

Denbighshire County Council

Panel Performance Assessment

October 2024



1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the performance duties under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Denbighshire County Council commissioned a Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) via the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).
- 1.2 The onsite assessment was completed over a four-day period concluding on 12th September 2024 with a feedback presentation provided to the Council outlining the key findings detailed within this report.
- 1.3 The assessment was undertaken based on the Council's agreed scoping document and the WLGA's PPA methodology, which was developed with the sector. The WLGA PPA methodology provides an overarching framework: the lines of enquiry are not prescriptive but provide guidance to the Panel on the areas that could be explored to meet the statutory duty. However, the extent to which the Panel explores those areas should be proportionate to the Council's scope but sufficient to enable the Panel to form a conclusion.
- 1.4 In accordance with the statutory guidance the PPA is not an audit or an inspection and does not seek to duplicate work undertaken by regulators and other bodies. Whilst the Panel has undertaken a corporate assessment, this assessment was not in-depth and should be considered alongside other sources of assurance such as the Council's own self-assessment, internal audit reviews, external audit and regulatory reviews.
- 1.5 In preparing for the PPA, the Council scoped their requirements to maximise the value and impact of the assessment to the Council. The specific areas of focus identified by the Council are reflected in paragraph 3.2.
- 1.6 This report provides a summary overview of the conclusions of the Panel reported by exception.

2.0 Panel

- 2.1 The following peers were commissioned by the WLGA to undertake the assessment. Selection of the peers was agreed and at the discretion of the Council, based on suitability of skills and experience:
 - Independent Chair: Bev Smith
 - Senior Member Peer: Councillor Caro Wild, Cardiff City Council
 - Senior Officer Peer: Tom Bowring, Director of Corporate Resources, Vale of Glamorgan Council
 - Wider Public, Private, or Voluntary Sector Peers: Anna Morgan, Red Shiny Apple Ltd; and Sian-Elin Freel – Mentor, Editor and Proofreader.
- 2.2 The Panel were supported by Joseph Lewis (Improvement Officer) and Lyndon Puddy (PPA Manager) from the WLGA's Improvement Team.

3.0 Scope and Approach

- 3.1 The Panel were required to assess the extent to which the Council:
 - Is exercising its functions effectively;

- Is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- Has effective governance in place for securing the above.

3.2 The Council identified the following areas where peer insight would be valued as part of the assessment:

- Leadership: How well is the Council's corporate and political structure working, and how is the capacity and capability suited to the delivery of the Council's priorities?
- Budget Proposals / Transformation: How well has the Council managed the current financial crisis, and how well is the Council preparing for the future?
- Partnership Working: How well placed is the Council to work effectively with partners, and maximise resources across sectors?

3.3 In undertaking the assessment the Panel conducted a desktop review of Council documents, data, external reports and other relevant intelligence. The onsite stage of the review involved a series of individual meetings and focus groups with the following stakeholders:

- Leader of the Council and Executive Cabinet Members
- Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Team including S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer
- Heads of Service and key Officers of the Council
- Opposition Members
- Elected Members
- Staff focus groups
- Trade Unions
- Ambition North Wales
- Destination Partnerships (Business)
- Statutory and non-statutory members of the Public Services Board (PSB)
- North Wales Regional Partnership Board
- Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council
- Fforwm Iaith members
- Older Persons Forum
- Chair/Vice Chair: Governance & Audit Committee
- Chair/Vice Chair: Performance Scrutiny Committee
- Chair/Vice Chair: Standards Committee

Executive Summary

4.0 Overall Conclusion

- 4.1 Within the current context of significant demand and financial pressures, the Panel identified a well-run council, with strong and cohesive political and professional leadership, that was exercising its functions effectively, acknowledging that there have been some recent challenges following the roll out of the new waste system. The Panel concluded that the Council has clear processes in place for managing resources economically and efficiently, and effective governance arrangements in place. Opportunities for improvement have been identified, which will enhance the arrangements in place, particularly where these relate to the Council's long and medium-term transformation priorities, which the Council will need to address to ensure sustainability.
- 4.2 The Panel recognised a council which, across several administrations, has navigated a decade of local government austerity well, protecting frontline services where possible.
- 4.3 The Panel identified key strengths and areas of innovation and good practice which will stand the Council in good stead to navigate the challenging economic outlook, these are highlighted in section 6.0.
- 4.4 The recommended opportunities for improvement are captured within text boxes under the relevant sections of the report. These areas of improvement have been developed in the spirit of sector-led improvement and are intended to support the Council as it grapples with realities of a challenging economic outlook, and crucially as it moves forward with the next stage of its transformation.

5.0 Local Context

- 5.1 Denbighshire County Council is situated in North Wales and stretches from the coastal towns of Rhyl and Prestatyn in the north coast, through the Vale of Clwyd and into the Dee Valley. The County covers an area of around 837 square kilometres and has a population of around 94,000 residents with over 36,000 Welsh language speakers within the County.
- 5.2 The County is split into 29 wards and has 48 Councillors.

15	Labour
13	Independent
8	Plaid Cymru: Party of Wales
7	Conservative
2	Wales Green Party – Plaid Werdd
1	Non-aligned Councillor
2	Vacant

- 5.3 The Leader of the Council is Councillor Jason Mclellan. The Deputy Leader is Cllr Julie Matthews. The Cabinet is made up of 9 Councillors including the Leader and Deputy Leader.
- 5.4 Delivery of the Council's services is through the Council's Corporate Executive Team (CET). CET is the Chief Executive Officer, Graham Boase who is supported by three Corporate Directors (one of which is the Council's Monitoring Officer) and the S151 Officer. The CET structure is further supported through a Senior Leadership Team which includes CET and all other Heads of Service in the delivery of functions.
- 5.5 The Council's vision is to create a '**One Council**' culture, with strong visible leadership and effective management, ensuring high levels of customer service for our communities. The Council's published values are: **Pride, Unity, Respect and Integrity**.
- 5.6 The Council has 5 principles that are fundamental to everything it does:
- **Our Culture**
 - **Our Communities**
 - **Our Performance**
 - **Our Member / Officer Relations**
 - **Our Staff**
- 5.7 The Council has a revised Corporate Strategy, The Denbighshire We Want 2022-2027. This plan underpins the Council's strategic ambitions going forward to secure the well-being of its residents and was developed in light of challenging financial pressures.

6.0 Strengths and Areas of Innovation

- 6.1 The Panel noted several areas of strength across the Council and its administration, including:
- A politically mature and stable coalition, capable of working collectively and collaboratively in the interests of the county and its residents.
 - An engaged and energetic Chief Executive, who has sought to bring additional clarity and accountability to the Council's directorship structure, establishing a strong foundation for further change and continually promoting and living the 'One Council and Denbighshire Way'.
 - Positive working relationships between officers and members who both understand their unique and complementary roles.
 - Strong recognition amongst staff of the 'Denbighshire Way' and the 'One Council' approach.
 - A strong sense of pride and commitment from staff to making a difference to communities and a willingness to support Council staff from other service areas

who require short term capacity e.g. responding to the customer facing issues around waste.

6.2 The Panel also noted a number of areas of good practice and innovation, these included;

- The Council has engaged well with its staff and members on its immediate budget pressures to date.
- A high degree of integration across social services and education, evident in the management structure of the organisation, but also triangulated through the feedback of interviewees.
- The Member Area Groups (MAGs) whereby members and officers meet in designated wards across the County to discuss residents' local priorities and local impact issues e.g. road resurfacing. In this example choice to which road is resurfaced was discussed and proposed in terms of the local priority (excluding statutory requirements) within existing resources. This approach appeared innovative to the Panel and a real source of engagement with members and the community as a whole.

7.0 National and Local Challenges

7.1 As with all local authorities, the Council is facing significant financial pressures, both within year and into the medium term. The high gap funding scenario identifies an accumulative £67.4m funding gap by 2027-28.

7.2 This challenging economic backdrop persists at a time when there is increased demand for local authority services and a cost-of-living crisis which has been amplified by increasing inflationary pressures. As with other local authorities the Council has seen an increase in complex childcare placements, independent foster care placements, increased demand and costs in adult social care, and pressures in supporting homelessness due to costs and subsidies relating to temporary accommodation.

7.3 While this picture is broadly true of all local councils, Denbighshire does experience particularly acute levels of deprivation, particularly along its north coast. The county is home to some of the most deprived areas in Wales. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) ranks areas in Wales from 1 (most deprived) to 1,909 (least deprived). According to the WIMD two parts of the Rhyl are now the most deprived in Wales -Rhyl West 2 (ranked 1) and Rhyl West 1 (ranked 2).

7.4 Across the UK's public sector there are well documented challenges in the recruitment and retention of staff across a range of professions; from planners to social works and those working in social care.

7.5 Whilst on site, the Panel recognised some of the political challenges facing the Council linked to the roll out of its new waste system. While this issue was identified as a major issue across the Council, the Panel was mindful that the PPA required to

consider a range of corporate functions, and not focus on any one single issue. The Panel recognises that the Council is looking to undertake a separate and independent review to understand how the Council's new recycling system was implemented and what lessons that can be learned but this should not dampen the Council's ambition to take appropriate risk in leading its future transformation programme.

Overview of Findings

8.0 Leadership: How well is the Council's corporate and political structure working, and how is the capacity and capability suited to the delivery of the Council's priorities?

- 8.1 Whilst on site the Panel saw evidence of clear executive leadership and a cohesive Senior Leadership Team, focussed on service delivery for the residents of Denbighshire and the staff of the Council.
- 8.2 The Panel also recognised that the democratic and corporate leadership of the Council embraced the principles of panel performance assessment and held a genuine commitment to its own and sector-led improvement.
- 8.3 The Panel saw firsthand evidence of a strong and mature coalition arrangement between the Labour Party and Plaid Cymru and heard evidence of how Cabinet is actively seeking to work collectively in the interests of citizens. As one Cabinet member suggested;
- "It's communities first, not politics".*
- 8.4 The Panel did also hear concerns from members of the Council, that there was a sense that Council had become more 'political' in recent years, and that had caused some additional strain on the administration.
- 8.5 The Panel recognised that the leadership of Denbighshire County Council has undergone substantial changes in recent years. This includes a new Chief Executive, a new political administration, 5 new members of SLT, and supported by new values and principles championed by the Leader and Chief Executive.
- 8.6 The Council may wish to consider, in light of ongoing strategic and operational pressures, what steps it can take to ensure it retains a cohesive Senior Leadership Team, aligned to a shared vision of Denbighshire County Council today and in the future. As one of our interviewees suggested;

"We are a learning organisation, we should take more time to invest in our own learning as teams".

- 8.7 The Panel also recognised the intense scrutiny and pressure that the Council's leadership faced following the implementation of the new waste system. The Council may wish to similarly consider what well-being focused support is available to all its impacted staff.
- 8.8 The Panel recognised the efforts the Chief Executive has put in place to rationalise the Council's directorships and noted that the new structure appears to be working well and is serving the Council's corporate interests.
- 8.9 The Panel explored evidence of the Council's "One Council" culture within its Corporate Plan and saw further evidence that SLT understood the vision and

corporate objectives of the Council and the role individual directorships and services play within it.

8.10 The Panel noted that the “One Council” culture could be developed further by the Council’s leadership, to articulate a clearer “One County” vision for *place*-based leadership. This could support the Council in articulating its transformation priorities for 25/26 and beyond.

8.11 The Panel noted that the Member Area Groups (MAGs) seems to work particularly well to manage the local ward priorities, and this could be further developed especially when considering the changes the Council may wish to make in how services are delivered in local areas, potentially including City, Town and Community Councils.

1.	<p>Continue to develop the narrative and vision the Council has set out for Denbighshire to ensure it can serve the county in the medium and long term.</p> <p>This should reflect the many advantages of the area, such as its fantastic cultural, natural and geographic assets. The Council should build on its approach to inclusive policy making to ensure that this vision is shared across the Council, its partners, and its residents.</p> <p>This vision should be aligned with its long-term transformation priorities and medium-term financial plan.</p>
2.	<p>Consider well-being and professional development support available to the Council’s Senior Leadership Team.</p> <p>The Corporate Executive Team and wider senior management team need to remain resilient and focussed in the face of ongoing and future challenges.</p>

9.0 Budget Proposals/Transformation: How well has the Council managed the current financial crisis, and how well is the Council preparing for the future?

9.1 The Council overspent by £3.2m in 2023/24. In Autumn 2023 this was projected to be £4.5m. Denbighshire undertook ‘budgetary control measures’ to help reduce the overspend. The areas of overspend were in Education and Children’s, Highways and Environmental, and Adult Social Care and Homelessness Services. The areas of overspend were due to:

- More complex child placements with increased costs and increased number of independent fostering placements.
- Overall significant pressures in adult social care and subsidy pressures in homelessness due to the average length of stay and rate per night in temporary accommodation.
- Highways and Environmental Services due to pressures in highways maintenance, street scene vehicle cost and waste services.

9.2 The Council has set a balanced budget for 2024/25 by:

- Identifying 'major savings proposals' amounting to £2.388m where Heads of Service were tasked with bringing forward large-scale saving projects. This was done in discussion with Lead Members. Each proposal was considered by the Corporate Executive Team and at informal meetings of Cabinet, before a report being to all Members was formally debated.
- Services also identified non-strategic savings/efficiencies amounting to £1.367m along with capital and corporate savings of £0.928m. This brought total non-strategic savings/efficiencies to £2.295m.
- Schools were also tasked to plan for 3% savings which amount to £2.7m, after receiving funding increases to cover inflationary pressures totalling £7.616m.

9.3 The approach outlined above still left a gap and Heads of Service were issued with further savings targets totalling £3m in 2024/25 and the Council acknowledged that this was not an ideal strategy, but in the weeks following approval of the budget, these savings were identified, and the Panel saw evidence that these are being delivered.

9.4 The Panel noted good practice in how performance against savings was reported and feel there could be opportunities to expand on this to include current and future saving proposals, building on the Red-Amber-Green approach currently used.

9.5 The Council has a strategy for its medium-term financial sustainability. The Panel recognised the positive engagement work across the Council that has taken place to support its budget planning for 2024/25 and noted that proposals had been amended based on feedback, suggesting that engagement was meaningful. This was complemented by the involvement of elected members at dedicated meetings to consider financial proposals and this was to be strengthened this year with an early budget debate.

9.6 The approach to identifying potential transformation schemes was seen to be inclusive, with staff at varying levels of the organisation being engaged in the process and the Chief Executive being visible in visiting staff regularly and at different locations consistent with the 'One Council' ethos.

9.7 The Panel considered the Council had put resource and energy into understanding the County's local pressures and are actively engaging the whole Council in managing its budget pressures now and into the future. This included attempts to address pressures within school budgets, following 13 of 54 schools bringing forward deficit balances compared with three in the previous year.

9.8 The Panel observed whilst on site that financial pressures were well understood and a key focus on the budget was being driven by the Council's Executive (political and officer). It was clear that this was embedded within the organisation's thought processes and was identified as the key pressure for the Council to manage. The scale of the financial pressures facing the Council was recognised by both internal and external stakeholders. This included recognition of the in-year financial

pressures on the Council's budget, an increase in need for demand driven services and the need to deliver financial savings.

9.9 However, the Panel felt that the Council needed to now proceed at pace with the prioritisation of its transformation aspirations using the prioritisation criteria it has developed. The Council will need to respond to anticipated future funding pressures, particularly its projected funding gap in the short, medium, and long-term. This will need to be aligned to its workforce strategy.

<p>3.</p>	<p>Develop a clear prioritisation of the Council's transformation agenda.</p> <p>The Council should continue to pursue its transformation agenda. The Council will need to carefully consider which of its projects and initiatives will be prioritised and carried forward, and crucially which projects will not.</p> <p>These should reflect the longer-term vision and ambition of the Council and align to its medium-term financial strategy, workforce strategy and risk appetite.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Align the Council's operating model and workforce strategy to its vision and transformation agenda.</p> <p>The Council will need to carefully consider how its vision translates into the operating model for the Council. This should include how the Council can support staff to meet the demands of a future vision for how the Council operates, and be aligned to its key strategies that enable transformational change.</p>

10.0 Partnership Working: How well placed is the Council to work effectively with partners, and maximise resources across sectors?

10.1 The Panel noted a clear recognition amongst the Council's senior leadership team, that partnership working would be essential to 'managing down demand' in areas of acute budget pressure, and the Panel heard first hand from partners in statutory forums about the strong sense of strategic engagement DCC demonstrates at a senior level.

10.2 However, the Council should consider how it can build on its approach to partnership working, and better engage with organisations beyond these partnership forums. The Panel heard from several grassroots organisations, small businesses, and voluntary sector groups that there is a strong appetite to work with the Council at an earlier stage of policy development, and to work collaboratively for the collective interests of Denbighshire.

"The Council is the fuel that keeps partnerships going, but they could do more, and be the spark for more partnership working"

- 10.3 The Panel identified a clear understanding of the potential that new partnership forums had for alleviating budgetary pressures in the medium-term and beyond. However, it also heard from a range of stakeholders, both inside and outside of the Council, that the Council struggled to provide the depth of corporate support needed to maximise these partnership forum’s transformational potential.
- 10.4 The Council should also consider how it can engage with City, Town and Community Councils in its endeavour to strengthen partnership working.

5.	<p>Carefully consider the opportunities for further partnership working presented by new statutory regional consortia i.e. Corporate Joint Committees.</p> <p>The Council recognises the important role partners will have to play in ‘managing down’ demand on key Council services. The Council has an opportunity to build on and strengthen its approach to partnership working through proactive engagement with new statutory Corporate Joint Committees.</p>
6.	<p>Use the Council’s convening power to strengthen partnership working with City, Town and Community Councils, and amplify collaboration for collective outcomes.</p> <p>The Panel established that the Council is working with its City, Town and Community Councils in some areas and recognises the key roles and support this relationship can bring. The Panel suggests that this work could be further strengthened through earlier and constructive conversations around the capacity and resource capability of those Councils to support the wider aspirations of the Council in delivering its transformational change priorities and being an integral part of the operating model for the Council in the future.</p>
7.	<p>Review and strengthen relationship with Trade Unions.</p> <p>In light of new Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, the Council’s senior leadership should consider whether they can do more to meet the aims and principles of consensus-building and collaborative working set out in the act with Trade Unions.</p>

11.0 The extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively

- 11.1 The Panel whilst on site were able to triangulate and evidence several sources that gave the Panel assurance that the Council is exercising its functions effectively. This included -:
- 11.2 Reviewing the statutory regulatory reports that highlighted no issues of concern to the Council’s service functions. At the time of the PPA the Council were experiencing service issues within waste. However, the Panel were satisfied that the Council was

establishing a review to learn lessons, address issues within waste and apply the wider learning to significant future service changes across the Council.

- 11.3 The Panel through a variety of staff groups, 1-2-1's, member groups identified common streams of the Councils' service pressures primarily resourcing to discharge the Councils current and future functions. The Council has identified resourcing as the cross organisational key pressure, and everyone the Panel engaged with understood this was the case. This process has been led and driven by the Chief Executive, wider Senior Management Team and political executive to the extent that a clear message to a 'whole' Council approach to future service planning and delivery is required with difficult future decisions and savings to be made. The Council is facing this challenge head on.
- 11.4 The Panel identified the Council has effective systems in place to deliver its functions through service planning, resources and performance management reporting with good scrutiny arrangements scoped around the Councils exiting corporate plan and corporate objectives. There is a clear and shared understanding, knowledge and ownership of the Council's vision and priorities across officer groups, Councillors and wider partners. The Panel further noted the new performance management arrangements that are in place and supporting the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and notes the work that is ongoing to improve the availability and accessibility of data that will provide the Council with evidence to deliver its services across the organisation.
- 11.5 The service planning arrangements reflect the Council's consideration of the sustainable development principle set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, and clearly link and contribute to the delivery of the Council's corporate objectives. The Council's service planning arrangements also evidence and reflect the Welsh Government's 2030 Net Zero Wales commitments.
- 11.6 The Panel identified the strong commitment and knowledge of members and officers to the local communities across Denbighshire. Members are integral to the joint planning around the Member Area Groups (MAG) process, reflecting local resident concerns and service delivery priorities which is a strength in Denbighshire and a source to citizen satisfaction in the delivery of priorities in a financially constrained and locally planned way.
- 11.7 The Panel recognised that the Council has, via its Stakeholder Analysis Survey, mechanisms in place to measure the satisfaction of local people in how it delivers its services.
- 11.8 The Council's approach to partnership working is set out in section 10.0 above.

12.0 The extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively

- 12.1 The Council's financial management arrangements have been covered within section 8.0.
- 12.2 The Panel identified a recognition amongst the Council's Senior Leadership Team that the Council's workforce was one of its most important assets, and that the Council has recently developed its new workforce/people strategy for 2024 - 26.
- 12.3 This work will be essential to the Council's wider transformation aspirations, and in ensuring that the Council has a clear vision for its workforce in the medium- and long-term. The strategy also represents an important vehicle and focal point for considering new and emerging workforce issues.
- 12.4 The Panel recognised that the Council has invested time, effort and energy into its staff communications, and noted positively the publication of the Denbighshire Today, the Council's daily staff newsletter, is a good example of the Council's commitment to keeping its staff informed.
- 12.5 While on site the Panel had the opportunity to meet with several staff groups. These sessions highlighted the range of staff experiences in working for DCC. Including the broadly positive message staff had about working for the authority, but also highlighted some concerns and frustrations. Including how corporate messaging can be filtered out further down the organisational structure.
- 12.6 As part of an on-going review into Council communications, the Council may wish to consider what more it can do to further a culture of two-way staff engagement, and whether the Stakeholder Survey provides the Council with sufficient data to support and inform the implementation of its workforce strategy.
- 12.7 The Council should also consider how staff without access to a Council email are able to be engaged and kept informed of information relevant to staff.

8.	Review the Council's approach to how it communicates and engages with its residents, staff and partners. The Council reviews its approach to ensure that it has the right tools and resources in place to engage with its staff, citizens and stakeholders in a meaningful two-way process.
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13.0 The extent to which the Council has effective governance in place

- 13.1 The Panel felt that both officers and members had a good understanding of their unique and complementary roles within political management and were both supportive of the PPA process and the principles of ongoing sector led improvement.
- 13.2 The Panel also saw evidence of the emphasis that the Council's corporate and political leadership has placed on creating a culture of transparency and taking responsibility at a senior level.

- 13.3 The Panel identified a strong Governance and Audit Committee, which has strong and effective leadership through the committee’s chair and vice chair.
- 13.4 The Panel also identified a positive working relationship between the Council and its internal audit function, with effective systems in place to ensure transparency, including in areas of transformation.
- 13.5 The Panel also identified the Council as having effective risk management processes in place, with appropriate systems in place to in track risk across the organisation and a risk appetite that should enable the Council to capitalise on emerging opportunities. However, the Panel also noted that the Council could benefit from testing its own risk appetite amongst its senior officers and members, ensuring there is a shared understanding of how this can be applied to the Council’s transformation priorities and medium-term financial plan. This is particularly relevant given the intense public scrutiny the Council has faced following the role out of its new waste system.
- 13.6 The Panel saw evidence of the Council’s arrangements to provide ongoing member development and noted that the Council has recently established a range of mandatory training modules for members. The Panel recognised the opportunity for the Council to build on the support it offers its members, particularly its Cabinet members. As one of our interviewees put it;
- “Being a Councillor in 2024, let alone a Cabinet member, involves a steep learning curve.”*
- 13.7 To ensure the Council can deliver on its ambitions and is able to scrutinise its own performance, the Council will need to continue to work with its members, to understand their ongoing professional development needs, and ensure that appropriate support remains available to all Councillors and committees in support of their own continuous professional development.
- 13.8 The Panel saw evidence of the Council’s governance of its equality agenda, noting that it has established a dedicated, member-led, forum that brings officers and members together to consider equality issues.
- 13.9 However, the Panel also heard from several interviewees that the Council’s Integrated Well-being Impact Assessment processes, which supports the Council in ensuring that key statutory principles are considered within policy development, could be made more effective.

9.	<p>Equalities</p> <p>In reviewing its Corporate Plan the Council needs to reflect on where the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 Wales Specific Duties (for example the Strategic Equality Plan) are best placed to ensure it has a robust and effective approach in place.</p>
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14.0 Improvement Support

14.1 If the Council would like to discuss any support required to address the areas for improvement, please contact Jo Hendy, WLGA Head of Improvement.

15.0 Acknowledgements

15.1 The Panel and the WLGA would like to extend their thanks for the support in coordinating documentation requests, responses to queries, arranging meetings and workshops and providing onsite support.

Helen Vaughan-Evans – Head of Corporate Support Services - Performance, Digital and Assets

Robyn Lovelock – Insight, Strategy and Delivery Manager

Heidi Barton-Price – Strategic Planning and Performance Team Leader

Emma Horan – Strategic Planning and Performance Officer

Carol Evans – Strategic Planning and Performance Officer

Chloe Thomas – Strategic Planning and Performance Officer