

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	30 January 2025
Head of Service	Catrin Roberts, Head of Corporate Support Service: People
Report author	Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Title	Arrangements for Reviewing the roll-out of the new Waste & Recycling Service

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. To outline the proposed arrangements for undertaking the review into the roll-out of the new Waste and Recycling Service.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To seek Performance Scrutiny Committee to formally establish a mechanism for undertaking a review into the planning, implementation and roll-out of the new Waste & Recycling Service and to receive the findings of the review in due course.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee:

- 3.1. considers the contents of the report and the draft terms of reference for undertaking the review (Appendix 1).
- 3.2. confirms the proposed arrangements for undertaking the review, as detailed in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of the report; and
- 3.3. agrees to receive the findings and conclusions of the review in due course.

4. Report details

- 4.1. On 3rd June 2024, the Council commenced the roll-out its new Waste and Recycling Service. This new system for collecting and dealing with domestic waste was introduced across the county simultaneously and as a result it constituted the biggest service change implemented by the Council since its establishment in 1996.
- 4.2. Within the first few weeks it became apparent that a large number of domestic waste collections were being missed or delayed on a regular basis, causing frustration and anger amongst residents. This resulted in elected members and the Council's call centre being inundated with queries and complaints. For these reasons, the Leader of the Council along with the Lead Member for Environment & Transport submitted a Scrutiny request seeking the Council's scrutiny function to examine in detail the problems created by the implementation of the new service, their causes, and the effectiveness of the response to mitigate the impact on residents. Several residents also contacted the Council seeking it to examine the new system's introduction and to examine matters relating to the Service's user-friendliness for residents with disabilities and/or protected characteristics.
- 4.3. The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) initially considered the scrutiny requests at its July 2024 meeting and decided that the matter did merit detailed examination. It was agreed that the Group would at its September meeting draw together a draft terms of reference for the review. In the meantime, whilst SCVCG members discussed with their respective political groups which issues or aspects of the roll-out they wished to see included in the review's terms of reference, officers were instructed to initiate enquires on the types of external support that may be available to support an in-depth review along with any associated costs.
- 4.4. At its September 2024 meeting the SCVCG considered two draft terms of reference documents. One compiled by Councillor Karen Edwards on behalf of the Independent Group, the other by officers produced solely as a basis for discussion to assist members in drawing up a terms of reference. Copies of representations made by the Plaid Cymru Group (the only Group not represented on the SCVCG) on what aspects they thought merited inclusion in the review were also shared with the SCVCG.

Following consideration of all documentation the Group instructed officers to collaborate with Councillor Karen Edwards to produce an amalgamated version of both terms of reference submitted, and to include in it other significant points raised during the discussion at that meeting. Upon completion this revised terms of reference document was to be circulated to all county councillors and members of the Council's Governance & Audit Committee (GAC) in advance of holding an all-member Council workshop to discuss arrangements for undertaking the review.

4.5. The all-member Council Workshop was held on 19 November, during which the draft terms of reference and potential arrangements for conducting the 'Review' were discussed. At the conclusion of that discussion a few minor additions, relating to risk management, well-being and equality impact assessments, were added to the draft terms of reference document. Following the all-member Council workshop, the SCVCG at its November meeting considered the feedback received during the Workshop along with the revised terms of reference document incorporating the amendments suggested at the Workshop. At the conclusion of its discussions the Group agreed to recommend the following approach for undertaking the review; that:

- a Task and Finish (T&F) Group be established for the purpose of undertaking the review.
- the T&F Group comprise of 12 members - with the aim of ensuring fair geographical and political representation on the T&F Group all Member Area Groups (MAGs) should be asked to appoint two non-current or former administration Cabinet members to serve on the Group (the legislation governing Scrutiny activities prohibits current Cabinet members from serving on any scrutiny inquiries or discussions. However, as this review will examine decisions relating to the roll-out of the new service which span the term of the current and previous Council administrations it is likely to look at decisions taken by both administrations, with both current and previous Cabinet members likely to be called to give evidence as part of the review. Therefore, if any member of the T&F Group was a member of the previous Cabinet they would have a prejudicial interest in any decisions taken by that Cabinet and would not be able to examine those decisions as part of the

review, hence why it is recommended that members of the former administration's Cabinet are not appointed to serve on this T&F Group).

- the T&F Group will appoint its own chair from amongst its membership. It will also agree its own workstreams, schedule of meetings, as well as whether it requires to seek and procure specialist independent advice or support.
- The T&F Group will be expected to conduct and conclude its review within a period of 12 months. If, as the review progresses, it becomes apparent that more time will be required in order to conduct a thorough review the T&F Group can request an extension to its timeline via a progress report to either the SCVCG or the Scrutiny Committee that established it.

4.6. To facilitate the formal establishment of a T&F Group to undertake the review, receive its findings, and communicate its conclusions to the wider Council membership and residents in due course, a Scrutiny Committee requires to be appointed as a mechanism for overseeing the process. The SCVCG recommended that Performance Scrutiny Committee be appointed as the designated committee for this purpose. The Committee is not expected to undertake the review, only to initiate its commencement and receive its report(s). The Committee is therefore asked to agree to the request and act as the formal reporting mechanism for the review.

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

5.1. An in-depth review of all phases associated with the roll-out of the new service will help identify any missed opportunities or shortfalls with the project planning, management and/or implementation stages. This will help inform future business or service transformation projects with a view to ensuring that Denbighshire is regarded as a well-run, high performing Council.

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

6.1. Scrutiny team staffing costs associated with the review will, where possible be contained within the Democratic Services budget. For additional costs, a commitment has been made that financial resources can be provided to procure any specialist

advice or support required by the T&F Group, subject to an evidence-based analysis of the anticipated value for money of procuring support.

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

- 7.1. No Well-being Impact Assessment (WBIA) is required for the purpose of this decision. As part of its review the T&F Group will examine the WBIA's compiled and revised during the planning, implementation, and roll-out stages for the new Service.

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

- 8.1. The SCVCG have been heavily involved with the drawing up of the proposed terms of reference, whilst all county councillors and members of the GAC had an opportunity to contribute to the terms of reference and proposed arrangements for conducting the review during the all-member Council Workshop in November 2024.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 Given the significance of this strategic change project, the number of residents that have been affected, county wide, it is important that the organisation learns from this experience. The proposals set out within the report to use existing resource as much as possible, whilst considering the costs and benefits of specialist advice to support the task and finish group is appropriate and proportionate.

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

- 10.1. The roll-out of this new Service, as it is a service used by all households in the county, represented the biggest service-delivery change executed by the Council to date. It is therefore imperative that any gaps in project planning, management, and/or delivery are identified, and lessons learnt with a view to mitigating any risks that may arise when planning future business/service transformation projects. This will help secure the delivery of quality services to residents whilst also safeguarding the Council's reputation.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7 of the Council's Constitution.