

<b>Committee</b>	Governance and Audit Committee
<b>Date</b>	January 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2025
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis (Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets) / Gary Williams (Corporate Director - Governance and Business)
<b>Head of Service</b>	Helen Vaughan-Evans (Head of Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets)
<b>Report author</b>	Robyn Lovelock (Insight, Strategy & Delivery Manager)
<b>Title of Briefing</b>	Panel Performance Assessment (PPA)

## 1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 Denbighshire County Council's Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) final report, draft response statements and draft Action Plan responding to recommendations.

## 2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 For the Governance and Audit committee to be provided with the PPA report (Appendix 1), a draft of response statements (Section 4.6 and 4.7) and the Action Plan (Appendix 2) setting out responses to the recommendations in the Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) report for the committee to discharge their duties under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, namely:
- To receive a copy of the report (Appendix 1).
  - To review the statutory statements the Council is required to make in response to the Report (Section 4.6 and 4.7) and make recommendations for changes to the statements as it deems appropriate.
  - To review the actions the council intends to take (Appendix 2) and make recommendations for changes as it deems appropriate.

### **3. What are the Recommendations?**

- 3.1 For Committee to note and provide feedback on the Panel Performance Assessment Report (Appendix 1).
- 3.2 For Committee to review the statutory statements the Council is required to make in response to the Report and make recommendations for changes to the statements as it deems appropriate (Section 4.6 and 4.7).
- 3.3 For Committee to review the actions the council intends to take, the 'Action Plan', and make recommendations for changes as it deems appropriate (Appendix 2).

### **4. Report details**

#### **About the PPA**

- 4.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that principal councils must make arrangements for a Panel appointed by the council to assess the extent to which it is meeting its performance requirements at least once between two consecutive ordinary elections (May 2022 and anticipated May 2027), i.e. once per County Council's term.
- 4.2 In addition to fulfilling the statutory requirement, an effective PPA can inform the council's improvement journey, building on the annual self-assessment, supporting it to look to the future through a different lens. The PPA has provided an opportunity to test thinking with impartial expert peers, who provide alternative perspectives through independent, objective challenge in making their recommendations.
- 4.3 The WLGA ran the Panel Performance Assessment on DCC's behalf between 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – the first PPA in Wales.
- 4.4 The draft report was reviewed for accuracy by Cabinet and SLT and all points of edit accepted by the Panel. The report was issued in November (Appendix 1). This report is positive overall and set out 9 recommendations for improvement and identified 8 areas of strength and innovation.

4.5 In responding to the PPA report, the legislation requires us to include:

- The extent to which we accept the conclusions in the report.
- The extent to which the council intends to follow any recommendations contained in the report.
- Any actions it proposes to take to increase the extent to which it meets the performance requirements (an Action Plan).

### **Draft statutory statements**

4.6 The draft statement for the “the extent to which we accept the conclusions in the report” is as follows:

*“The Council accepts the report and its conclusions. It notes that the Assessment was a useful process and appreciates the thoughtfulness and the thoroughness of the Assessment team. For future Assessments, we would welcome greater content in the final report on the evidence seen which has led to each recommendation. A general observation, which reflects across a number of our responses in the Action Plan, is that we would like to have seen more emphasis in the process and report on how we are building community and council well-being and resilience for anticipated future challenges, in line with the Well-being of Future Generations goals and ways of working.”*

4.7 The draft statement for the “extent to which the council intends to follow any recommendations contained in the report” is as follows:

*“The Council accepts all recommendations made in the PPA report and has put in place an Action Plan setting out how it will take each recommendation forward. It should be noted that this Assessment has been done at a particular point in time and progress has already happened quickly around some areas, such as prioritisation of the transformation work.”*

### **Action plan**

4.8 Actions the Council intends to take in response to the Reports recommendation is contained within the draft Action Plan (Appendix 2).

4.9 Actions will be added to the Council's Performance Management System and updates given quarterly. Progress on actions will also be communicated in our annual self-assessment.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?**

5.1. The Panel Performance Assessment will test the effectiveness and efficiency of the council's functions. This work will particularly support the Corporate Plan's theme around being a Well-run, High Performing Council.

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

6.1. The PPA was delivered and funded by the WLGA.

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

7.1. No assessment is required for this report.

## **8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1. The scoping document, including the areas of focus sought, was developed between May and June 2024 with input from the Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet, Performance Scrutiny ([6th June 2024 – Item 9](#)), the Governance and Audit Committee ([12th June 2024 – Item 7](#)) and County Council ([9th July 2024 – Item 6](#)), alongside the council's self-assessment of its performance for 2023 to 2024.

8.2 To review the draft PPA report for accuracy, the draft version was reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team (17<sup>th</sup> October 2024) and at Cabinet Briefing (4<sup>th</sup> November 2024). The report findings were also discussed at the DCC Leadership Conference (3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024), CET (16<sup>th</sup> December) and Cabinet Briefing (6<sup>th</sup> January) to inform the draft statutory statements and action plan.

8.3 Informally the Report and Action Plan was discussed at Council Workshop (14<sup>th</sup> January) and at Staff Council (15<sup>th</sup> January).

8.4 Following today, the Report and Action Plan, including Governance and Audit recommendations, will be discussed at Cabinet (18th February) and Council (20th February).

## **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

9.1. No statement is required with this report.

## **10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1. There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

## **11. Power to make the decision**

11.1. Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Part 6, Performance And Governance Of Principal Councils And Corporate Joint Committees (Sections 92, 93, 94 and 108).