

Report to	Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	22 October 2020
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets
Report author	Karen Bellis, Community Hub Manager
Title	Community Benefits Policy

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. Approval and adoption of Denbighshire County Council's (DCC) Community Benefits (CB) Policy

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To consider and comment on the proposed CB policy (Appendix 1) and its alignment with the Council's corporate plans and priorities

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That the Committee considers the policy document and makes recommendations in relation to its use
- 3.2. That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

DCC Community Benefits Policy

- 4.1. In June 2019 the DCC Programme Board for Young People and Housing approved the creation of the Community Benefits Hub (CB Hub), along with the inclusion of community benefits in all relevant contracts. The Hub will provide support, and enable Services to include CBs in contracts at the earliest opportunity. The

commissioning cycle process is central to achieving best value and outcomes for DCC spend and it is to be expected that by applying a CB approach at an early stage this will go toward increasing value for DCC spend. A CB Hub Officer was appointed in February 2020 and CB Hub manager appointed in March. DCC Community Benefits Policy will support the work and actions of the CB Hub in achieving intended outcomes and targets.

4.2. The Council spent £116m in 2017/18 so with a modest 1% CB return this could generate £1.16m in new benefit per annum. This Policy will support the work of the CB Hub, and the council officers it supports, to access such funding and benefits to reinforce our corporate plan priorities that will help our communities to become more independent and resilient. The Council delivers its services directly through its own workforce, and through private and third sector organisations. The Council procures a wide range of goods, services and works from over 4,500 suppliers, service providers and contractors. The CB Policy will provide a framework for internal and external stakeholders to be active in continued and developing engagement allowing us to monitor and evaluate, learn lessons, measure impact, and design fit for purpose CB planning the future. Policy will also support the CB Hub to track, monitor and report on community benefit outcomes across the council and become a means of assessing the strength, vitality and performance for the Corporate Plan 2017-2022. This in turn will be used to formulate strategies for improvements and influence policy decisions. There could be opportunities to involve local communities in the delivery of community benefits.

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

- 5.1. Young People – by contributing to greater employment opportunities, opportunities to develop skills in life and work through volunteering and community based activities, and provide access to effective career advice and mentoring.
- 5.2. Connected Communities – Opportunities to work with partners to improve outreach to communities, target those most likely to be digitally excluded so they have the skills and means to use digital services

- 5.3. Environment – Increase the biodiversity quality of important habitats and species across the county, raise the profile of the county as a place to visit in order to capitalise on Denbighshire's economic potential
- 5.4. Resilient Communities – Support people to plan and shape their communities, provide easily accessible information that support people's independence and resilience, ensure people are involved in shaping and improving services

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

- 6.1. Adoption of DCC Community Benefits Policy does not require additional funding.
- 6.2. Officers will be engaged at early stages to access CB Hub support for the inclusion of Community Benefits at Business Case stage.

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

- 7.1. The Well-being Impact Assessment (attached at Appendix 2) was completed at beginning June, after the production of a Draft CB Policy.
- 7.2. The Well-being Impact Assessment was undertaken by Karen Bellis, Manager Community Hub with support from Tania Silva, North Wales Construction Framework Manager
- 7.3. Continued internal and external stakeholder engagement is key to securing and delivering significant and sustainable community benefits. We need to ensure that any benefits gained are going to be of use and are to be valued by not only DCC (Members and officers) but also the community that we serve. The Corporate Plan 2017-2022 sets out our five corporate priorities designed around the Well-being and Future Generations Act and this was developed following the County Conversation which provided feedback from our residents. We asked people to comment on what was good, bad, or needed developing in the areas in relation to the seven goals. This provided the priorities Denbighshire developed: Housing, Connected Communities, Resilient Communities, Young People, and Environment

- 7.4. The Community Benefits Hub is now active (as of mid-March 2020) and this policy will guide and enable the CB Hub to offer practical and relevant support to officers during the commissioning and procurement of goods and services, and also to undertake meaningful engagement with external stakeholders.
- 7.5. Consultation and engagement has been carried out with: DCC Planning Department, Countryside Services, Community Development Officers, Education, Legal & Democratic Services and Procurement Officers. External consultation and engagement has been undertaken with Value Wales, Social Value Portal, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Flintshire County Council and Impact Social Value Reporting.

8. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 8.1 Section 6 indicates that there are no direct financial consequences of this report. As no additional funds have been requested, it is assumed that any impact will be contained within existing budgets

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

- 9.1 No risks have been identified in adopting the DCC CB Policy.

10. Power to make the decision

- 10.1 Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015; and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972
- 10.2 Scrutiny's powers with respect of policy development and review is outlined in section 7.4.1 of the Council's Constitution