



Corporate Plan 2012-17

An excellent council, close to the community

DRAFT

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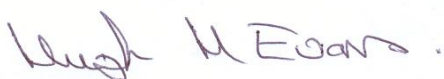
FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this Corporate Plan which sets out the main priorities for the council during the next five years. The plan is the result of more than a years' work, including extensive consultation and engagement, and I am therefore confident that our priorities reflect the needs of our communities. The priorities are also ambitious and will move Denbighshire, and the council, forward.

It is well known that local authorities are facing difficult times. We have got less money to invest in council services, and we must also manage issues which are outside of our control, such as the global economy, welfare rights reform and the restructure of the health service. During these difficult times, it is particularly important that we play our part by providing the best services possible for residents, and by focussing on priorities that will make a difference to people's lives. Our Corporate Plan has a clear focus on improving services for our customers. We are also committed to becoming more responsive to the needs of customers, and to being clearer about what standards of service our customers should expect from the council.

I want our residents to have pride in their communities, and also to have confidence that the council is doing everything possible to develop this. Having recently seen the commitment and sense of pride displayed by volunteers at the London 2012 Olympic Games, I want the council to work closely with local communities during the lifetime of this Corporate Plan to encourage the development of volunteering and community activities throughout Denbighshire. Only by working together will we be able to make our communities more vibrant and instil a sense of pride in our towns and villages.

I would also like the council to become more accountable to the public, and to achieve that we must reduce bureaucracy and make information easier to understand. The priorities in our Corporate Plan are clear, and are well understood and supported by all our Elected Members. The information on page 15 describes how we will monitor the delivery of the Corporate Plan, and I hope to see some of you at future meetings of our Cabinet when we will be discussing our progress.



Councillor Hugh H Evans, Leader of Council

INTRODUCTION

I am proud to say that Denbighshire is now one of the highest performing councils in Wales. Over the lifetime of this Corporate Plan, I want the council to maintain this status and deliver further improvements. I want Denbighshire to become an excellent council and to compare favourably with the best authorities outside of Wales. To do this, we must continue to provide consistently good services and strive for excellence, despite having less money to spend.

The financial environment means that money is tight at the current time, and that is as true for the council as it is for households and individuals. We have less money to invest in services than we have had in the past, and that means we need to be clear about what we aim to do, as well as what we are not able to do. That is why this Corporate Plan sets out how much we expect to invest in our priorities over the next 5 years, and how we will find this money.

In order to identify the priorities for our Corporate Plan, we undertook a significant amount of research, analysis, and engagement work which highlighted a number of themes which are important to our communities. The themes emerging from our research and engagement work then underwent significant consultation to refine and develop them into what are now the priorities within our Corporate Plan:

- Developing the local economy;
- Improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings;
- Improving our roads;
- Vulnerable People are protected and are able to live as independently as possible;
- Providing a clean environment;
- Ensuring access to good quality housing; and
- Modernising the Council to deliver efficiencies and improve services for our customers.

Each of our priorities will have to be approached in a different way. Some are about changing the way the whole council works, whilst others will be delivered by a small number of council services working together. Some will take several years to deliver and will require a significant amount of financial investment, whilst others may be achievable relatively quickly and may require additional effort and human resources, rather than substantial amounts of new money.

In order to continue to provide high quality services to our residents, it is essential that we modernise the council and exploit technology to become more efficient and cost-effective. Changing the way we work will enable us to divert valuable resources to support services to the public. Delivering our modernisation agenda will be the key to protecting key frontline services and protecting jobs during the next five years, which is why this is one of the priorities within our Corporate Plan. It is not only important in its own right, but it also underpins our other priorities.

We have worked hard to ensure that the priorities within our Corporate Plan reflect the needs of our communities, and we will review these priorities annually to ensure that they remain relevant.



Dr Mohammed Mehmet, Chief Executive

THE FINANCIAL STRATEGY TO SUPPORT OUR CORPORATE PLAN

This section will provide a 1 or 2 page summary to explain how we will ensure that the necessary resources are available to support the Corporate Plan. The section for each priority will also include details of how much money we expect to make available to support delivery. These sections will not be drafted until Members have had an opportunity to discuss the financial strategy for the Corporate Plan, which is due to take place on 11th September 2012.

HOW OUR CORPORATE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

What is the Corporate Plan?

The purpose of our Corporate Plan is to describe the main priorities for the council during the next five years, and to explain what that will mean in terms of benefits to our communities. It is important to note that our Corporate Plan does not cover everything that the council will do. We provide a wide range of services for our communities, and each of our 13 council services has a separate plan which says what it aims to deliver, and how it will be done. The Corporate Plan identifies the main priorities for the council as a whole during the next 5 years. This means that these areas will receive additional focus and resources in order to ensure they are delivered successfully. They have been identified as priorities for the council because our research and engagement work tells us that they are important to our communities and that we need to do more in these areas to meet the needs and expectations of our communities.

Consultation and Engagement

Whilst developing our new Corporate Plan for 2012-2017, we undertook a considerable amount of consultation and engagement work, focusing on residents, staff, and Elected Members. The aim of this work was to help identify priorities to address the needs and concerns of our communities. Some of the key activities undertaken as part of our consultation and engagement work included:

- **A residents' survey:** of 6,000 households during the summer of 2011, that included questions about the biggest issues facing our communities.
- **A public survey:** through our website and by posting leaflets in our leisure centres, libraries, One-Stop-Shops and council reception areas. This took place between October and December 2011, and generated 1,228 responses.
- **Workshops with young people:** through the Denbighshire Youth Council and Student Councils in some of our high schools.
- **Staff workshops:** with different levels of staff throughout the council.
- **Workshops with Elected Members:** to consider the conclusions from our research and engagement work and agree draft priorities for our new Corporate Plan.
- **Public consultation on draft Corporate Plan priorities:** inviting comments from residents, staff, Town & Community Councils and other stakeholders during August and September 2011.

Links to other strategic documents

Our Corporate Plan also supports, and is supported by, a number of other key strategic documents. The BIG Plan, which is a 15 year strategy (2011-26) developed by the council and its partners to improve the quality of life of our local communities by enhancing our economic, social and environmental wellbeing. Our Corporate Plan 2012-17 has been developed to ensure that the council is able to make a meaningful contribution to the outcomes of the BIG Plan, which are:

- Older people lead independent and fulfilled lives
- People and places in Rhyl benefit from regeneration activity
- Children and young people in Denbighshire achieve and have skills for life
- Vulnerable families in Denbighshire are supported to live a life free from poverty, where they can be independent and flourish
- Needs of our rural communities are recognised and met
- People in Denbighshire have healthy lifestyles
- Children, young people and vulnerable adults in Denbighshire are safe
- Denbighshire has a thriving and sustainable economy and a skilled workforce

Denbighshire's Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out what can be built and where, throughout Denbighshire up to 2021. New building developments will be one of the things needed to support the priorities in our Corporate Plan, so it has been important to ensure that the LDP and our Corporate Plan complement each other to help delivery benefits to our communities.

Our Corporate Plan has also been designed to support the objectives within our Strategic Equality Plan, and we have also undertaken a comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment to help us understand how our Corporate Plan can contribute to positive outcomes for all the peoples of Denbighshire. It has also been drafted to carefully complement the individual plans of each council service, such as education; social care and environmental services.

Further Consultation

The council will review its corporate priorities every year to ensure they remain relevant, and we will publish an annual corporate plan delivery document to explain what we expect to deliver during that year to support our priorities. In order to contribute to the debate, make comments or suggestions, or to request further information, please contact the Corporate Improvement Team using the contact details on Page 1.

Priority: Developing the local economy

Denbighshire residents, in common with communities across Wales, have stressed the importance of reviving the local economy to provide a sound base for all other development. The main influences on our local economy in the short to medium term are the state of the global economy, the monetary and fiscal policy set by the UK Government, and the Welsh Government initiatives outlined in its Programme for Government document. However, as a local authority there is much that we can do together with local and regional partners to provide the environment for growth. We will focus on improving skills and ensuring these are the right skills to support economic improvement. We will also provide support for the tourism sector, and implement planning policies that encourage the development of identified employment land. We also recognise the need to work with partners to improve infrastructure such as broadband, mobile communication, road and rail transport. Our vision for local economic improvement rests on our commitment to realising benefits for our communities. Therefore, we also focus on realising local ambition in our towns and rural communities, and on tackling the persistent deprivation concentrated in parts of Rhyl and Denbigh. In order to realise this priority we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

Denbighshire will have a workforce with the skills required for business growth

- The council will work with local and regional partners to understand the specific skills needs and demands from local business in Denbighshire and in the wider region including in the Enterprise Zones at Deeside and Anglesey. We will ensure the delivery of a high class and relevant school's curriculum and provide support to partners in creating demand and opportunities for training, apprenticeships, further and higher education.

The infrastructure that connects the county to the wider region will enable individuals and businesses based in Denbighshire to compete effectively in wider markets for jobs and trade

- The council will play a leadership role in campaigning for investment in infrastructure to improve travel and communication, such as roads, rail transport and broadband. To do this, we will work closely with regional partners through the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

Businesses will develop and grow in Denbighshire

- The council will supply business support; planning policies to encourage the development of employment land; and facilitate the provision of buildings to meet the needs of modern businesses, including reviewing our own industrial units. We will focus particularly on attracting inward investment, new start-ups and growing small and medium enterprises.

The county's Tourism industry will be supported and developed

- We will work with the tourism trade and the Destination Denbighshire Partnership to raise the profile and quality of our tourist destinations. We aim to increase the volume of higher-spend activity and over-night stays. Likely significant markets for growth are: cycling / walking activities around the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the cycling centre of excellence; heritage & arts based tourism (the World Heritage Site, castles and religious sites, and Ruthin Craft Centre); and coast-related tourism, including water borne activities.

Towns and rural communities will be revitalised

- The council will deliver support for local economies and communities and encourage the development of volunteering and community activities in your area through; Town Plans, the Rural Development Plan, participatory budgeting and the transfer of some council assets to Town and Community Council's or other local groups.

Deprivation in parts of Rhyl and Denbigh will be reduced

- The council will lead and support community regeneration through the Rhyl Going Forward programme, Families First Programme, Flying Start Programme and the North Denbighshire Communities First programme.

If we are successful we will expect to see:

Fewer people being unemployed

Improvements in people's incomes

An increase in the number of active enterprises

An increase in productivity in Denbighshire

An increase in the revenue from tourism in Denbighshire

An increase in residents' satisfaction with their local area

A reduction in levels of deprivation in Rhyl and Upper Denbigh

How will we pay for this?

	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17
Denbighshire					

Priority:

Improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings

The performance of pupils in Denbighshire has improved significantly in recent years. However, we believe that there is still room for improvement in terms of how well our children perform at school. Not only do we want our children to be the highest performers in Wales, but we want to narrow the gap between Denbighshire and the top performing authorities in the UK. In doing so, we also want to reduce the gaps in performance between different groups of learners, such as those from less well-off backgrounds. Attendance and performance in schools can be affected by the school environment, and many school buildings in Denbighshire are in need of improvement and modernisation in order to provide facilities which support 21st century teaching and learning environments. In delivering this priority, we hope to achieve the following outcome:

Students achieve their potential

- We will provide significant investment to improve school buildings and facilities and to provide improved learning environments for pupils.
- We will continue to review school provision across the County to ensure that we provide the right number of school places, of the right type, in the right location
- We will support and challenge schools in order to raise standards and improve educational experiences for all pupils

How will we pay for this?

	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17
Denbighshire					

If we are successful we will expect to see:

Improved performance at the end of primary and secondary school stages, with a particular emphasis on English, Welsh and Maths

Improved pupil attendance and fewer exclusions from schools

All pupils leaving school with approved qualifications

An improvement in the quality of school buildings and facilities

A reduction in the number of mobile classrooms used

A reduction in the number of empty spaces in schools, and fewer oversubscribed schools

**Priority:
Improving our
roads**

Access to employment, services, leisure, family and friends are all facilitated by a quality road network. Poor roads hamper access, reduce safety and can damage vehicles, trade and even social contact and wellbeing. For these reasons residents stress the importance of roads maintenance and we are responding by continuing our commitment to improving the network through resurfacing, surface dressing, and other infrastructure investments. By realising this priority we hope to achieve the following outcome:

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

- We will maintain the current levels of additional investment for road maintenance and improvements over the next 5 years.
- We will work with our Elected Members, through Member Area Groups, to develop our road capital maintenance programme.
- We will review preparations for Highways Winter Maintenance and our contingency plans to respond to unexpected scenarios
- We will develop and implement policy regarding delivery of increased dropped kerbs at strategic locations

If we are successful we will expect to see:

An overall improvement in the condition of our roads

A reduction in the percentage of roads classed as being in poor condition

An improvement in residents' satisfaction with the quality of our roads

How will we pay for this?

	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17
Denbighshire					

Priority:

Vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible

We are changing the way we deliver Social Services to enable people to take greater responsibility for their own health and well-being and to have greater control by being more involved in decisions about their care. We will focus on early intervention, prevention and reabling approaches which support people to maintain their independence. At the same time, we have a responsibility to ensure vulnerable people are protected, and to minimise the risk of them experiencing abuse or exploitation. In order to realise this priority, we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

Vulnerable People are able to live as independently as possible

- We will develop additional Extra Care Housing sites across the county
- We will continue to develop our reablement service which supports people to accommodate their illness by learning, or re-learning, daily living skills
- Ensure the continued development of Assistive Technology to support adults to remain safe and independent
- We will improve the ease of the provision of information through mobile devices, a single point of access for customers and fluid interfaces between organisations
- We will work with local organisations to develop community-based activities, which help people to remain active and independent

Vulnerable children and adults are protected

- We will work with health, the police and the voluntary sector to further develop early intervention approaches to protecting vulnerable adults, children and families
- We will ensure access to suitable and appropriate accommodation for vulnerable people at risk of becoming homeless

If we are successful we will expect to see:

More Extra Care Housing across Denbighshire

Fewer people in residential care homes

More people living in their own homes, for longer

Fewer repeat referrals to adult or child protection services

How will we pay for this?

	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17
Denbighshire	£ 2.4m				

**Priority:
Providing a clean
environment**

Denbighshire has an attractive and inviting landscape, and a spread of historic and cultural towns and villages. The quality of this public space is key to encouraging people to move into the county, as well as attracting tourists which help to support the local economy. Maintaining this appeal requires investment in keeping towns neat and tidy including deterring littering and dog fouling. In order to realise this priority we hope to achieve the following outcome:

To produce an attractive environment for residents and visitors alike

- We will use a range of mechanisms such as fixed penalty notices to deter dog fouling, littering and other environmentally anti-social behaviour
- We will use education and preventative activity to develop a culture of 'local pride' within people of all ages
- We will encourage community involvement in sustaining our public spaces
- We ensure that our street cleansing and grounds maintenance service becomes more efficient and cost-effective

If we are successful we will expect to see:

Less dog fouling and litter in our towns and villages

Less environmental anti-social behaviour

Neat and tidy towns and villages

High levels of public satisfaction with the appearance of public spaces

How will we pay for this?

	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17
Denbighshire					

Priority:
Ensuring
access to good
quality housing

The real test of 'quality' housing is housing that meets people's needs. We recognise that this means a mix of council, social landlord, private rented and owner-occupied housing, and have therefore developed a Housing Strategy to reflect this. In delivering this priority we hope to achieve the following outcome:

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

- Our planning policies will encourage the required mix and amount of new build housing
- We will adapt in light of the UK Government's welfare reforms
- We will work to ensure empty homes are brought back into use
- We will adapt homes to meet the needs of disabled residents
- We will have quality council housing and quality relationships with social landlords to ensure we meet social housing needs
- We will explore options with social landlords and the private sector for investment in new housing provision

If we are successful we will expect to see:

Homeless people and those threatened with homelessness assisted to find a home

Welsh Government Affordable Housing targets delivered

Empty dwellings returned to occupation

Fewer people on the Housing Waiting List

Denbighshire County Council Housing Services recognised for excellence

How will we pay for this?

	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17
Denbighshire					

Priority:
**Modernising the
council to deliver
efficiencies and
improve services for
our customers**

Denbighshire has done well to manage budgets cuts in recent years without major impacts on the frontline services that resident's value. This is getting harder, but it is still our aim. We think we can achieve this in the next five years by improving significantly the way we exploit technology. This can help make customer access to services better, and also make our workforce less tied to buildings. We will also focus on getting best value for money by ensuring that all our services are working to best practice, including delivering against clear customer service standards. In delivering this priority we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

Services continue to improve and develop

- We will make better use of information and best practice to improve service delivery, and we will utilise techniques to streamline our processes
- We will compare our performance against that of other local authorities and the private sector to ensure we are delivering the best possible services
- We will use technology to enable frontline services to improve efficiency and reduce the time spent on administration

More flexible and effective workforce supported by cost efficient infrastructure

- We will develop the use of flexible working to improve the service to the customer, reduce costs and support a positive work-life balance for our staff
- We will provide the technology and building infrastructure to enable the use of flexible working practices
- We will reduce the cost of services by reducing the amount of office buildings, business travel and other costs such as printing.

Customers will have easy access to clear information and transactional processes

- Customer Service Standards will enable customers to know what to expect from the council
- We will enable customers to carry out all Council transactions through the Council website

How will we pay for this?

	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17
Denbighshire					

If we are successful we expect to see:

Increased public satisfaction with the simplicity and ease of their interaction with the council

More cost effective services

Fewer complaints by the public

More transactions carried out through the Council website

High levels of staff satisfaction

Reduced impact on our environment as a result of less business travel and paper waste

MONITORING OUR SUCCESS IN DELIVERING THE CORPORATE PLAN

It is essential that we are able to monitor whether we are delivering the expected benefits for our communities. We have a range of mechanisms in place to ensure that Elected Members and members of the public are able to track our progress throughout the lifetime of this Corporate Plan.

Quarterly Performance Reports

Every three months, we will produce a report examining our progress in delivering work designed to support the delivery of the outcomes attached to our priorities. These Quarterly Performance Reports are considered by both our Cabinet (which is accountable for delivering the Corporate Plan) and by our Performance Scrutiny Committee (which provides a challenge to senior officers and Cabinet) to help ensure that we stay on track. All of our Quarterly Performance Reports are published on our website, and members of the public are welcome to attend sessions of Cabinet or Performance Scrutiny Committee to hear how things are progressing. To find details of when these meetings take place, and to access agendas; reports; and future items for discussion, please visit our website using the following link:

<https://moderngov.denbighshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

Annual Performance Review

We will publish an Annual Performance review each October to analyse our progress in delivering the outcomes attached to our priorities during the previous financial year. This report will be discussed at a meeting of the Council and, again, members of the public are welcome to attend these sessions to hear what our Elected Members think about our progress. Details of these meetings will also be available through the website link above.

Service Performance Challenge Meetings

The activity required to successfully deliver our Corporate Plan will be undertaken by individual council services, or groups of services working together to delivery shared outcomes. We hold a Service Performance Challenge meeting for each council service twice a year to examine council services and identify specific areas which are not going according to plan. These meetings provide the opportunity for our Elected Members and senior officers to explore ways to improve performance in these areas. These meetings are attended by representatives of our Scrutiny Committees and relevant Cabinet Members.