestic Violence Lead Officer provided adaptations to the current methodology to ensure greater effectiveness.

All taxi drivers in Denbighshire have received child sexual exploitation (CSE)



Lost in Art meeting in Ruthin Craft Centre

awareness training as part of their licensing arrangements.

### **Resilience through support for vulnerable groups allowing people to live in their own homes for longer**

Dementia Friendly training is held across Denbighshire with many venues, such as libraries, being community hubs that are open to community groups out of library hours with meeting rooms and moveable furniture.

We have introduced Safeguarding Awareness E Learning - brand new safeguarding training that is being rolled out across the council. The training has been produced via our e-learning modules. Safeguarding is everyone's business and we all have a role to play in reporting any concerns we may have about vulnerable people living in our communities.

### **Resilience through thriving community groups**

A week-long series of events was held in September 2017 across Denbighshire to celebrate older people, in the run-up to

International Day of Older Persons (1 October).

The events were arranged by the Ageing Well in Denbighshire Multi Agency and Resident Group to showcase what support is available.

Events included sessions of the Lost in Art project, social events, arts and textiles, a "culture club" for arts and dance, and Talking Points sessions for people to get advice and information on well-being issues.

We continue to develop our Talking Points project to improve information, advice and assistance service at the heart of the community. Talking Points offers an opportunity for the citizens of Denbighshire to meet with health, social care and third sector staff in their own community in a convenient, appropriate and welcoming venue such as a local library, and to talk with them about the well-being outcomes they desire for themselves or others.

### **Resilience through empowering residents to feel informed and influence services**

The council has been working to respond to the requirements of the Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 through its programme to modernise the way social services deliver. This work places greater emphasis on the outcomes of individuals, including outcome-focussed conversations. Training has been rolled out to staff and we will continue to develop this practice in 2018-19.

Children and adults receiving support and service provision are offered a "what matters" conversation for individual support packages. Feedback from the

2017-18 Community Support Services annual "Have Your Say" citizen survey is as follows:

- 80% felt they have been actively involved in decisions about their care and support (320/401).
- 97% were able to communicate in their preferred language. (411/424).
- 94% felt that they were treated with dignity and respect (418/424).

## ENVIRONMENT: ATTRACTIVE AND PROTECTED, SUPPORTING WELL-BEING AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

### Summary

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Denbighshire aims to ensure that the environment is both attractive and protected, but also supports community well-being and economic prosperity. To achieve this we will reduce our carbon impact and increase the use of renewables throughout the county. We also plan to increase the biodiversity value of the county by protecting vulnerable species and habitats for the benefit of both wildlife and people who live and visit Denbighshire. Alongside this, Denbighshire aims to raise the profile of the county as a place to hold outdoor events that capitalise on our unique environment.

### Performance Status

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#### Acceptable

One way in which we will contribute to a greener environment is by improving the energy efficiency of our council homes. At the end of the year a total of 957 (28%) of existing council-surveyed properties were recorded as achieving an energy efficiency rating of C or above. However, it is noted that not all stock condition surveys have been completed at this time so this figure is subject to change. As no new council homes have yet been built, none have an energy efficiency rating of A as of yet.

Thresholds have been set for reducing our carbon emissions with a 3% reduction being acceptable, 4% reduction being good, and a 5% reduction per annum being excellent in order to achieve our ambition of 15% reduction over the five years between 2017-22. A Business Case is currently being developed to outline how this will be achieved in our own

assets (including buildings that we occupy and emissions from our fleet).

The total economic impact of tourism in the county is nearly £500 million, and performance here has grown steadily over the last five years.

At the end of the year we had planted over 3,000 trees to increase tree canopy cover in Rhyl, from an overall five-year ambition of 18,000. The council will be working closely with the community throughout the project with a number of opportunities to get involved, including community planting days.

At the end of the year, the numbers of black grouse, little terns, adders, sand lizards & bees was at an 'acceptable' level within the county. These species and groups of species are considered to be of particular importance due to a combination of their small or declining

populations, and limited range. We have outlined plans to improve the populations of these species over the course of the five year plan. We've also gained Bee Friendly Status. We now need to progress the project by designating Bee Friendly sites within Denbighshire, and involving the community at every opportunity.

We have surveyed our residents to ask them about their satisfaction with open spaces in the area, and results will be ready in autumn 2018.

We have an ambition to support all sectors to work together to increase the quantity of energy that is produced from renewable sources. A project will be brought forward later in 2018, so the draft indicator is subject to change as it becomes clearer what data can be reliably collected and reported upon to provide us with an informed position.

Based on a National Flood Risk Assessment in 2012, 16,750 properties in



Sand Lizard photographed by Ecology officer Joel Walley

Denbighshire were in a flood zone, which is between 20% and 30% of all properties in the county. The 'Flooding in Wales' report identified 3,250 properties as being in severe risk of flooding, with a further, 13,200 at moderate or low risk. The East Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme is ongoing and is anticipated to be completed in 2020, with 500 properties of those properties at severe risk benefitting from a reduced risk of flooding. Further projects will be progressed throughout the period of the Corporate Plan to reduce the risk of flooding throughout Denbighshire, subject to funding.

## Programme Progress

Good

Of the seven projects currently identified, two are already underway: urban tree planting, and the East Rhyl coastal defence scheme.

A future project that will be brought to the Program Board will propose an extension of the flood risk management work, but will require sizable capital investment. This will be considered later in 2018, and investment decisions will be put before the Strategic Investment Group and Cabinet.

Other projects under this priority focus very much on the 'green' agenda. The Biodiversity project will seek to create conditions under which biodiversity can flourish not just through management of our countryside sites but also by providing expert advice to partners in construction, planning, etc. to ensure opportunities to mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts of developments are sought.

A new area of work for the council is that of 'increasing renewable energy capacity

across the county'. The work is to be scoped out early 2019 and, as well as having the potential to deliver environmental benefits, the work could deliver job opportunities in the energy sector (*integrating* with the Young People priority).

The two remaining projects focus on reducing carbon emissions from the buildings that we (as employees) occupy and the vehicles that are used, and improving the energy efficiency of council homes. As well as reducing carbon output, the latter project will also help to reduce households' expenditure on fuel. Project briefs for these will be delivered by summer 2018.



Volunteers tree planting

### **A Tern up for the books**

A little tern ringed 25 years ago was recaptured in June 2018. This is believed to be the oldest recorded in the world. The little tern was first ringed as a chick on 8 July 1993 on Gronant beach by Professor David Norman. It is understood that this tern has set a new world record for longevity and is still producing chicks. Gronant Dunes, where the little terns nest, is managed by Denbighshire's Countryside Services.



Little Tern photographed at Gronant by Ecology officer Joel Walley



Bee photographed on flower by Ecology officer Joel Walley

### **Denbighshire awarded a national nature accreditation**

Denbighshire County Council has been given Bee Friendly status from the Welsh Government, a scheme which aims to make Wales a pollinator-friendly country. The Council plans to work with school and community groups to create bee and bug "hotels" at Bee Friendly Denbighshire sites, reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides and identify sites to improve for pollinators by planting wildflowers and sowing wildflower seeds. The council will also create "Bee Friendly Denbighshire" signage to explain which areas are included in the scheme, and encourage communities and school groups to carry out pollinator surveys and share their results.

## Pupils turn wildlife watchers at Ruthin environmental haven

Wildlife watchers from Rhos Street primary school in Ruthin are ploughing their efforts into protecting and enhancing a countryside haven – a stone's throw away from their brand new school.

Denbighshire Countryside Services manages a piece of land near the Glasdir estate in Ruthin for wildlife interest and, in particular, for two priority species: the otter and the water vole, two of the UK's fastest declining mammals.

The site is mitigation land for protected wildlife species. As such access to the site is restricted, but the Countryside Service recognised an opportunity for the new school (adjacent to the site) to use this

wonderful resource as an outdoor class. A new access is being created linking the school to the site. This has involved building a foot bridge, a task that was completed by local volunteers and Countryside Service staff.

Going forward youngsters will monitor wildlife at the location with Go Pro cameras and other technology. A hide has been built to help with this. Rhos Street Eco School Group will also help lead visits from other schools in the county, and keep an eye on the Carneddau ponies that are grazing unwanted vegetation to encourage wildflowers to flourish. The school will also carry out practical tasks such as thinning of the willow. The byproduct from this will be recycled to weave various artefacts that will be on sale at Rhos Street's Summer Fair.



Rhos Street volunteers tree planting in Ruthin

This Corporate Plan is the first to focus so heavily on the preservation of the natural environment and to pay particular attention to maintaining biodiversity within the county. This direction was as a result of the County Conversation engagement, conducted as part of the development of the Corporate Plan and driven by the *Involvement* principle. As part of this exercise, voices from young people in the community were heard. They were concerned about the future of the environment and wanted the council to more actively pursue change under this theme.

As part of the Corporate Plan Denbighshire will (in *collaboration* with Natural Resources Wales) plant 18,000 trees by 2022 as a *long term* commitment to the environment, and to provide

shaded community recreation spaces. Planting began in Autumn/Winter 2017 with the establishment of 3000 trees and over 500m hedging, all with the help of school and community groups. This programme will continue in one area of Rhyl for a five year period, with further planting to commence in Rhyl and Denbigh in Autumn/Winter 2018.

In-keeping with the low carbon theme, we plan to reduce carbon emissions levels from our own assets, explore opportunities for generating increased green energy through the county, and we'll ensure all new-build council homes have an energy efficiency rating of 'A'. This demonstrates our approach to maximising benefits from projects, *integrating* with our Housing priority and the national goal of A Prosperous Wales.

## Diversity and Equality

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Everyone has a right to enjoy the environment. In Denbighshire we have made huge progress to not only safeguard our astounding natural resources, but to also make it easier than ever for all people to experience them.

The Denbigh Men's Shed group participated in a photography exhibition featuring the landscape around Llangollen and the Alyn Valley. The project improved people's health and well-being through encouraging visits to new places, and also made images of these spectacular landscapes accessible to all.



Hillwalkers rambling in Denbighshire

We have been working with landowners to replace stiles with hand and kissing gates on public paths to ease access for users with mobility issues. With the landowners' agreement we are looking to ease access throughout the whole of Denbighshire by replacing stiles as resources allow and where the opportunity arises. Currently, there is an ongoing project to replace all the stiles along the River Clwyd bank from Ruthin to Bodfari, with much of the middle section now completed. This work has only been possible due to grant funding from the Welsh Government that ends this year. We will look for other funding to assist this programme and ensure the Rights of Way Improvement Plan continues to recognise and support our work to improve access for users who may find existing routes difficult to access.



All-terrain Tramper

An all-terrain Tramper / mobility scooter has been purchased by the Countryside Service team for the public to use at Loggerheads Country Park. The scooter will be available through a pre bookable service and will be introduced over the next six months. The aim of the project is to enable people with mobility problems to join their friends and family on days out in the park.

# YOUNG PEOPLE: A PLACE WHERE YOUNGER PEOPLE WILL WANT TO LIVE AND WORK AND HAVE THE SKILLS TO DO SO

## Summary

We want Denbighshire to be a place where young people can and want to flourish. To do this there must be excellent education provision working alongside a strong employment offer for all, focusing on skills for work and skills for life. We also know that physical and emotional well-being from an early age is important, preventing problems occurring later in life. We want to make sure that we give young people the best start in life, and will work with our partners, schools and businesses to make this happen.

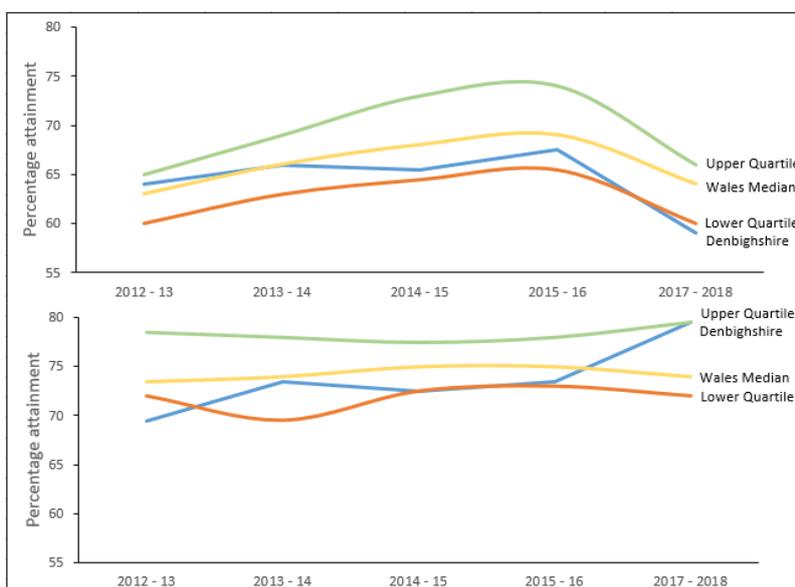
## Performance Status

### Priority for Improvement

Based on attainment in Summer 2017, 50% of Yr11 pupils achieved 5 GCSEs A\*-C (including English or Welsh (1st language) and Maths, against 83.5% of them achieving the commensurate grade at the end of Primary School (Yr6). Our ambition for the Corporate Plan is to see this difference between primary and secondary attainment narrow over the next five years.

attendance remaining in the third quartile (acceptable), and secondary remaining below the Wales median (priority for improvement). Closer examination reveals that authorised absences have fallen and unauthorised absences have increased. This is attributed to schools engaging more with the council's fixed-penalty process, now ensuring the correct coding of any unauthorised holidays.

Recently published data for primary and secondary attendance (2016-17 academic year) has seen both fall 0.1%, primary



Denbighshire's GCSE performance in English as a first language (Upper chart) has declined into the lower quartile. Welsh as a first language (lower chart) has however improved, and is only just below the upper quartile level.

The percentage of 18-24 year olds claiming work-related benefits has steadily increased in Denbighshire over the last year, now at 3.8%. With the new Corporate Plan thresholds for this measure have been reviewed. Previously, following the financial crisis, a baseline for improvement was set at 4.6%. This is no longer relevant, and we shall revert to our default methodology for setting performance thresholds, where the Wales average (currently 3.5%) is Red: Priority For Improvement. Our Excellence threshold will remain as the outturn for Great Britain (currently 3%). This measure is currently considered Red: Priority for Improvement therefore.

New data released in April from the Child Measurement Programme for Wales reveals that the percentage of Denbighshire's 4-5 year olds achieving a healthy weight is declining, placing us in the 3rd quartile (below the Wales median) and 8th worst in Wales.

Early data from the first Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) survey are encouraging, generally showing a positive response by our pupils to their feelings about school. However, it is still early days for our work in this area and more data is needed to better understand our performance.

Corporate data for the number of young volunteers is not robust at present, due to data protection limitations preventing us from being able to accurately capture volunteers under the age of 16. These issues are being considered as part of a new-project being developed by the council around volunteering opportunities for young people.

Currently 22 of our 56 schools are providing education in buildings that have the lowest suitability and condition categories (C & D). The 21st Century Schools Programme Band B programme will reduce this figure over time, though there will still be Denbighshire schools in these lower condition categories.



New school on Glasdir estate in Ruthin

There are 10 projects currently planned in support of this priority, some of which have been brought forward from the Economic & Community Ambition programme under Denbighshire's Corporate Plan 2012-17. Some of the overarching aims have multiple projects in development to support them, namely:

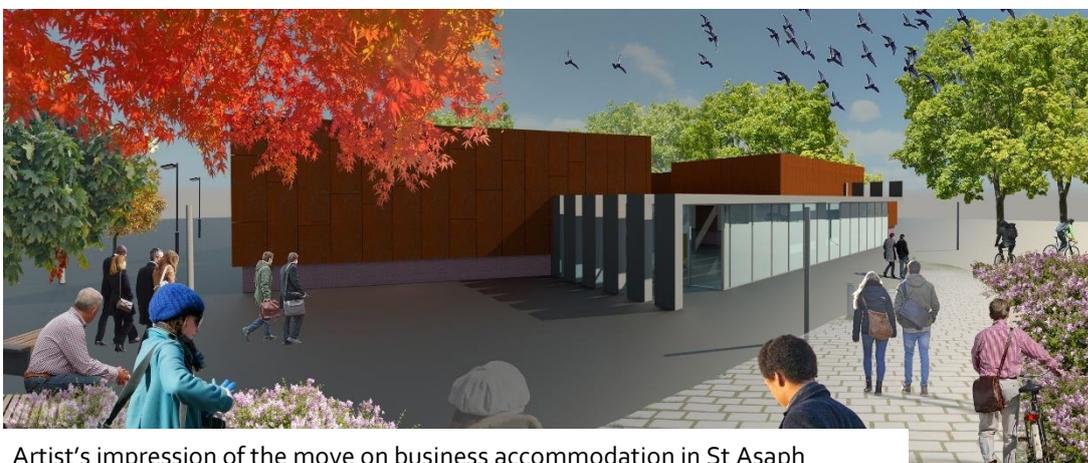
Under 'Develop greater employment opportunities for young people' there are three strands of work: Develop technology based entrepreneur space close to transport interchange; Young Person Employment Support; and TechZone - Growth Sector Move-on Accommodation. Work is already underway on the last of these projects. This work is set within the context of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's work and the North Wales Growth Deal. The council remains committed to its Economic Ambition Strategy 2013-23, which seeks to help businesses go from strength-to-strength, offering good quality, well paid and rewarding jobs for our residents and providing them with a

means to enjoy a good quality of life in our towns and communities.

The council is in the early stages of delivery its pioneering Ready for Work project, which seeks to educate young people about jobs that are available through career events / job fayres and mentoring. Additionally work is progressing with The Denbighshire Working Start Scheme, which will provide young people with access to meaningful work experience.

Band A of the 21st Century Schools projects will be finished under this Corporate Plan, and Band B will commence (subject to confirmation from Cabinet). This is likely to cover school provision in Denbigh, Rhyl and Llangollen, but expenditure is unlikely to be required until at least 2020.

A project focussed on reviewing the needs of parents and the support available to them is being developed. It aims to ensure children of all ages have good physical and mental well-being, and are equipped to lead happy lives.



Artist's impression of the move on business accommodation in St Asaph

### **ARTS TOGETHER - bringing families together at a transitional time**

ARTS TOGETHER is a multi-arts creative engagement project for pre-school age children and their parents delivered by a professional artist and education and health professionals. It was a pilot project co-ordinated by key strategic partners that was designed to improve family interaction and support transition into school for early years children.

As part of the programme parents were invited to attend high quality creative weekly workshops with their three-year olds over a six-week period. These sessions provided an opportunity for parents and early years children to engage in participant-led creative experiences in a safe, supported and structured way. The sessions were targeted at parents with three year olds who were about to start nursery class in September, with an aim to support children's transition into school (working with bilingual and specialist schools, and promoting an inclusive agenda).

The parents felt that there were both social and educational benefits for their children that they gained as a result of attending the ARTS TOGETHER sessions. For example, parents were happy that their children were learning to hold scissors properly and learn their colours and shapes before they started school in September. Socialising with other children was also important to the parents, having opportunities for their child to play in a different environment with other children of the same age was

mentioned as being valuable. The results for the questionnaire produced by the project showed that most parents were not worried about their child starting school in September. One parent shared that she didn't learn to read until she was 12 years old and therefore felt attending ARTS TOGETHER with her son was very important due to the educational benefits her son was gaining.



Infants and mothers attending the ARTS TOGETHER sessions

**TRAC - supporting young people aged 11-24 who are disengaging with education**

Led by Denbighshire County Council, the TRAC Project operates across all six North Wales counties. TRAC is aimed at supporting young people aged 11-24 who are disengaging with education and at risk of becoming NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training).

One beneficiary has grown from an angry, opinionated young man who was disillusioned with education into a fully committed student.

Ben (not the child's real name) was a very wary, shy, non-trusting young man who had a difficult relationship with his father. Initially difficult to engage with Ben began to trust the TRAC team a small amount. However the lack of trust was holding back the assistance possible for

him and putting Ben at risk of not completing his BTEC qualification. By meeting with Ben alongside other more confident students he saw the trusting relationships the tutors and other students had, resulting in progressively greater engagement by Ben. This led to BEN completing his qualification and attending a further work placement using a bus pass provided by the project.

The continuous engagement from the TRAC project has had a positive impact on Ben's education, with great feedback from his course tutor. It has also given BEN the confidence to start work in a local restaurant, washing up in the kitchen. Next year he hopes to attend a further year at college and is looking forward to starting back in to education with the knowledge he is equipped to do well.



Through the County Conversation engagement and listening to young people's aspirations for the future, it has been possible to better understand the types of jobs young people will find rewarding and provide both profitable and fulfilling careers that are important to young people. It is with this in mind that a number of projects within the Corporate Plan aim to not only provide young people with qualifications, but to provide the skills needed for the next generation of work (*long-term*).

As part of the OPUS project's *collaboration* activities, numerous young people are getting a head start into careers through work experience in the third sector.



Plans are in development for a digital skills and entrepreneurial hub to provide enterprising business start-ups with the abilities and networks to help them succeed in a growing digital sector. A young people's skills grant has also been developed to help provide training for early stage careers development, which will provide *long-term* benefits for applicants.

There is also a focus on the mental well-being and 'life skills' preparation for young people (managing bank accounts, being savvy consumers, etc.). This emphasis is as a direct result of *involving* young people with the County Conversation exercise, and should *prevent* circumstances from compromising young people's ability to thrive.

Denbighshire county Council is investing heavily in the future of Rhyl, though a strategic program of projects named the "Rhyl Master Plan". As part of this program, the renovation of the Rhyl water front has received a £25M investment with the intention to provide a boost to the Rhyl economy and over 250 Jobs in the next two years. This investment in the future has already been noticed by the Princess trust who have been running case studies on the Leisure developments and specifically 1891 due to the opportunities created for young people.

In Denbighshire we know that young people need the best start in life to continue to grow and become happy, healthy and prosperous. Through the Corporate Plan we have made provision to allow the same opportunities to all young people.

### **Young people being supported to achieve their potential**

The Council's Facilities, Assets and Housing Service has worked in partnership with Sport Wales, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Public Health Wales, the National Exercise Referral Programme and Duke of Edinburgh Outdoor Activities to deliver a range of active leisure opportunities specifically targeted at older, disabled, and younger people. These have included free swimming for under 16 year olds during school holidays and free swimming for over 60's throughout the year.

Ysgol Llywelyn received the Silver School Mark Award on February 8 as a result of getting over 15% more students walking and cycling to and from school. An active school run has so many benefits for young people and schools, from increasing the pupils' levels of physical activity, helping to promote students' physical and mental health and wellbeing, reducing the number of cars at the school gates and creating a better environment for the whole school community.

### **Young people supported through school facilities and programs.**

Our schools have received wide recognition for a wide range of enrichment programs, aimed at allowing young people to grow up healthier and happier.

The Catering Team involvement with the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) over the past two years has been a great success. While the initial project in 2016 involved just four schools, this was increased in 2017 to eight schools, with a further increase in 2018 to 16. This project involves close work with the schools themselves, local community organisations and our Community Wellbeing department. Ysgol Carreg Emlyn achieved a top award for health and wellbeing. Ysgol Carreg Emlyn has received the National Quality Award - the highest award a school can obtain - through the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes. In order to achieve the award, the school demonstrated the highest standard in indicators across seven health topics, including mental and emotional health, wellbeing and relationships, environment and safety.

The Denbighshire County Council-led TRAC 11-24 project has been recognised with two awards. The project, which runs across all six North Wales authorities, supports young people aged 11-24 at highest risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). The project was recognised at the European Structural and Investment Fund's annual information event in Swansea.

## Improving the information used to guide young people

To diversify the voices being heard in the running of our schools Denbighshire has developed a promotional campaign to encourage a more varied group of people to become school governors.

In order to allow young people's voices to be heard a new Youth Council approach has been instigated over an initial three-year period. As part of establishing a Youth Council over 3,000 young people were consulted and issues that they want to debate have been identified. Following a number of successful meetings, the Head of Education in Denbighshire County Council has requested follow-up work with schools through the Youth Council, underpinning dialogue and action.

Schools are staying informed about the risk of bullying, and it is hoped that with greater awareness and action the bullying rates of 2016-17 can be further reduced. From the information we have, we know that there were 96 reported incidents of bullying from across primary and secondary schools for 2016-17 academic year. We know that there have been 57 bullying incidents in 2016 -17. Where possible, the bullying incidents were broken down into types of bullying, listed below:

- 68 'unknown'( meaning school were unable to clearly identify a definite type or reason)
- 18 related to appearance
- Two related to poverty / deprivation
- Eight "identity based"
- Four related to race, religion, belie
- Three related to sexual orientation
- One related to disability



School Holiday Enrichment Programme

## **Young people are resilient and have the right skills to thrive.**

Having the right skills for life and work is important for the development of young people in the community. To provide language skills for life the Youth Service continues joint work with the Urdd to promote the Welsh Language and culture activity with young people (the award-winning 'Welsh is a Winner' project). In addition to this, young people are able to now gain a 'recorded learning outcome'. This system is an effective way of capturing young people's positive participation across a range of 'softer skill' and harder to measure areas.

A new Welsh Language Reference Group for Youth Work has been established and job descriptions updated in order to enable Welsh speakers to be recruited and then trained in youth work.

Denbighshire County Council is making steps to improve the attainment of those with a disadvantaged start in life. In 2017, there were 16 children in local authority care in year 11. Ten of these achieved qualifications including five who gained the L1 threshold and one who achieved the L2+. Most of those who did not achieve a formal qualification were in secure accommodation or had significant health issues. All children except those in secure accommodation have places in college or sixth form. This is consistent with the profile of previous years.

## **Young people have appealing employment that matches their skills.**

Matching the skills people have to the jobs people want is a major driver of Denbighshire's economic plan. This plan starts with developing young people but also involves establishing fulfilling career paths that will be fulfilling once in the workplace. In order to do this we have appointed a Principal Manager Strategic Employment to bring together the work of the national tackling poverty programmes within Denbighshire. The work above all supports our Economic and Community Ambition priority, and also supports the Tackling Poverty agenda. All this work will contribute to some of the barriers of employment faced by unemployed citizens, working towards eliminating inequality.

As part of Denbighshire's work to deliver its Economic and Community Ambition Strategy, the 14-19 Team are also managing and delivering on the Ready for Work project. The Ready for Work project is a significant investment by the local authority and is one of the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan for 2017 -22, meeting the needs of Young People. We have provided over 50 extended and supported work placements for the Year 11 cohort from September 2017.

In addition to 'Ready for Work' we have started up an internal project called Denbighshire Working Start Scheme, to offer work experience within Denbighshire County Council to residents we want to target this to areas where disadvantage could hold people back. As an institution Denbighshire now uses the Disability Confident Scheme within recruitment, supporting and promoting disabled people in our workplace.

## KEY PRINCIPLES

At Denbighshire County Council there are a number of key principles that underpin all we do. We are committed to the Sustainable Development Principles, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to equality and diversity, and support for the Welsh language.

For this reason, our strategic equality objectives and well-being objectives are integrated. Together they form our Corporate Plan. Hence, progress against both is reported within this document under each priority.

Below is commentary on how these priorities are supported through work across the whole council – not just the corporate plan. It includes a summary of the conclusions from our reports on the Public Sector Equality Duty, and explanation of how our business supports the national Welsh Language Strategy.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

With the introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Denbighshire County Council's commitment to sustainable development has become even further embedded in our policies and decision-making frameworks, and has been a key driver for our approach to developing corporate strategy.

In May 2017 we closed a project in which we reviewed our key planning and decision-making frameworks in light of the Act. This involved:

- i. Reviewing documents in our democratic forums, including Terms of Reference for Committees, our Constitution, Meeting Report templates, etc.;
- ii. Learning & Development for Staff & Members;
- iii. Workforce Planning;
- iv. Procurement;
- v. Asset Management;
- vi. Impact Assessment;
- vii. Engagement;
- viii. Internal Audit;
- ix. Performance Management;
- x. Risk Management;
- xi. Medium & Long-term Financial Planning.

Developments of particular note include the creation of the Well-being Impact Assessment website, which is well-used by staff and referenced by members to better enable informed decision-making that checks the extent to which the Sustainable Development principles have

been applied for any given project, as well as the likely impact (positive or otherwise) within the context of the seven well-being goals. This has been well-received corporately, and there is interest from partners and the community in its use.

A process for considering and responding to Community Risk has been devised, by which county-wide risks are recorded and reflected in our Local Assessment of Well-being in order to enable us to identify priorities.

During this process we also recognised that our approach to Engagement needed to shift, so that residents are involved in discussions about decisions that affect them much earlier on in the process than was previously the case. To facilitate this, a new Engagement Portal has been secured, which will better enable us to organise our engagement activity and monitor the approach that's taken in order to enable us to look for opportunities to continuously improve.

As a key statutory partner on the Conwy & Denbighshire Public Services Board, in April 2017 an online Local Assessment of Well-being was published, informed by: data; national and local research, and - crucially – discussions with residents, visitors and businesses through the County Conversation. The assessment is available to view on the Conwy and Denbighshire Public Service Board website (<https://conwyanddenbighshirelsb.org.uk/en/home/english-wellbeing-assessment/>). It is a live, accessible resource that's kept up-to-date. This has been cited as good practise by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 authors in Welsh Government, who have invited Denbighshire County Council officers to discuss their approach in national fora.

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

In our approach to mainstreaming equality and diversity information (making it more readily available throughout the county), we have created Equality and Diversity pages on our website. These highlight our commitment to celebrating diversity and promoting equality in everything we do, to improve the quality of life for everyone living, working and visiting Denbighshire.

Denbighshire County Council continues with its membership of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (NWPSSEN). Meetings are held bi-monthly and Strategic Planning Team Members attend the meetings.

As the setting of Denbighshire County Council's Well-being Goals were driven by the national well-being goals – of which An Equal Wales is one – actions that promote equality and address inequality are integral to our Corporate Plan. Examples and achievements are elaborated on in greater detail under the commentary for each priority. There are, however, actions we take to support equality and celebrate diversity in our wider portfolio, as cited below, and those which meet our Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equalities Act 2010.

## **Training**

We continue to provide equality training for staff via the Respect Booklet. A new online equality e-module (incorporating the Respect Booklet) has been created and translated. This will be accessible via the NHS Platform for E Learning later in 2018.

## **Engagement**

We have created a new Public Engagement Officer role in the council in order to improve the quality and consistency of public engagement across all service areas and with all residents. The post has been filled and a work programme set out.

All the work being undertaken on County Conversation has involved contact with groups from protected characteristics to inform new iterations of plans.

The council has in place an Armed Forces and Veterans Covenant which ensures those members of the armed forces community do not suffer any disadvantage in accessing council services.

## **Reporting**

We have produced the Public Sector Equality Duty report for April 2016 – March 2017 detailing our commitment and compliance with this legislation.

Each year we are required, as a Local Authority, to publish reports for Welsh Government detailing our commitment and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty in terms of an Equal Pay Audit (March 2017).

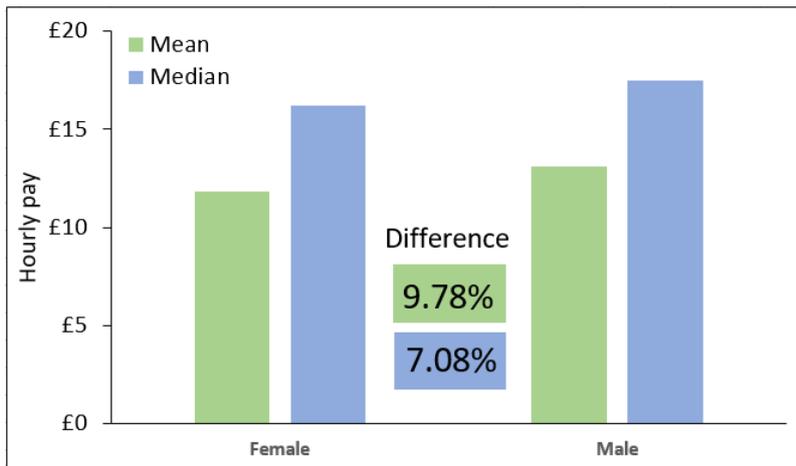


## Equal pay

The mean pay gap (hourly rate) is 9.78%. This has improved significantly from the previous year. This includes all employees in the Council on differing terms and conditions. The median pay gap (7.08%) does provide for a more accurate typical hourly rate and is not skewed by a small proportion of high earners. The change in methodology demonstrates a minimal gender pay gap based on hourly rate of all employees.

We have also audited the pay gap between disabled and non-disabled

employees (14.84%, based on average hourly rates). However due to a high proportion of employees who have declined to specify on their disability status it is skewing the overall figures. It is difficult to do further analysis without identifying the individuals in this protected characteristic group. Likewise the high proportion of employees who have declined to specify their ethnicity compromise the confidence in the overall figures in relation to the pay gap between Black Minority Ethnic and White Employees, which suggests a gap of (24.25%, based on hourly rates of pay).



The difference in pay between the male and female employees of Denbighshire County Council is currently 9.78% in favour of females (Mean) or 7.08% in favour of males (Median).

## WELSH LANGUAGE

The Welsh Language Standards have been created by the Welsh Government to ensure that the Welsh Language is treated no less favourably than the English language. The set of standards have been created to ensure that people across Wales can access services provided by the public sector in the language of their choice. The Standards relate to a wide range of issues, including correspondence, advertising, publicity, meetings, telephone greetings, creation of policies and recruitment. It also looks at the linguistic skills level of the workforce.

The council has adopted the strategy on how it intends to promote the language over the next five years and it has come to the end of its first 12 months since it was adopted. The Strategy has been broken down into distinct areas: Children and Young People (including education and youth work); Business and the Economy; Communities; Internal Administration within the council, and the strategic development of the Welsh Language in Denbighshire. At the end of the last reporting period there remained only one main Standard yet to be addressed, which was to ensure that the intranet is completely bilingual. Since this time the Council has introduced a brand new Intranet called Linc, in direct response to the Welsh Language Standards. The intranet is now fully bilingual, with each page and link in Welsh corresponding with the English version. The responsibility for co-ordinating the content of the intranet lies with the Corporate Communications team and they ensure that all information is fully bilingual.

A new post was introduced into the authority in early 2018, with a view to enhancing the opportunities to promote the Welsh Language within the authority. This officer will provide advice and support for compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and provide day-to-day guidance for staff wishing to promote the Welsh language. Each service within the council also has a Welsh Language Champion, and meetings are held quarterly to monitor progress with the Standards, as well as providing a forum to share best practice and to act

as a critical friend. The members have an in-depth understanding of the needs of the Standards and associated strategy. They carry out 'mystery shopper' checks and arrange awareness sessions and activity for colleagues and learners.

All services are required to produce a workforce plan each year and this plan must consider the number of Welsh speakers employed within individual services. All Heads of Service are asked to consider whether they have enough Welsh speakers within their services to provide a fully bilingual service to the public. Services are also challenged on their compliance with the Welsh language during service challenges, a process led by senior managers and Councillors.

## PROJECT REGISTER

Every six weeks the Corporate Executive Team (CET) receives an update on the corporate projects that are underway in Denbighshire. A Project Register, produced through our Verto Performance Management System, provides the most recent status information extracted from Project Highlight Reports approved by each Project Executive.

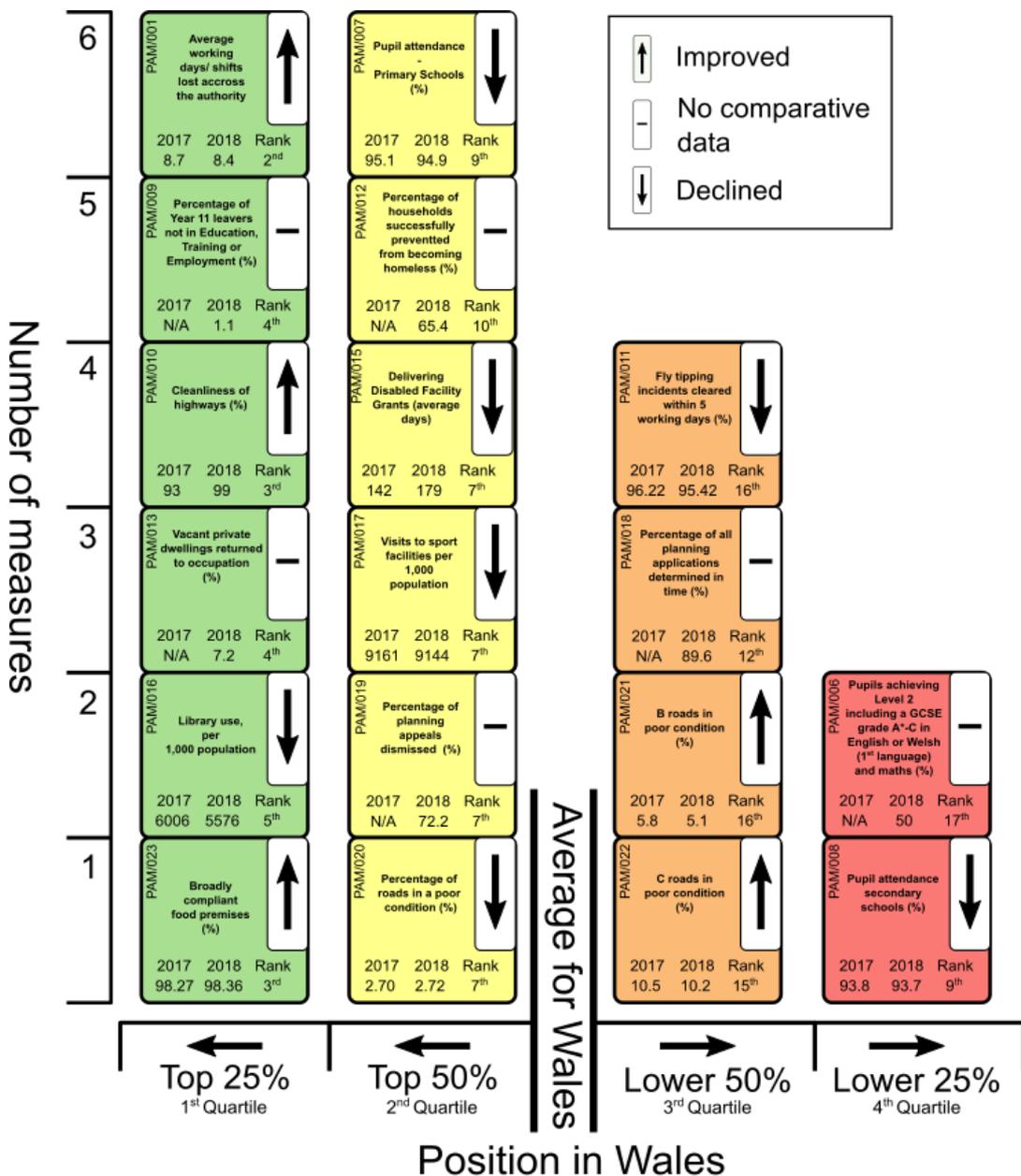
There were 34 projects reported upon as at 25 June 2017. One project (3%) having an Orange: 'Acceptable' status'; Eight projects (23.5%) assessed as Yellow: 'Good', and the remaining 25 projects (73.5%) having a 'Green' Excellent status:

Please see Appendix 1 for a summary of the Corporate Projects.

## COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE

The Welsh Government and Local Government Data Unit released all authorities' 2017-18 performance data –Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) – on 6th August 2018. As in previous years this was accompanied by an overview of national trends. However Waste and Social Care data will not be published until October and November respectively. The position reported here, therefore, will be updated at that time.

Below is a single outturn performance indicator infographic which shows Denbighshire County Council's performance in the PAMs. It also contains comparative information, including Denbighshire's quartile position and ranking.



Code	Reason for Decline
PAM/006	As a result of changes to GCSEs in 2017 we cannot make comparisons with previous years. Nonetheless, in Denbighshire there was a dip of 8.7% against a national dip of 5.7%. In line with the national picture, schools with the highest entitlement to free school meals (eFSM) had a more significant dip. Two of our schools have in excess of 30% eFSM pupils.
PAM/007	During 2016-17 (academic year), there were 97,054 authorised absences (down from 97,403 for 2015-16), against 33,927 unauthorised (up from 27,804). This represents a 4.6% increase in absence from the previous year (130,981, up from 122,207). The increase in unauthorised absence is attributed to schools engaging more with the Council's fixed-penalty process, ensuring the appropriate coding of any unauthorised holidays.
PAM/008	During 2016-17 (academic year), there were 85,777 authorised absences (down from 86,173 for 2015-16), against 26,848 unauthorised (up from 26,078). This represents a 0.3% increase in absence from the previous year (112,625, up from 112,251). The increase in unauthorised absence is attributed to schools engaging more with the Council's fixed-penalty process, ensuring the appropriate coding of any unauthorised holidays. The Service has also put interventions in place where it has found school procedures around absence are not robust.
PAM/011	In 2017-18, the service shifted its clearing work of fly tipped material from a daily schedule to twice weekly, predominantly in the north of the county. This allows greater flexibility from our available resources, but may have contributed towards the slight dip in performance.
PAM/015	The introduction of two new systems at the beginning of the year has affected performance in 2017-18. Firstly the new ICT system (Tascomi) to process DFGs; and secondly the new electronic procurement system. Both systems are now embedded.
PAM/016	The number of visitors recorded will have been impacted by the closure of St Asaph library during its six month refurbishment, and similarly the closure of Denbigh Library during its refurbishment. There was also considerable disruption at Rhyl Library while roofing work was undertaken - this may have affected visitor numbers. Visitor figures for the previous year may also have been over-estimated where people-counters had malfunctioned.
PAM/017	Two factors have impacted on our performance in this indicator. Firstly a reduction in attendance on the 5x60 school sports programme as a result of split break times in some schools, meaning less pupils are able to attend the planned sessions. Secondly, some Leisure sites have experienced significant closures in the year due to refurbishments (e.g. St Asaph Leisure Centre).
PAM/020	A 0.02 variation is not significant for a sample of this kind.

The work of all councils in Wales 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 that 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, the main one being Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn).

A summary of the main conclusions from recent external audit and assessment work is provided below:

### WALES AUDIT OFFICE

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, the Wales Audit Office (WAO) annually reviews the Council's progress towards meeting its objectives and its prospects for continuing to improve in the year ahead. For 2017-18, the WAO confirmed that overall the "The Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement",

If the WAO has significant concerns about the progress made by a council or the direction it is taking, it will make formal recommendations for change. Denbighshire's Annual Improvement Report did not contain any formal recommendations, reflecting the WAO's positive view of the Council.

In addition, further targeted reviews by the WAO were carried out during 2017-18:

#### **Service User Perspective Review**

To understand the 'service user perspective' at every Council within Wales, in Denbighshire County Council the WAO reviewed the Housing service in relation to whether the Council was using the experiences and aspirations of service users to inform the design and delivery of services for the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

This report concluded that most council tenants are satisfied with the quality of the service, and the council is beginning to re-engage tenants in service design, but the council has not always evaluated the impact of service changes.

## Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the future?

This review focused on how 'fit for the future' Denbighshire County Council's scrutiny functions are. The WAO considered how the council is responding to current challenges, including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and how the council is beginning to carry out scrutiny of Public Service Boards. The WAO also examined how well placed the council is to respond to future challenges such as continued pressure on public finances and the possible move towards more regional working between local authorities.

This report concluded that the Council's overview and scrutiny function is responding well to current challenges, however limited capacity to support scrutiny may hinder future progress, and there is scope for Cabinet members to contribute more actively to scrutiny discussions.

## ESTYN

Estyn stated in their 2018 report on Denbighshire County Council that, over time, a very strong senior leadership has ensured a determined focus on improving provision and outcomes for learners. A highly effective impact of this is the way leaders have demonstrated the confidence to recently amalgamate the Education Service and the Children's Service into one department. This has succeeded in delivering a coherent and efficient integrated service. This action is having a very positive effect on the provision available to children and young people and is having a beneficial impact on learners' wellbeing.

Overall, most schools in Denbighshire perform consistently well. Although performance across the secondary schools has been variable over the last three years, standards at key stage 4 on nearly all key indicators broadly compare well over time with those in similar authorities across Wales, and with national outcomes.

The authority places great importance on learner voice, ensuring that many children and young people take part in purposeful opportunities to share their opinions, concerns and ideas for improvement. This is enabling learners to have clear channels of communication in which to improve the authority's services and provision.

The Local Authority knows its schools very well and supports and challenges them effectively. Overall, Denbighshire County Council was found to have a range of appropriate provisions for vulnerable learners and these are generally effective in meeting the needs of children and young people.

Inspection area	Judgement
Outcomes	Good
Quality of education services	Good
Leadership and management	Excellent

After consideration of Denbighshire County Council's effectiveness in the task of providing quality education and training. Estyn recommended the following improvements:

- Reduce the variability in outcomes in secondary schools.
- Ensure that the evaluation of services focuses clearly on measuring the outcomes that children and young people achieve through those services.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 – DENBIGHSHIRE CORPORATE PROJECT REGISTER (JUNE 2018)

Delivery Confidence	Project Name	Milestone	Cost	NC Benefits	Cash Benefits	Risk
	East Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme					
	PLANT Project : Urban Tree Planting	N/A		N/A	N/A	
	Community Planning & Development Resource					
	PROCUREMENT: Local Supplier Development					
	Ready for Work				N/A	
	Ruthin Town: Glasdir Development- Relocation of Ysgol Pen Barras and Rhos Street School					
	Ruthin Area Review: New Area School for Ysgol Carreg Emlyn					
	Denbigh Extra Care Housing					
	New build 3-16 Catholic school in Rhyl			N/A	N/A	
	Ruthin Review - New School for Llanfair DC					
	Ruthin Extra Care Housing (Phase 2)			N/A		
	2nd Generation - North Wales Construction Framework			N/A	N/A	N/A
	St Asaph Library & One Stop Shop Community Hub					
	North Wales Construction Framework					
	Rhyl Waterfront Development					
	49 - 55 Queen Street					

	Rhyl Town Centre Loan Fund					
	Rhyl Waterpark (SC2)					
	Rhyl Town Centre Master Plan					
	Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMs)					
	Centralised Mailroom Project					
	Implementation of OPENHousing and OPENContractor					
	Cefndy ICT Investment Project					
	Outsourcing of Hafan Deg Day Care Centre					
	Outsourcing of Dolwen Care Home			N/A		
	CRM					
	Capturing the voice of children, young people and families					
	Gypsy and Traveller (GT) Accommodation project					
	Capita Regional MIS					
	West Rhyl Coastal Defence Scheme Phase 3					
	Rhyl Golf Club flood defence scheme					
	Better Business for All (BFC Phase 1 - Planning & Public Protection)					
	Exploit opportunities for growing new sectors of the economy, agree plans and implement associated actions					
	Former North Wales Hospital					

APPENDIX 2 – CORPORATE RISK REGISTER (JUNE 2018)

The **Corporate Risk Register** is reported on every six months. This is the matrix used to score risks.

<b>LIKELIHOOD</b>	<b>A</b> Almost Certain					
	<b>B</b> Highly Likely					
	<b>C</b> Probable					
	<b>D</b> Possible					
	<b>E</b> Rare					
		<b>5</b> Very Low	<b>4</b> Low	<b>3</b> Medium	<b>2</b> High	<b>1</b> Very High
		<b>IMPACT</b>				

Risk Description	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk
The risk of a serious safeguarding error where the Council has responsibility, resulting in serious harm or death	B <sub>2</sub>	D <sub>2</sub>
The risk that the economic and financial environment worsens beyond current expectations, leading to additional demand on services and reduced income.	C <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>3</sub>
The risk of an ineffective response to a severe weather, contamination, public safety (including cyber attack) or public health event.	D <sub>2</sub>	E <sub>2</sub>
The risk of a significantly negative report(s) from external regulators.	C <sub>2</sub>	D <sub>3</sub>
The risk of significant liabilities resulting from alternative models of service delivery	B <sub>2</sub>	E <sub>2</sub>

The risk of a health & safety incident resulting in serious injury or the loss of life. (Where H&S is referred to, this incorporates fire safety)	C2	E2
The risk that the impact of welfare reform (Universal Credit) is more significant than anticipated by the Council.	B2	D3
The risk that programme and project benefits are not fully realised.	B2	D2
The risk that effective partnerships and interfaces between BCUHB and Denbighshire County Council (DCC) do not develop, leading to significant misalignment between the strategic and operational direction of BCUHB and DCC	A1	C2
The risk that the decisions that are necessary to enable the delivery of a balanced budget are not taken or implemented quickly enough	B1	C2
The risk that the changes we introduce have a greater positive or negative impact than we anticipated	B2	D3
The risk that appropriate capacity and skills to sustain service and corporate performance is not available	C3	D3
The risk of fraud and corruption resulting in financial and reputational loss and possibly impacting on service delivery.	B2	E2
The risk that the cost of care is outstripping the Council's resource	B1	C2
The risk that demand for specialist care cannot be met locally	B2	C2
The risk that the return on investment that Denbighshire receives from the Regional Growth Deal is disproportionate	C1	C1