



Development of new Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027 (third iteration of the Well-being Assessment): Well-being Impact Assessment Report

This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number: 913

Brief description: The Strategic Planning team is responsible for the development of the council's new Corporate Plan (and also supports the development of the PSB's Well-being Plan). The expected date for the new Corporate Plan to be ratified by Council is October 2022. The development of the Corporate Plan is supported by a collaborative approach with partners across North Wales, and in particular Conwy County Borough Council. The project also contains the following work streams: engagement and consultation, needs assessment, joint priority setting. v3 was completed following our workshops with staff, Denbighshire's new Cabinet and following a joint workshop between Cabinet and SLT, during which the findings of the well-being assessment (research, including engagement) were discussed.

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Responsible Service: Business Improvement & Modernisation

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? Communities, businesses, visitors, public sector partners (regional and local), including children and young people and people with protected characteristics.

Was this impact assessment completed as a group? Yes

Summary and Conclusion

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

3 out of 4 stars

Actual score : 30 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

We still need to consider how community assets can be used to support the outcomes of the draft plan. However, pledges to support growing the local social economy, including community businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises and around community benefits in procurement have been introduced since an earlier iteration of this impact assessment. We will need to settle ongoing maintenance and secure legacy of our pledges as those are developed and being delivered.

Prevention

The latest iteration of the draft Corporate Plan now includes a "Healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire" theme. Its purpose is to promote and support the safety, resilience and well-being of people of all ages. In terms of the environment, it features strongly in the new plan to reflect the programme we have in place already and also because climate change adaptation was a key feature of engagement feedback and research.

Integration

V3 now closely mirrors the seven Well-being Goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. Previously, the LDP was not a core part of our thinking. However, following the completion of the well-being assessment (engagement feedback and research) housing, and building new housing,

has emerged as a priority for our residents. There are many actions relating to the LDP in the Net Carbon Zero strategy.

Collaboration

The ongoing disruption caused by Covid-19 is resulting in a medium term focus (ie not to 2050). PSB Board members workshop took place in January 2022, to discuss the findings of the Well-being Assessment, to consider the relationship between these challenges, and the new Well-being Plan proposes a focus on poverty and deprivation ("Conwy and Denbighshire will be more equal with less deprivation"), that is in alignment with Denbighshire's draft Corporate Plan.

Involvement

We are confident we are applying all ten principles, and the commissioned work to engage seldom heard groups continues to be an important part of our approach and evidence base. Our engagement has faced challenges (social distancing, online meeting fatigue), but the quality of feedback has been excellent. Councillors have said that they see themselves as a critical in conversations with their constituents.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Positive

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Positive

Main conclusions

We should continue to revisit the impact assessment on a regular basis and review our findings to inform the approach to further development engagement and consultation on the draft plan.

Engagement with seldom heard groups (serving and ex-armed forces, offenders and ex-offenders, in addition to people with protected characteristics), across the region, should continue. We should also use the impact assessment as an aide memoir, using the topics and the tooltips to inform our engagement and well-being assessment. The opportunities highlighted at the end of each sustainable development principle and each of the seven well-being goals should be noted and considered thoroughly. These are, in summary:

- We will need to work with businesses, farmers and Trade Unions more closely, and link into regional work via the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. There is the potential to maximise skills development around low carbon housing in particular. However, women and people with protected characteristics and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are less likely to benefit from opportunities from the green sector.
- There may be some pledges that result in increased carbon emissions in the development stages.
- We may need to adjust our thinking around climate risk resilience to include resilience to hotter, drier summers.
- Wildflower meadows remain contentious with some residents regarding them as an eyesore. The new plan could take the opportunity to bring people along with the climate and ecological change programme.
- Topics such as mental-well-being should be kept under review as we continue to emerge from the pandemic, but move into a space with increased stresses around cost of living.
- There is some discussion about how experiences of Covid-19 will have exacerbated inequality – although the consequences are not yet fully understood. Perhaps the plan could more explicitly reference these, particularly in relation to the health, learning and growing and fairer, more equal themes. The well-being assessment specifically highlighted disabled people has having poorer well-being, with critical links between housing and employment.
- Some of the pledges may not be able to partly, let alone, fully alleviate poverty and disadvantage given the turbulence in the wider global economy. We need to watch for optimism bias.

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- Some interventions will need to be targeted to be effective. There is no specific geographic area of focus at present, although one will likely emerge as specific pledges are developed.
- There is some discussion about how experiences of Covid-19 will have exacerbated inequality, which can cause certain individuals to be more at risk – although the consequences are not yet fully understood.
- To what extent does the plan aim to contribute to the longer term resilience of rural areas together with opportunities to develop and safeguard vital rural assets?
- We may need to pay more attention to the rural economy and the importance of agriculture to culture. The council may need to be 'refocussed' in some way to deliver cultural regeneration in a cohesive way - the review of the new senior leadership team structure could address this.
- We will need to work seamlessly with partners and Welsh Government to support small and medium sized businesses to ensure they are prepared and well-positioned for changes to procurement.

Individual pledges identified within the Corporate Plan, where they warrant new or additional activity, should be individually impact assessed as they are developed.

It is also important to note that our level of influence and control varies across some of the pledges and this will affect our ability to bring about positive impacts in some areas. For example, digital infrastructure.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

We are estimating a positive impact because the draft Corporate Plan is proposing more focussed work to support a green priority and to support people to secure better work.

The Wales Centre for Public Policy has produced research on the impact of Covid-19 and Brexit on economic well-being and this is included in our well-being assessment.

Further actions required

We will need to work with businesses, farmers and Trade Unions more closely, and link into regional work via the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB). There is the potential to maximise skills development around low carbon housing in particular, which could form part of focus of the learning theme.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Supporting a green economy is a core part of the draft Corporate Plan. The extent of positive impacts will need to be assessed once detailed pledges are agreed and projects scoped. However, following leadership set by NWEAB should lead to positive outcomes.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Active travel, roads and bridges maintenance, electric vehicle charging, public transport and broadband for rural communities feature in the draft plan.

Economic development

Tourism, green economy, social economy, levelling up and the growth deal feature as pledges in the draft Corporate Plan.

Quality skills for the long term

Curriculum development and delivery of 21st Century Schools are proposed alongside equality objectives to address social deprivation and disadvantage faced by some people with protected characteristics. However, it is worth noting that our powers are limited. Schools are their own public bodies, and it is their governing bodies, not the local authority, that determine how the curriculum is taught in schools. Our School Improvement Arm is also delegated to GwE.

Quality jobs for the long term

The new draft "Learning and growing Denbighshire" theme prioritises a range of pledges to support people to find decent work, including support for young people to access work experience and income-maximising opportunities for those in low paid work and education, training and employment for all young people, including those in care.

Childcare

Childcare sufficiency audits will soon be refreshed. Once published we will consider and link to its findings.

We will be delivering new enhanced childcare facilities at three sites in the term of this plan, funding pending. These are Oaktree extension; Dewi Sant and Twm o'r Nant.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

There may be some pledges that result in increased carbon emissions in the development stages. These are sometimes difficult to calculate over the life time of a building for example, but our procurement team is exploring how this can be determined alongside partners across Wales

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Economic development

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Quality skills for the long term

There is widespread recognition, which has been highlighted in our well-being assessment, that women and people with protected characteristics and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are less likely to benefit from opportunities from the green sector.

Quality jobs for the long term

The draft well-being assessment still lacks up to date analysis about local jobs.

Childcare

The draft well-being assessment includes some analysis of how childcare can be a barrier for women in particular, who may disproportionately arrange and ferry children to/from providers (this could impact active travel and visibility in the workplace).

The new childcare provision cited above brings with it questions around sustainability, for carbon, and overall provision across the sector. These should be assessed in more detail within each individual well-being impact assessment.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Denbighshire County Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and a strategy (2021-2030) to become net carbon zero and ecologically positive has been approved. Environmental well-being is a key feature of our well-being assessment and engagement feedback.

Further actions required

The Climate Change Programme will soon be able to assess the results achieved by our current effort and allocated budgets to determine the extent to which we are on track to achieve our targets in 2030.

We may need to adjust our thinking around climate risk resilience to include resilience to hotter, drier summers.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

The draft Corporate Plan has made a commitment to the continued delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan, aiming to be a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030.

Biodiversity in the built environment

The draft Corporate Plan has made a commitment to the continued delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy and Action Plan, aiming to be a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030.

The draft well-being assessment demonstrates that the planet needs flourishing eco-systems for it to survive.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

This is a feature of the draft Corporate Plan (reducing use of single use plastics; increasing recycling)

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Energy efficient housing, alleviating fuel poverty, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and choosing active travel over private car feature in the draft Corporate Plan.

It is also worth noting that this was a consideration throughout our engagement and consultation. We didn't print excessive paper copies of our surveys, due to the environmental impacts. They were still available from libraries to ensure it was accessible but as a print on demand service.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

From our engagement, we have found that people feel strongly about being empowered to tackle climate change, and were particularly vocal about active travel.

Flood risk management

Continued delivery of flood defence schemes to reduce the risk of flooding features in the draft well-being assessment and draft plan. There is also more detailed consideration now of how climate risk resilience (eg from flooding), intersects with deprivation and other characteristics.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

There may be some pledges that result in increased carbon emissions in the development stages. These will need to be considered, with negative impacts removed, reduced or mitigated on a case by case basis.

Biodiversity in the built environment

There may be some pledges that result in increased carbon emissions in the development stages. These will need to be considered, with negative impacts removed, reduced or mitigated on a case by case basis.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed). However, the new waste service project should be managing any negative impacts identified through its own detailed well-being impact assessment.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Our well-being assessment shows that some people, particularly those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, may be less likely to benefit from schemes to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce their energy bills. EV cars are likely to remain within the reach of those with a sizeable disposable income for a while yet.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Some people are vocal about wildflower meadows and see these as an eyesore. This needs to be resolved.

Flood risk management

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The draft Corporate Plan is making a new commitment for the county to be healthier, happy and caring.

We had previously raised a concern that the draft Corporate Plan did not adequately address the findings of the well-being assessment to attempt to resolve issues of food supply and poverty. The new draft overcomes this weakness.

Further actions required

We previously said we needed to reference the recently published North Wales Collaborative's population health needs assessment in our well-being assessment. This has been done.

Topics such as mental-well-being should be kept under review as we continue to emerge from the pandemic, but move into a space with increased stresses around cost of living. There may be new evidence to consider. This is however a core part of the draft Corporate Plan around socio-economic disadvantage.

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

This now features strongly in the latest draft of the Corporate Plan and cuts across many, if not all, of the themes. There are also a range of pledges/equality objectives that aim to secure better health and well-being outcomes for disadvantages or marginalised groups.

Access to good quality, healthy food

The themes 'a greener Denbighshire' and 'a fairer, more equal Denbighshire' make pledges to alleviate food poverty and increase community grown food opportunities.

People's emotional and mental well-being

The new themes of health and a learning Denbighshire are very much focussed on securing better well-being outcomes.

Access to healthcare

Waiting lists, and the impact these have on service delivery, staff well-being, in addition to the health and well-being of patients is likely to be subject to further analysis.

Participation in leisure opportunities

Active travel features strongly, so too the aspiration of young people to get involved in more accessible and appropriate leisure, sport and cultural activities.

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Access to good quality, healthy food

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

People's emotional and mental well-being

Some groups may be at risk of worse emotional and mental well-being as a result of the social distancing measures of Covid-19. The plan, as it is worked up into more detail, will need to consider

how some interventions will need to be targeted to be effective.

Access to healthcare

The draft Corporate Plan currently, aside from a commitment to providing dropped kerbs and supporting digital inclusion/transport, may not contribute anything significant in terms of improved access to healthcare.

Participation in leisure opportunities

Some people may be less likely to participate either because of access issues (cost, transport, living in a rural area) or perhaps due to accessibility barriers for people with protected characteristics.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Overall there is a greater focus in draft Corporate Plan around mobilising collective resources to tackle poverty, hence the overall impact changing from neutral to positive. However, it is not clear currently how any proposed areas of focus will truly reduce poverty (increase household incomes) given the turbulence of the geopolitics and the global economy.

Further actions required

There is some discussion about how experiences of Covid-19 will have exacerbated inequality – although the consequences are not yet fully understood. Perhaps the plan could more explicitly reference these, particularly in relation to the health, learning and growing and fairer, more equal themes.

Positive impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership;

pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

The latest draft Corporate Plan includes a new theme, 'A fairer and more equal Denbighshire' and is supported by a range of pledges to reduce harms, exploitation and abuse experienced by people, to ensure people's voices are heard; to alleviate socio-economic deprivation.

A range of equality objectives are highlighted with an Asterix (*) throughout the Corporate Plan.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

The draft Corporate Plan includes proposals to support marginalised groups, such as refugees. The draft well-being assessment includes analyses to consider the well-being of (some) marginalised groups, such as refugees. There is also, while limited, a little more understanding of the long term resilience of people who suffer discrimination and disadvantage to climate change for example.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Deprivation and tackling poverty is featuring strongly in the draft Corporate Plan, with a particular focus on reducing the impacts of poverty (eg hunger) and improving opportunities for skills

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

The draft well-being assessment includes analysis at a smaller local area level (both in terms of data and engagement feedback). There is no specific geographic area of focus at present, although one will likely emerge as specific pledges are developed.

Negative impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

The well-being assessment specifically highlighted disabled people has having poorer well-being. We will need to critically review the pledges to see whether they will enhance or pose further challenges to people with protected characteristics as each pledge is developed further.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

The draft well-being assessment includes analyses to consider the well-being of (some) marginalised groups, such as refugees. However, this is limited, and reflects, in part, challenges we faced with engagement. There is also, while limited, a little more understanding of the long term resilience of people who suffer discrimination and disadvantage to climate change for example. Some of the pledges may not be able to partly, let alone, fully alleviate poverty and disadvantage given the turbulence in the wider global economy.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

As already stated, the impacts of the pledges may not be able to partly, let alone, fully alleviate poverty and disadvantage given the turbulence in the wider global economy.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

There is no specific geographic area of focus at present, although one will likely emerge as specific pledges are developed. As stated elsewhere, some interventions will need to be targeted to ensure the benefits are felt by the people/places needing them most.

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Impact has changed from neutral to positive as a result of the the new themes and pledges in the current draft Corporate Plan that focus on community well-being and community building.

Further actions required

This section may need more extended discussion to determine any negative impacts as well as opportunities to maximise collective efforts to support cohesive communities over the longer term. To what extent does the Corporate Plan aim to contribute to the longer term resilience of rural areas together with opportunities to develop and safeguard vital rural assets?

We will need to fulfil these pledges within the context of the fairer, more equal Denbighshire theme.

There is some discussion about how experiences of Covid-19 will have exacerbated inequality, which can cause certain individuals to be more at risk – although the consequences are not yet fully understood.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

The draft Corporate Plan emphasises the council's ongoing commitment safeguarding vulnerable children, young people and adults, to ensuring the best possible care of looked after children, carers. Homelessness, and good housing features strongly, alongside pledges that focus on bringing communities together.

Community participation and resilience

This features in the context of pledges around skills development, sports and leisure, cultural and Welsh language opportunities and opportunities for intergenerational community building. Social isolation and loneliness is included.

The attractiveness of the area

Plans to support a green economy could create a positive impact, although this could be a tenuous assertion with no specific evidence at present.

Connected communities

The draft corporate plan considers connectivity again as a core part of securing well-being (see prosperous section), and also to ensure people are digitally included.

Rural resilience

Rural broadband is a feature, so too the rural economy.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Community participation and resilience

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

The attractiveness of the area

Wildflower meadows remain contentious with some residents regarding them as an eyesore. The new plan could take the opportunity to bring people along with the climate and ecological change programme.

Connected communities

Our control in securing better phone signal and broadband is limited, as demonstrated by the previous corporate plan.

Rural resilience

To what extent does the Corporate Plan aims to contribute to the longer term resilience of rural areas together with opportunities to develop and safeguard vital rural assets?

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The overall impact is expected to be positive, given the contribution we intend to make to collectively supporting the national agenda around Welsh language as well as deliver local culture and arts-led regeneration.

Further actions required

Further discussion needed, particularly at a North Wales Economic Ambition Board level. There

could be tensions across the region with some areas wanting to limit tourism and others wanting to stimulate more tourism. We may need to pay more attention to the rural economy and the importance of agriculture to culture.

The council may need to be 'refocussed' in some way to deliver cultural regeneration in a cohesive way - the review of the new senior leadership team structure could address this.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

The draft Corporate Plan contains a theme dedicated to securing a Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. The pledges propose to create community-focussed Welsh language opportunities and play our part in achieving one million Welsh Speakers, embedding our Welsh Language Strategy 2022 to 2027 and our Welsh in Education Strategy, among other pledges.

We are awaiting new Census 2021 data. Until that is available, the draft assessment uses 2011 data and any new information gleaned from engagement or other research sources.

Promoting the Welsh language

The draft Corporate Plan states it wants Denbighshire to be a county where the Welsh language is a living, thriving language and the pledges within the theme focus on developing people's skills and confidence in using Welsh at home, in work and with children from a very young age.

Culture and heritage

Culture and heritage, and in particular links with our rural farming heritage, is a key feature of our draft well-being assessment – with opportunities for growth highlighted. The new theme highlights, in particular, arts and culture as a driver for regeneration and personal/community well-being.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Promoting the Welsh language

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Culture and heritage

The council may need to be 'refocussed' in some way to deliver cultural regeneration in a cohesive way. Agriculture may be overlooked somewhat.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Denbighshire County Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and a strategy (2021-2030) to become net carbon zero and ecologically positive has been approved. Procurement features heavily in the action plan to deliver the strategy and for these reasons the anticipated impact is positive.

Further actions required

The latest draft Corporate Plan sets out a broader commitment to health and well-being. We will await consultation of the PSB's draft Well-being Plan to ensure the plans are integrated once that is approved. Based on the current draft, both plans are in alignment.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

In line with the draft social partnerships Bill, the latest draft of the Corporate Plan makes specific pledges around procurement and securing community benefits.

Human rights

Core part of procurement and HR policies currently. The equalities commitment emphasises ongoing support as part of Wales's declaration as a Nation of Sanctuary.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

The draft Corporate Plan attempts to create more focus around tackling poverty and deprivation. The draft well-being assessment provides a shared analysis and narrative around long term trends, opportunities and aspirations. We need to wait and see whether this will feature in the PSB's plan.

Reducing climate change

Reducing climate change is a core part of the draft well-being assessment – and was a particular feature of engagement feedback.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

We will need to work seamlessly with partners and Welsh Government to support small and medium sized businesses to ensure they are prepared and well-positioned for the changes.

Human rights

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

In terms of our evidence base, there are some gaps across topics, which are identified very clearly in our draft well-being assessment. These gaps are often due to partners experiencing capacity issues while they deliver business as usual in addition to the additional demands placed upon them by Covid-19.

Reducing climate change

None identified at present (this should continue to be reviewed).