

# Corporate Plan 2012-17

An excellent council, close to the community

DRAFT

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To make comments and suggestions or for further information please contact:	
By <b>EMAIL</b> :	<a href="mailto:corporate.improvement@denbighshire.gov.uk">corporate.improvement@denbighshire.gov.uk</a>
By <b>TELEPHONE</b> :	01824 706161
By <b>POST</b> :	Corporate Improvement Team Denbighshire County Council, County Hall, Wynnstay Road, Ruthin, LL15 1YN

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## Denbighshire County Council's priorities for 2012-17 are:

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

Clean and tidy streets

Ensuring access to good quality housing

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

## FOREWORD

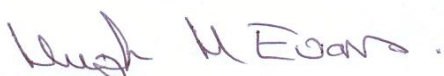
I am pleased to present this Corporate Plan, which sets out the priorities for our council during the next five years. The plan is the result of more than a years' work, including extensive consultation and engagement, and I am therefore confident that our priorities reflect the needs of our communities.

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 that 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 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 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.

The priorities we have set are very ambitious and will move Denbighshire, and the council, forward. The plan is supported by all our Councillors, regardless of political allegiance, and we are very clear that these priorities should direct our financial decisions over the next five years. We believe that, by delivering this Corporate Plan, we can transform the lives of many people in Denbighshire, and that we can create a legacy for the future.



**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 where our priorities lie. This Corporate Plan not only sets out what our priorities are for 2012-17, but it also says how much additional funding we think is needed to deliver those priorities.

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 that 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.

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. The priorities focussing on the economy and education, in particular, have a timescale beyond the five years of this plan. Although we expect to see real progress in these priority areas, we believe that the full benefits will be realised beyond 2017.

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 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.

This is, without question, the most ambitious Corporate Plan the council has ever had, but it is also achievable. I believe that, by delivering this plan, we can make a significant and lasting difference to the people and communities of Denbighshire.



**Dr Mohammed Mehmet, Chief Executive**

# THE FINANCIAL STRATEGY TO SUPPORT OUR CORPORATE PLAN

## BACKGROUND

The financial position faced by local authorities is currently very tough. Funding cuts by the UK Government in recent years mean that we have a lot less money to invest in services that we used to. So far, we have been able to manage this situation by reducing our spending without any noticeable impact on the frontline services valued by our communities. However, we don't expect the financial position to get any better over the next five years, and we think that we will need to continue to make savings of at least £3.5 million each year for the foreseeable future. This is obviously going to limit what the council is able to do, and some very difficult decisions will need to be made about how we are going to make those savings.

Further financial pressures are likely to arise from such things as rising energy costs; offices and school buildings that are in poor condition and require significant investment just to keep them open; an increasing number of older people needing services from us; and a global economy that is struggling to achieve growth.

## OUR AMBITION

Despite the difficult situation we are faced with, this council has a very clear ambition not only to maintain the quality of its services, but also to improve. We are already one of the best councils in Wales, but we want to improve from being a "good" council to become an "excellent" council. We also want to create a legacy for Denbighshire by transforming the quality of our schools, and housing for our older people who are unable to remain living in their own homes.

We think that we are leading the way in the UK by having a Corporate Plan that sets out how much additional money we hope to invest in our priorities over the next five years in order to achieve our ambitions. Our Councillors have shown a desire to match their ambitions with the additional investment needed to deliver real change for the communities of Denbighshire.

## HOW MUCH MIGHT THIS COST?

This Corporate Plan sets out our ambitious, but deliverable priorities for the next five years. Some of these priorities will require significant capital investment in order to achieve our ambitions. We think that we will need to invest somewhere in the region of an additional £134 million pounds of capital funding in our priorities over the next five years. That is a big number, and it is in addition to any money we have already committed to those priority areas.

The £134 million is also aspirational, and based on current assumptions about our financial position over the next five years. Should our situation change, we have the controls and processes in place to enable us to review our financial strategy during the lifetime of the Corporate Plan.

Our current thoughts about what we might spend the additional money on are set out within the sections on each priority. Not all of our priorities will require additional capital funding, but some - particularly the priorities about improving education, roads and independent living - would not be possible without it. Other priorities, such as providing a clean environment, may just involve doing things differently, or they may require additional revenue funding.

In addition to the capital investment, we will continue to move more of our revenue budget to priority areas over the next five years. During 2010-12 we moved £2.5 million of our revenue budget to support corporate priorities, and we expect to move an additional £5 million of revenue funding to priority areas by 2017. This will mean that we will have less money available for areas that are not identified as a priority.

### **HOW CAN WE AFFORD THIS?**

Although £134 million is a large sum of money, the council would not have to provide all of this money itself. We expect that grants from the Welsh Government will be available to help fund the planned work to improve our schools and roads, and that other partners would be likely to contribute to our planned extra care housing projects. In reality, we think that the council may have to contribute around £78 million of the £134 million. Some of this £78 million would be found from reserves, balances and by selling assets, with the rest being generated through prudential borrowing.

Of course this money will have to be repaid. However, we have experience of using prudential borrowing, and we have used it successfully in the past to invest significant additional funding in our roads, and to invest in our housing stock, which enabled us to reach the Welsh Housing Quality Standard on time and ahead of most other councils.

### **WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

There are always risks attached to any significant level of capital spending, but we understand those risks and we are confident that the proposals are achievable. Furthermore, we believe that the risks of not investing in our priorities are even greater.

If we choose not to invest in our priorities over the next five years, then our assets will continue to deteriorate; services may not be able to improve; and we would need to spend more and more money just to be able to maintain existing standards. For example, we currently spend approximately £1.5 million per year just to keep our school buildings open by undertaking urgent repairs. Without the additional investment, we would also have to accept that the condition of our roads would deteriorate, and that we wouldn't be able to provide the extra care housing that is needed to support people to live independently.



If we do not invest in our priorities we will not realise our ambitions. Some of our ambitions require a lot of investment, but they will lead to radical improvements. For example, we believe that the investment in schools and education in Rhyl will dramatically improve the life chances of many children from some of the most deprived areas in Wales.

We also believe that our ambition to invest an additional £134 million of capital funding in Denbighshire over the next 5 years will have a significant knock-on effect on the local economy. We will adapt our procurement strategy to ensure that Denbighshire gets the maximum possible benefit from this additional spending, for example, by working with those undertaking big construction projects so that they use local people to deliver the work.

### **DOES EVERYONE SUPPORT THIS APPROACH?**

The financial strategy outlined above has been developed with our Councillors, and they all support this approach. Should circumstances change, and these plans become unaffordable, we have the flexibility to change our levels of spending accordingly.

As we implement these radical changes, the next five years will be an exciting and challenging time for the council. With these levels of additional investment, we must deliver drastic improvements. If we are successful, and we believe we will be, Denbighshire will be one of the best places in the UK to live, learn, work and visit by 2017.

## **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. By and large, it is businesses that deliver economic growth. As a local authority, however, together with other local and regional partners, we can help by creating and supporting the conditions that allow those businesses to be successful and flourish. The establishment of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board offers opportunities for the county that we will enable local businesses to take advantage of.

We will focus on ensuring the right infrastructure is in place, that Denbighshire's workforce has the right skills and that our businesses are aware of current and future opportunities for growth. We will also promote Denbighshire as a great place to live, work, visit and do business in. We will make it easier for businesses to operate, wherever possible reducing bureaucracy, streamlining processes and providing high quality advice and support. As an employer and purchaser of goods and services, we will also play our part in supporting the local economy.

A healthy economy also depends on vibrant economically active communities. Therefore, we will also focus on realising local ambition in our towns and rural communities, and on improving outcomes for individuals by tackling the persistent deprivation concentrated in parts of Rhyl & upper Denbigh. In realising this priority, we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

#### **The infrastructure that connects the county, internally and to the wider region and beyond, 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.

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

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

#### **Businesses will develop and grow in Denbighshire**

- The council will provide easily accessible, high quality business advice and support. We will focus particularly on encouraging new start-ups and growing small and medium enterprises, and will work to attract inward investment.
- We will put in place planning policies to encourage the development of employment land and facilitate the provision of buildings to meet the needs of modern businesses.

## Denbighshire's existing economic strengths and new potential will be maximised

- The council will work with partners to support and grow the tourism industry locally. Working together, we will encourage more overnight visitors, and increase the volume of high spend activity by raising the profile and quality of our tourist destinations and expanding the range of activities available across the county.
- We will research new and emerging opportunities in economic sectors that may be appropriate for Denbighshire and support businesses to position themselves to benefit from them.

## 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, where appropriate, of council assets to Town and Community Council's or other local groups.

## Deprivation in parts of Rhyl and upper Denbigh will be reduced

- The council will lead and support community regeneration ensuring better co-ordination and alignment of programmes, including the Rhyl Going Forward programme, and the North Denbighshire Communities First programme.

## How much might this cost?

It's difficult to estimate the level of additional investment we will secure for economy-related projects by 2017, as a wide range of grants are likely be available from the Welsh Government and other partners. These may amount to many millions of pounds, but we don't yet know what all of these projects will be.

Right now, we predict that the council will invest an additional £2 million in this priority over next 5 years. This will be a mixture of capital and revenue funding. This is in addition to the £3.5 million we have already put aside to help support the Town Plans and community projects during the period of the Corporate Plan.

As mentioned earlier, we also believe that our plans to invest an additional £134 million of capital funding in Denbighshire over the next 5 years will have a significant positive impact on the local economy.

## If we are successful we will expect to see:

*Fewer people being unemployed*

*Improvements in people's incomes*

*An increase in the number of healthy private and third sector enterprises*

*An increase in confidence levels of local businesses*

*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 and a narrowing of the gap between the most deprived areas and other parts of the county*

## **Priority:**

### **Improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings**

The educational performance of pupils in Denbighshire has continued to improve in recent years. However, we believe there remains room to improve and provide the best possible education provision for pupils so they can achieve their very best potential.

We aim to deliver an education service that narrows the gap between Denbighshire and the top performing authorities in the UK. We also want to reduce the gap in performance between different groups of learners, such as those from less well-off backgrounds.

We believe that the school environment can affect pupil attendance and performance, and many schools in Denbighshire are in need of improvement and modernisation. We intend to deliver significant improvements to our schools and school facilities so that we can transform the learning environment to support education.

In delivering this priority, we hope to achieve the following outcome:

#### **Students achieve their potential**

- We will support and challenge schools in order to raise standards and improve educational experiences for all.
- We will ensure that the learning offer and opportunities presented enable all students, in all phases of education, to do the very best they can.
- We will invest significantly to improve school buildings and facilities and 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. Specifically, we aim to deliver:
  - A brand new high school for Rhyl
  - Extension and remodelling of Ysgol Glan Clwyd
  - Bodnant Community School extension as a single site school
  - A new area school in Cynwyd
  - A new faith based school in the north of the county

#### **How much might this cost?**

We already have an agreed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme that will cost £74 million to deliver, of which we expect £37 million to come from the Welsh Government. In addition to the £74 million, we aim to invest a further £23 million on implementing our area reviews, refurbishments and other improvements to our schools.

**If we are successful we will expect to see:**

*Excellent educational performance at the end of primary and secondary school stages, with a particular emphasis on English, Welsh, Maths and Science*

*Improved pupil attendance and fewer exclusions from schools*

*All pupils leaving school with approved qualifications*

*Significant improvements in the quality of school buildings and facilities*

*A significant reduction in the number of mobile classrooms used*

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

## **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. In response, we will continue 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 our current levels of additional investment for road maintenance and improvements over the next 5 years.
- We will work with our Councillors, 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 events.
- We will develop and implement policy regarding the delivery of increased dropped kerbs at strategic locations.

## **How much might this cost?**

The Welsh Government has pledged to provide an additional £2.2 million per year in 2013-14 and 2014-15 for road improvements. This is in addition to the £2.2 million already provided in 2012-13. The council has already agreed an additional sum of £1.5 million for roads in 2012-13, and we anticipate continuing this level of additional funding for the remaining 4 years of the Corporate Plan. This would equate to a further investment totalling £10.4 million over the period of this Corporate Plan. This is in addition to the additional investment already agreed for 2012-13.

**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*

## **Priority:**

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

We are changing the way we deliver Social Services to promote people's health and well-being, and encourage more involvement in decisions about personal care. Our focus on early intervention, prevention, and reablement approaches will support people to maintain their independence. At the same time, we will ensure vulnerable people are protected, and minimise the risk of them experiencing abuse or exploitation. In order to realise this priority, we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

#### **Vulnerable People can live as independently as possible**

- We will develop 2 or 3 additional Extra Care Housing schemes 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.
- We will develop our programme of providing Assistive Technology to support adults to remain safe and independent.
- We will work with local organisations to develop community-based activities that help people to remain active and independent.
- We will adapt homes to meet the needs of disabled residents, and reduce the time it takes to deliver disability facility grants

#### **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 that vulnerable people at risk of becoming homeless have access to suitable and appropriate accommodation<sup>1</sup>.

### **How much might this cost?**

We estimate a need for three extra care facilities, which will cost approximately £7 million each. We expect a significant proportion of this cost to be shared with private sector partners and Registered Social Landlords. We also expect to invest an additional £500k into Cefndy Enterprises, which provides work opportunities for disabled people. This equates to an additional investment of £21.5 million in this priority over the next 5 years. We expect the investment in extra care housing to generate revenue savings, as it will enable us to change the way we provide care.

<sup>1</sup> There are links here to our Housing priority on Page 15

**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*

## **Priority: Clean and tidy streets**

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 that 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 will ensure that our grounds maintenance and street cleansing services are run in a cost effective and efficient manner.

## **How much might this cost?**

This priority can be addressed without the need for large, additional capital investment. We will mainly focus on achieving this by changing the way that services are provided, and this can largely be contained within existing budgets. However, as described earlier, we plan to continue moving additional revenue funding into our budget for corporate priorities over the next five years, and we expect that some of this money could be used to support this area of work.

**If we are successful we will expect to see:**

*Less dog fouling and litter in our towns and villages*

*Less environmental anti-social behaviour*

*Clean and tidy towns and villages*

*High levels of public satisfaction with the appearance of public spaces*

## **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. All Denbighshire housing will be brought up to a good standard. We will build, demolish, and renovate where necessary, as we understand that quality neighbourhoods need quality housing. 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**

- We will introduce planning policies that ensure a suitable mix of housing throughout the county
- We will ensure that more empty homes are brought back into use
- We will focus on derelict and eyesore sites in our communities to ensure they are redeveloped to meet the housing needs of the community
- We will ensure that our council housing meets the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and is sustained to that standard over the course of the Housing Stock Business Plan.
- We will explore options with social landlords and the private sector for investment in new housing provision
- We will develop a range of housing opportunities for young people across the county
- We will develop a range of low cost affordable housing options for rent and sale for local people
- We will adapt the level of support we offer our customers in light of the UK Government's welfare reforms

## **How much might this cost?**

Much of the investment needed to deliver this priority will come from the existing housing budgets. The Housing Revenue Account is already kept separate from other council money, and cannot be used for other purposes anyway. There will be a need for capital investment, but this is already accounted for by existing funding allocated for our Housing Stock Business Plan and the West Rhyl Housing Project.

**If we are successful we will expect to see:**

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

*Improved living conditions in private sector housing*

*Welsh Government Affordable Housing targets delivered*

*More empty dwellings returned to occupation*

*Fewer people on the Housing Waiting List*

*Denbighshire County Council Housing Services recognised for excellence*



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

Denbighshire has done well to manage budget cuts in recent years without major impacts on the frontline services that residents 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. Exploiting the right technology will mean we can reduce the cost and speed up some of our processes. Technology can also help make customer access to services better, and make our workforce less tied to buildings. If our workforce is less tied to buildings, we can sell some property. 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.

Modernising the way we work will require some investment, but it should reduce costs and improve our use of resources in the long-term, making this a wise investment.

In delivering this priority we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

**Services will continue to improve and develop**

- We will streamline our processes and make better use of information to improve service delivery.
- We will get better at comparing our performance against that of others to ensure we are delivering the best possible services.
- We will use technology to reduce the time frontline staff spend on administration.
- We will develop and publish Customer Service Standards to enable customers to know what to expect from the council.
- We will enable customers to carry out more council transactions, such as making Council Tax payments, through the council website.

**More flexible and effective workforce supported by cost efficient infrastructure**

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

## How much might this cost?

Over the next 5 years, we expect to invest approximately £4 million of additional capital funding to deliver this priority. This will mainly be invested in our Information & Communications Technology (ICT) and in our office buildings assets. However, this spending should generate significant revenue savings as we will have to spend less on running and maintaining our old and inefficient office buildings. The investment in ICT will also generate savings as it will enable us to work more effectively and efficiently.

### **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, paper waste and carbon emissions from our office buildings*

## 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 those 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 Councillors. 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 Councillors:** to consider the conclusions from our research and engagement work; agree draft priorities for our new Corporate Plan; and agree how much additional funding we aim to invest in those priorities.
- **Public consultation on draft Corporate Plan priorities:** inviting comments from residents, staff, Town & Community Councils and other stakeholders during August and September 2012.

## **Links to other strategic documents**

Our Corporate Plan also supports, and is supported by, a number of other key strategic documents. One such document being 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 deliver 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.

## 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 Councillors and members of the public are able to track our progress throughout the lifetime of this Corporate Plan.

### **Striving for excellence**

This Corporate Plan will be supported by technical guidance which will define all the indicators and performance measures we will use to evaluate the success of this Corporate Plan. For each indicator and performance measure, we will establish an “excellence threshold” which will enable us to understand our current position in relation to what we consider to be “excellent”. Some of the outcomes we aim to deliver for our communities are extremely challenging and will take a long time to achieve. For example, we expect that achieving genuine excellence for our local economy, educational performance and the condition of our roads will take longer than the duration of this Corporate Plan. However, we will expect to see genuine progress in all of our priority areas during the next five years, even if the full impact of some of our work may be seen beyond 2017.

### **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](#).

### **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 Councillors 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 deliver shared outcomes. We hold a Service Performance Challenge meeting for each council service twice a year to examine their progress and identify specific areas that are not going according to plan. These meetings provide the opportunity for our Councillors 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.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Denbighshire County Council aims to safeguard and promote the use of the Welsh language throughout Denbighshire in the conduct of its business with the public, the services it provides, the partners it works with, and its role as a major employer and contractor within the county. The council has responsibility for providing schools and ensuring sufficient school places, and, through regulation of the curriculum and the character of schools, for the strategic direction of Welsh language and Welsh medium education.

The Welsh Language Scheme outlines the council's commitment to provide an inclusive and relevant Welsh language service that meets the needs of our residents, whether they are fluent Welsh speakers or are learning the language. It describes how we will give effect, so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable, to the principle established by the Welsh Language Act 1993 that, in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality. The council also endorses the Welsh Government's strategic policy document 'Iaith Pawb', which is a national action plan for a bilingual Wales, and the Welsh Language Scheme endeavours to reflect the national strategy on a county level. The scheme covers the services that Denbighshire County Council provides to the public, partnerships which the council is a member of, and third parties who provide services on behalf of the council.

Further information about Denbighshire's Welsh Language Scheme can be found on our [website](#), or by contacting the Corporate Communications and Marketing Team on 01824 706222, or by email at [public.relations@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:public.relations@denbighshire.gov.uk)