



ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

This report looks at council performance in terms of the delivery of the outcomes identified within the Corporate Plan, Strategic Equality Plan, Outcome Agreement, and the Statutory Performance Framework

This document may be available in other formats on request

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FOREWORD

Each year we publish a report to review our performance and to evaluate how successful we have been in delivering real benefits for our communities. This report is a review of our performance during the 2012/13 financial year.

It was during last year that the council agreed a new five-year Corporate Plan for 2012 - 2017, with 2012/13 representing the first year of that plan. Although it is without question the most ambitious Corporate Plan the council has ever had, it is also achievable. The plan sets out our priorities for the five-year period, and this report evaluates our progress so far. We know that some of our priorities will take several years to deliver, and we realise that the full benefits of our Corporate Plan will be realised beyond 2017. In particular, the priorities focussing on the economy and education have a timescale beyond the five years of our Corporate Plan. However, it is important for us to be able to demonstrate the progress we have made at the end of each year, and this report aims to do that.

I am pleased to be able to say that we made significant progress with some of our priorities during 2012/13, and we were able to lay the foundations for success for those (like developing the local economy) that have a longer-term focus.

In addition to our Corporate Plan, the council also has a Strategic Equality Plan, and we will use this report to evaluate our progress in delivering our equality objectives. We want to include these to show that equality work is not seen as a separate activity, and that we are working hard to ensure that equalities becomes part of our day-to-day business. Many of our equality objectives are linked to our priorities, and our next Corporate Plan in 2017 will include equality objectives and remove the need for a separate Strategic Equality Plan.

I am proud to say that Denbighshire has consistently been the highest performing council in Wales in recent years, according to the indicators used by the Welsh Government to evaluate local government performance. In 2012/13, we performed in the top quarter of councils in Wales for 17 of 30 statutory indicators, which is more than any other council. Furthermore, we had fewer indicators in the bottom half of councils than any other council in Wales (8 out of 30), and we were the best council in Wales on issues such as preventing homelessness and recycling. Our aim is not only to maintain our status as a high performing Welsh council, but also to deliver further improvements and become an excellent council that compares favourably with the best authorities outside of Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Mehmet'.

Dr Mohammed Mehmet, Chief Executive

INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overall assessment of the performance of Denbighshire County Council during 2012/13, and contains sections on the following elements of our work:

1. The council's Corporate Plan 2012-17, and progress in delivering our corporate priorities;
2. The council's Strategic Equality Plan, and progress in delivering our equality objectives;
3. The council's progress in delivering on our Outcome Agreements with the Welsh Government (designed to demonstrate how we contribute to national priorities);
4. The council's performance in relation to the National Strategic Indicators (used by the Welsh Government to evaluate local government performance in Wales);
5. The conclusions from audit and inspection work from our external regulators;
6. Progress on major collaborative projects with other councils and agencies.

HOW WE UNDERSTAND OUR PERFORMANCE

The following contains information that will help you to understand the analysis of our progress, particularly in relation to our priorities.

Each priority has one or more "outcomes", which describe the benefits we aim to deliver for our communities. We use a selection of "indicators" to help us understand whether we are making progress with delivering these outcomes. Indicators do not directly measure the performance of the council, as most indicators are outside of our full control and tell us about the external environment. However, indicators are useful and important because they help us to understand whether outcomes for our communities are getting better or worse.

Each outcome also has a selection of "performance measures" which measure the success of the council's work in relation to that outcome. Each indicator and performance measure is given a status that describes the current position. The status tells us how good the current position is, and the colours below represent the following definitions:

Status	Definition
Green	The current position is excellent
Yellow	The current position is good
Orange	The current position is acceptable
Red	The current position is a priority for improvement

These colours do not show whether we have met a particular "target" because, unlike most other councils, we do not set specific targets for indicators and performance measures. This is because targets tend to be based on achieving

INTRODUCTION

minor annual improvements, but this type of system does not tell us how well we are performing comparatively. Using a traditional approach, it is possible to meet a target (and show this as green) even if the comparative position is still very poor.

Our system means that we only report something as “green” if the current position for an indicator or performance measure is genuinely “excellent”. Where possible, we use comparisons with other councils to say how good the position is in Denbighshire. Being “green” or “excellent” usually means we are in the top quarter of councils in Wales, and “red” usually means we are in the bottom half of councils in Wales, which would be a “priority for improvement”. However, where being in the top quarter of councils in Wales cannot be classed as “excellent”, we use a different threshold. For educational attainment, we only call something “excellent” if we are the best in Wales, because educational attainment in Wales is currently lower than in other parts of the UK. For sickness absence, we compare our position with the UK private sector because we feel that sickness absence in Welsh councils is higher than we would expect it to be in Denbighshire.

Each outcome also has "improvement activities", which are projects and actions designed to contribute to the delivery of the outcome. We monitor the delivery of these activities by providing a "delivery confidence". The same four colours are used to mean the following:

Status	Delivery Confidence Definition
Green	Successful delivery appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery significantly
Yellow	Successful delivery appears probable but significant issues already exists requiring management attention.
Orange	Successful delivery is in doubt with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas.
Red	Successful delivery appears to be unachievable.

We use a wide range of information to understand the progress being made by the council. As well as using traditional measures of our performance (which measure how much of something we do, or how well we do it), we also analyse population indicators that tell us whether people in our communities are any better off than they used to be. It is also important for us to know how people feel about the outcomes we hope to deliver, so we undertake a number of surveys to evaluate whether people are feeling more or less positive about things that affect their lives. Monitoring our improvement activities is important because these are the things that we hope will make a positive difference to our communities in the future. Finally, we evaluate what our external regulators say about us. We have brought all of these things together to produce a balanced report of our performance in 2012/13.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Financial Position

The council sets a revenue budget each year. This revenue budget covers the costs of the services the council provides, and is paid for by service users, Welsh Government Grants, Council Tax, and Business Rate payers. For 2012/13, the revenue budget was £260 million.

In 2010/11, in order to meet the reduced budget settlements forecast as part of the UK Government spending cuts to address the national debt, we began the process of identifying where we could make financial savings. The council set a four-year savings programme to deliver approximately £18 million by the end of 2014/15. The saving target for 2012/13 was £3.4 million and this saving was delivered. We made a pledge to meet the required savings while protecting frontline services, through a combination of reviewing management structures; developing new ways of working; and supporting early retirement and voluntary redundancy from council employees.

All services underwent a Service Challenge to identify areas for savings and to explain how we could achieve these while protecting frontline services. We used this information as the basis to develop a Medium Term Financial Plan, which set out how the council will make these savings. The Medium Term Financial Plan is being revised in 2013/14 to take account of potential reductions to the council's budget settlement. Targets for future years' savings will become clearer once formal notification of future settlements is received.

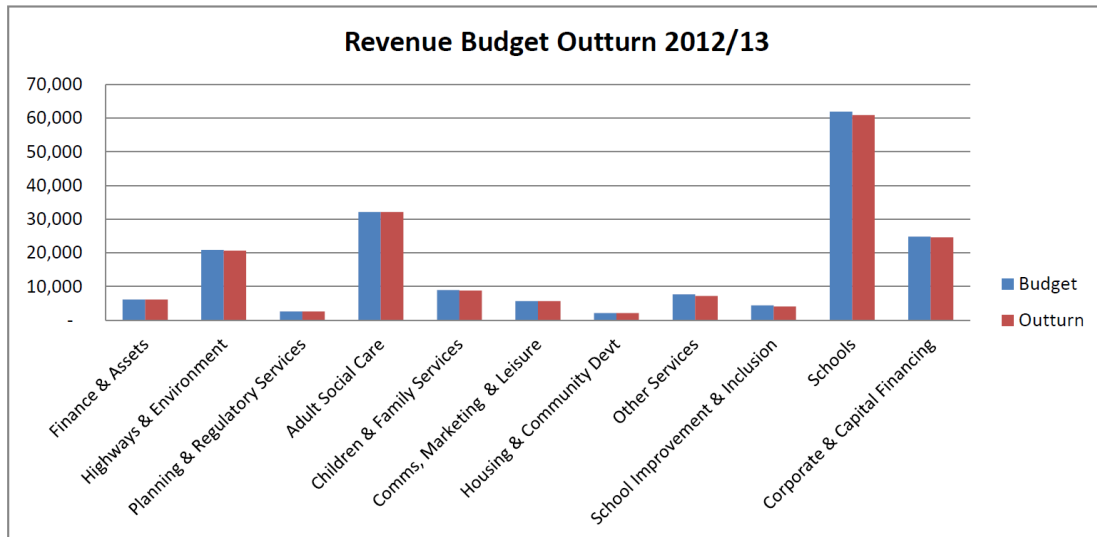
We will have to take care and manage demands for services while the amount of money available to pay for them is reduced. Reductions in the amount the council spends each year will continue to be required, and some very tough decisions will have to be taken to ensure we continue to operate within our means.

In 2012/13, we invested an additional £1 million in our priorities, allocated as follows:

Area	£'000
Modernising Education	200
Highways	100
Town Plans/Regeneration	100
Information & Communication Technology	300
Foryd Harbour	100
Demographic Change/Extra Care Housing	200
Total	1,000

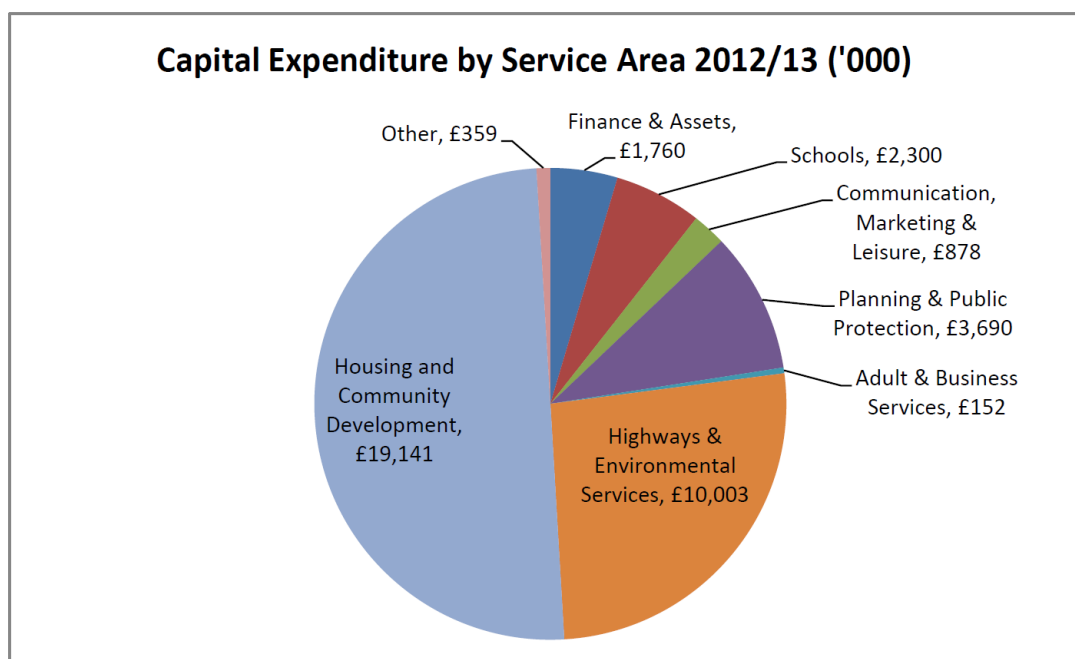
By the end of the year, the council had spent £1.5 million less than it budgeted for on services and corporate budgets, including making a budgeted contribution to balances of £300k. The year-end position made it possible to make a net contribution to reserves and balances (including schools) of £3.1 million.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION



During 2012/13, the council agreed an ambitious Corporate Plan which aims to deliver investment of over £120 million in schools, social care facilities and roads in the coming five to seven years. External funding will contribute to the overall cost of investment in schools and roads, but the Plan relies upon internal resources to fund borrowing and to provide cash. Such a significant investment will help improve key services but does not come without risk, and therefore measures are in place to continually assess the delivery and affordability of the Plan. During 2012/13 we contributed additional cash resources of £2.7 million to help fund the Corporate Plan.

Capital investment in council assets amounted to over £38 million in 2012/13, which included £6.4 million spent on improvements to the council's housing stock. Indeed, expenditure on Housing and Regeneration-related projects was the most significant area of capital investment in 2012/13. The graph below also shows that significant investment has been made to maintain and improve the council's road network and other infrastructure, as well as investment in other service areas.



1.0 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The rest of this report provides a review of progress during 2012/13, and it is split into the following sections:

The Corporate Plan

There are a total of 14 outcomes within our Corporate Plan, with each of our seven corporate priorities having one or more outcome. This report reviews each outcome and provides an evidence-based assessment of the current position.

Strategic Equality Plan

There are a total of six equality objectives that were agreed between north Wales public bodies. Each equality objective has one or more "action areas" (or outcomes). This report reviews the progress made in each of the "action areas" where the council felt it could make a contribution.

Outcome Agreement

Like all councils in Wales, we developed a set of ten outcomes within our Outcome Agreement with the Welsh Government. The Outcome Agreement sets out how we will work towards improving outcomes for local people within the context of the Welsh Government's national priorities. This report reviews the council's progress in delivering on its Outcome Agreement.

National Strategic Indicators

There are a total of 30 statutory indicators, known as the National Strategic Indicators (NSIs). The NSIs are used to measure performance of local authorities at a national level, and this report provides an overall assessment of the performance of Denbighshire County Council.

External Regulation And Inspection Work

Like all councils in Wales, the work of Denbighshire County Council is scrutinised by external regulators to ensure that we use public money efficiently and effectively to deliver benefits for our communities. The Wales Audit Office has an annual programme of audit and assessment work that it undertakes in the council, and the conclusions from this work are brought together in an Annual Improvement Report. Other regulators undertake work relating to specific service areas. The main ones are Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW). This report summarises the conclusions made about the council by our external regulators during 2012/13.

Collaboration

Sometimes it is possible to reduce costs or improve services for the community by working in collaboration with other councils or agencies. The report reviews progress with the major collaborative projects we are involved with.

1.1 The Corporate Plan

PRIORITY: Developing the local economy

Our approach to the “developing the local economy” corporate priority has been slightly different to the other priorities in our Corporate Plan. During 2012/13, the main focus for this priority was to develop an Economic and Community Ambition Strategy. The development of this strategy was required to provide us with a clearly defined approach to address this significant area of work.

During the first year of the Corporate Plan (2012/13), much work has also been done to address the knowledge and information gaps that limited our understanding of the local economy. We have now got to the stage where we have a draft proposal for the structure of this priority, and a draft set of indicators for each of the six outcomes under the priority (as set out on pages 7-17 of this report). This structure is included in this report to provide an idea of how this priority is developing. However, it should be noted that this is subject to change - following the agreement of the Economic and Community Ambition Strategy – and also, as our understanding of data availability becomes clearer for each of the proposed indicators.

The performance management framework will therefore be finalised during 2013/14. We will then have a much clearer understanding of the health of the local economy, and we will be able to start delivering a co-ordinated programme of works aimed at influencing the key outcome indicators.

PRIORITY: Developing the local economy

OUTCOME 1: The infrastructure that connects the county internally, to the wider region and beyond, will enable individuals and businesses based in Denbighshire to compete effectively in wider markets for jobs and trade

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

The overall position for this outcome will take more time to become clear because there are too many unknown factors to be able to make a full assessment. In particular, a number of indicators rely on the results of a business survey that is due to take place towards the end of 2013/14. This survey will provide the information needed to evaluate this outcome fully. However, of the information that is currently available, we do know that the position with broadband and 3G in Denbighshire is poor, with both achieving very low Ofcom rankings.

TRANSPORT

Indicators	Status
% of people who report travel difficulties as a barrier to employment	New for 2013/14
% of businesses who report travel difficulties as a barrier to employment	New for 2013/14
% of businesses who report selling goods and services to a wider area	New for 2013/14

1.1 The Corporate Plan

DIGITAL AND MOBILE

Indicators	Status
Ofcom five point ranking for overall broadband performance	4 ¹
Ofcom rank for premises that receive a 3G signal from all operators	5 ¹
Ofcom rank for premises that receive a 4G signal from all operators	n/a
% of businesses who report carrying out activity in e-commerce	New for 2013/14

LAND AND PREMISES

Indicators	Status
% of employment land sites in use	Tbc
% of employment land sites ready to be developed	Tbc
% of all available employment land with business premises in use	Tbc

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The successful delivery of the main improvement activity appears highly likely, offering confidence that we are contributing effectively to the outcome. The North Wales Economic Ambition Board has now been formally agreed by all six north Wales local authorities, and it has identified three priorities: Advanced Manufacturing (led by Flintshire), Energy & Environment (led by Anglesey), and Inward Investment (led by Wrexham).

Denbighshire is leading on the development of an integrated **Infrastructure Investment Plan** and a **Skills Development Plan**. The delivery confidence "yellow" indicates confidence in the successful delivery of the project, with resolvable issues that do not present a cost/schedule overrun.

Infrastructure Investment Plan

Understanding the economic benefit for investment in Rail Electrification in North Wales has been identified as an early priority for the Infrastructure Investment Plan. Denbighshire will contribute to this via the development of an economic case for investment in Rail Electrification. The data collection to support the economic case is underway.

Skills Development Plan

The Welsh Government shortened the timetable for the Skills Development Plan. A workshop with all North Wales local authorities was held in June 2013, which looked at the baseline information.

Improvement Activity	Status
The North Wales Regional Economic Ambition Board	Yellow

¹ Each area is ranked on how it scores on four broadband metrics, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 the highest or fastest, and 5 the lowest or slowest.

1.1 The Corporate Plan

PRIORITY: Developing the local economy

OUTCOME 2: Denbighshire will have a workforce with the skills required for business growth

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

Again, the overall position for this outcome will take more time to become fully clear because there are still some unknown factors until we undertake the business survey towards the end of 2013/14. However, of the information that is available, we do know that Denbighshire had a higher- than-average proportion of working age people claiming Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) as of 31st March 2013. This was also true of 16 -24 year olds in Denbighshire, although recent data shows a reduction in JSA Claimants in each group, which is a positive development.

Denbighshire also has a smaller proportion than most other council areas in Wales of the working age population with qualifications at level 2 and above, although the position for those with qualifications of level 4 and above is more positive (classified as "acceptable"). However, the position is "excellent" for the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications at all.

Therefore the information provides some positives and some negatives, although most of the indicators are currently classed as being a "priority for improvement" (where data exists). This is not a surprise to us, and this is why the outcome was included in our Corporate Plan in the first place, i.e. because we would like the position to improve. Clearly these improvements are very difficult to achieve, and it may take several years to show significant improvement. However, we made the decision when developing our Corporate Plan that being difficult to achieve is not a good enough reason to stop us from trying.

SKILLS FOR WORK AND LIFE

Indicators	Status
% of the working age population with no qualifications	9.3
% of the working age population with qualifications of level 2 and above	69.8
% of the working age population with qualifications of level 4 and above	28.8

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH JOBS

Indicators	Status
% of year 11 school leavers not in employment, education, or training	3.6
% of the working age population claiming Job Seeker's Allowance	4.2
% of the population aged 16 to 24 claiming Job Seeker's Allowance	7.2

ADVANCED SKILLS FOR GROWTH

Indicators	Status
% of businesses reporting unfilled vacancies due to unsuitable applicants	New for 2013/14
% of businesses reporting difficulty recruiting staff with the right skills	New for 2013/14

1.1 The Corporate Plan

ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Indicators	Status
% of the labour supply in Denbighshire who are self employed	10.8

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The successful delivery of the improvement activities appears highly likely, offering confidence about the council's contribution to this outcome. At this stage the council identifies no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to delivery, with the exception of the facilitated discussions between Rhyl City Strategy and the Honey Club. The successful delivery of this project was in some doubt due to issues with the compulsory purchase order of the adjoining property. However, urgent action was taken and recent developments show that the objections to the compulsory purchase order have been withdrawn. This has quickened progress, with notices of cancellation received from the Planning Inspector, erected on site, and placed in the local press.

Improvement Activity	Status
Closing the skills gap in Denbighshire ²	Green
Facilitate discussion between Rhyl City Strategy and Honey Club	Orange

² This council is working with businesses, the Sector Skills Council, and Careers Wales to identify skills gaps. It will then work with schools, careers advisors, and colleges to develop advice and courses for young people.

1.1 The Corporate Plan

PRIORITY: Developing the local economy

OUTCOME 3: Businesses will develop and grow in Denbighshire

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

There are still significant data gaps that limit our ability to determine the current position of this outcome. All of the indicators are new and will be reported during 2013/14, with several of them relying on the business survey that will take place towards the end of 2013/14.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Indicators	Status
No. of businesses that access business advice & support services	New for 2013/14
% of businesses that receive support and achieve the planned goals	New for 2013/14

LOCAL BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Indicators	Status
% of businesses who report that they are part of a business network	
a. Local	New for 2013/14
b. Regional	New for 2013/14
c. National	New for 2013/14
% of businesses who report some benefit from their business network	
a. Local	New for 2013/14
b. Regional	New for 2013/14
c. National	New for 2013/14

DCC PROCUREMENT AND LOCAL IMPACT

Indicators	Status
£ value of procurement contracts awarded to local businesses	Tbc
£ value of local procurement as a % of total procurement	Tbc
% of agreed community and social benefit clauses that are:	
a. fully achieved	Tbc
b. partially achieved	Tbc
c. not achieved	Tbc

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The successful delivery of improvement activities appears highly likely, offering confidence about the council's contribution to this outcome. At this stage, the council identifies no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to delivery.

1.1 The Corporate Plan

The delivery of the Local Economic Ambition Strategy has been incorporated into the overall Economic and Community Ambition (ECA) Programme. A series of workshops is now complete, and the draft strategy and action plan is on track and was considered by council in July 2013.

Nearly all management posts following the restructure of Economic Development and Regeneration are now in place. The process now moves on to the teams to support the management posts.

Improvement Activity	Status
Bee and Station Hotel ³	Green
Fund capital projects to micro rural enterprises ⁴	Green
Develop a Local Economic Ambition Strategy	Green
Restructure support for Economic Development & Regeneration	Green

³ This is the work to redevelop the derelict Bee & Station Hotel in Rhyl into quality business accommodation.

⁴ The council will publicise funding opportunities for capital projects to micro rural enterprises under the Rural Development Plan's rural Denbighshire business creation and development project.

1.1 The Corporate Plan

PRIORITY: Developing the local economy

OUTCOME 4: Denbighshire's existing economic strengths and new potential will be maximised

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

There are still significant data gaps that limit our ability to fully determine the current position of this outcome. No agreement has yet been reached on what would be "excellent", "good" etc. for these indicators, and these thresholds will be set once the Economic and Community Ambition Strategy has been approved. However, clearly the ambition is to see significant improvements (increases) for all the indicators listed below.

TOURISM

Indicators	Status
Total revenue derived from tourism (£m)	314
No. of residents employed in accommodation & food services	4059
No. of businesses in accommodation & food services	350

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Indicators	Status
No. of businesses in production sector	205
No. of residents employed in manufacturing services	3300
No. of residents employed in energy & water sector	600

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Indicators	Status
The count of births of new social enterprises	Tbc
The one year survival rate for new social enterprises	Tbc
The three year survival rate for new social enterprises	Tbc
The number of jobs created within the social enterprise sector	Tbc

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The projects identified as the council's contribution to this outcome are progressing well. Some management attention is required, but the issues appear to be resolvable and should not present a problem that threatens delivery.

Improvement Activity	Status
Develop the tourism sector by delivering new and improved mountain bike trail initiatives:	
a. Llyn Brenig Area	Yellow

1.1 The Corporate Plan

b. Llantyslio Mountain	Yellow
c. Moel Famau	Yellow
Develop the tourism sector by delivering six web-based digital trails	Green
The Regional Economic Ambition Board will work on three key priorities:	
a. Attracting Inward Investment	Yellow
b. Energy & Environment Sector	Yellow
c. Advanced Manufacturing Sector	Yellow

1.1 The Corporate Plan

PRIORITY: Developing the local economy

OUTCOME 5: Towns and rural communities will be revitalised

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

There are still significant data gaps that limit our ability to fully determine the current position of this outcome. **Some of the indicators for this outcome are based on the Residents' Survey. The overall evaluation will therefore need to be completed following the analysis of these results, which will be distributed before the report is presented to Council on 8th October 2013. Data not yet available.**

The position for vacant town centre premises is currently better than the UK average, but no decision has been made as to what benchmarks we will use to determine whether the current position in Denbighshire is excellent; good, acceptable, etc.

For the indicators relating to the rural economy, further work is required to define the rural population. Once this is established, we will be able to provide data for those indicators.

TOWN AND AREA PLANS

Indicators	Status
% of activities in town & areas plans with a delivery confidence of GREEN	New for 2013/14

TOWN CENTRES AND HIGH STREETS OF THE FUTURE

Indicators	Status
% of vacant town centre premises	11.1
% of residents reporting overall satisfaction with their town centre	Residents' Survey
% of town residents reporting overall satisfaction with their local area	Residents' Survey
% of town centre businesses reporting confidence in future prospects	New for 2013/14

RURAL DENBIGHSHIRE

Indicators	Status
% of the rural working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance	Tbc
No. of rural LSOA in Denbighshire with a median income below £XXX p/w	Tbc
% of rural residents reporting overall satisfaction with their local area	Residents' Survey
% of rural businesses reporting confidence in their future prospects	Residents' Survey

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The work to deliver this outcome is progressing as planned; there are no outstanding issues threatening delivery.

Improvement Activity	Status
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1.1 The Corporate Plan

Year 1 projects within Town Plans will be delivered with our support	Green
Finance plans for projects will be developed for subsequent years	Green

PRIORITY: Developing the local economy

OUTCOME 6: Deprivation in parts of Rhyl and upper Denbigh will be reduced

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the official measure of deprivation in small areas in Wales. Wales is divided into 1,896 Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA), each having about 1,500 people. Deprivation ranks are worked out for each of these areas: the most deprived LSOA is ranked 1, and the least deprived 1,896. One area has a higher deprivation rank than another if the proportion of people living there that are classed as deprived is higher. The WIMD was last updated in 2011, and the next update will be in 2014. In 2011, 10% of LSOAs in Denbighshire were among the 10% most deprived LSOAs in Wales. This would appear to a proportionate position, although our ambition would be to reduce that proportion during the period of our Corporate Plan. The WIMD tends to be updated every three years, so we can expect an update in 2017. This will enable us to evaluate whether we have been successful in reducing deprivation in the most deprived areas of the county.

TACKLING DEPRIVATION AND POVERTY

Indicators	Status
% of LSOA that fall into the 10% most deprived in Wales	10
No. of LSOA with a JSA claimant count greater than Wales average	9
No. of LSOA with a median household income below 60% Wales median	32

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

Overall, the successful delivery of the majority of improvement activities appears likely, offering a reasonable level of confidence about the council's contribution to this outcome. However, at this stage there are three projects with an Orange status. This means that successful delivery of those projects is in doubt, with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. The council is actively managing those risks and we remain hopeful about delivering those projects successfully.

The issues with the Rhyl Harbour Development do not relate to delivery of the project itself. We remain confident that the facility will be delivered in a way that enables the harbour business to grow and become a genuine attraction for the town. The current concern relates specifically to the number of new jobs to be created by June 2016, which is a requirement of the grant funding, given that the business will need time to develop. The issue with the West Rhyl Housing Improvement Project relates to compulsory purchase orders delaying the project. As mentioned earlier in the report, the issues with the development of the Honey Club Hotel related to objections to the compulsory purchase order, but these have recently been withdrawn enabling demolition works to commence on site.

1.1 The Corporate Plan

Improvement Activity	Status
Parental support for deprived 0-4 year olds	Green
Delivery of Welfare Rights Support in Denbighshire	Green
Delivery of additional Welfare Rights Support in Denbighshire	Green
North Denbighshire Cluster bid for Communities First Scheme	Green
Rhyl Harbour development	Orange
Honey Club Hotel development in Rhyl	Orange
West Rhyl Housing Improvement Project	Orange

1.1 The Corporate Plan

PRIORITY: Improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings

OUTCOME 7: Students achieve their potential

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

We are using a higher benchmark for excellence for the educational attainment indicators than just a Wales comparison. This is because attainment levels in Wales tend to be lower than other parts of the UK, and we do not feel that being in the top quarter of authorities in Wales can genuinely be classed as “excellent”. We therefore only class these indicators as “green / excellent” if Denbighshire is the best in Wales. Being in the top quarter of councils in Wales is classed as “yellow / good”, and being in the top half of councils in Wales is classed as “orange / acceptable”. Being in the bottom half of councils in Wales would still be classed as “red / priority for improvement”.

The overall position for this outcome is positive, with attainment rates improving for all measures at key stages 2 and 4 last year. Denbighshire has a higher proportion of pupils achieving the level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents than any other council in Wales, and we are in the top quarter of councils for the average capped points score for pupils at key stage 4. However, three indicators are currently causing concern. First, the proportion of pupils leaving without an approved qualification is comparatively high, and a reduction to below 0.25% looks necessary for our position to become "acceptable" in future years. Second, the proportion of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2 is comparatively low, although it should be noted that the actual position in Denbighshire improved by 1.2% in 2012/13, and our position is only 0.1% away from being “acceptable”. Finally, the number of fixed-term exclusions is comparatively high, having increased from 533 in 2011/12 to 650 in 2012/13. However, two fewer exclusions would have resulted in the position being classed as “acceptable” compared to the national position. It should also be noted that the average number of school days lost per fixed-term exclusion in Denbighshire was among the lowest in Wales during 2012/13. Attendance rates in our primary schools (“good”) and secondary schools (“excellent”) is very pleasing, as attendance is obviously linked to attainment levels.

Indicators	Status
% of all pupils that leave without an approved qualification	0.82
% of pupils who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2	83.5
% of pupils who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 4	53.1
Average Capped Points Score for pupils at Key Stage 4	339
% of pupils achieving the level 2 threshold, inc English/Welsh & maths	54.7
% of pupils achieving the level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents	82.7
% of pupil attendance in primary schools	94.5
% of pupil attendance in secondary schools	92.9
Average number of school days lost per fixed-term exclusion	2.1
Number of fixed-term exclusions	650

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Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
<p>The successful delivery of improvement activities appears highly likely, offering confidence about the council's contribution to this outcome. At this stage the council identifies no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to delivery.</p> <p>Overall, the service is confident it has the systems in place to support students to achieve their potential. Three of the performance measures are currently classed as a “priority for improvement”, but this simply reflects the reason why they were included in the Corporate Plan in the first place (i.e. we want to improve from the current position). For example, we have a strategy for reducing our reliance on mobile classrooms, and this is linked to future planned improvements to our school buildings. Improvements that rely on capital projects will obviously take time to implement, and we would therefore not expect these to be “good” or “excellent” at this stage.</p>	
Performance Measures	Status
No. of surplus places as a % of total primary school places	16.6
No. of surplus places as a % of total secondary school places	16.6
No. of deficit places as a % of total primary school places	1.24
No. of deficit places as a % of total secondary school places	0.00
No. of primary school places provided by mobile classrooms	616
No. of secondary school places provided by mobile classrooms	584
Improvement Activity	Status
Support and challenge governing bodies to secure strong leadership	Yellow
Work with education services in North Wales (RESIS ⁵)	Green
Works to improve Ysgol Dyffryn Ial	Green
Works to improve Ysgol y Llys	Green
Works to improve Ysgol Dewi Sant	Green
Works to improve Ysgol Twm O'r Nant	Yellow
Works to create an area school in Cynwyd	Green
Replace gymnasium used by Denbigh High School	Green
Consultation on the Ruthin Area primary education review	Green
Potential Project to work with young people at risk of NEET	Green
Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	Green
Pilot a system for collecting data on incidences of bullying in schools	Green

⁵ Regional School Improvement Service

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PRIORITY: Improving our roads

OUTCOME 8: Residents and visitors to Denbighshire have access to a safe and well-managed road network

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

This outcome will be successful if Denbighshire has a safe and well-managed road network, and the quality of the roads is the biggest influencing factor in this. To make comparisons more meaningful, we compare our position for the road condition indicators with a group of similar rural local authority areas in Wales (those with a comparable road network), rather than all of Wales.

Overall the current position for this outcome is positive, because the quality of our road network has improved. Roads in Denbighshire generally improved at a faster rate than in our family group of similar councils in Wales, which means that we saw an actual and a relative improvement in 2012/13.

We achieved improvements in all the road condition indicators in 2012/13. The overall position improved significantly, with the percentage of A, B & C roads in poor condition reducing from 11.2% in 2011/12 to 10.1% in 2012/13. The position also improved for each type of road, with the biggest improvement being seen in our A roads, where the percentage in overall poor condition reduced from 7.2% in 2011/12 to 5.6% in 2012/13. The position for rural C roads (which make up the majority of our road network) is now considered to be comparatively “good”, as is the overall position for A, B & C roads combined. This means that we have fewer roads classed as being in a poor condition than most similar councils in Wales.

Our ambition is to continue to improvement the condition of our roads so that by 2017 less than 5% of A and B roads and less than 10% of C roads will be in overall poor condition. This will be a significant challenge, but we believe that this would enable us to say that our road network is “excellent”.

Some of the indicators for this outcome are based on the survey of City, Town & Community Council Members and the Residents’ Survey. The overall evaluation will therefore need to be completed following the analysis of these results, which will be distributed before the report is presented to Council on 8th October 2013. Data not yet available.

The number of successful claims made against the council where the claim related to the condition of the road network reduced to two during 2012/13, which also indicates that the condition of our roads is improving.

Survey Indicators	Status
Residents Survey, % satisfaction with:	
Maintaining main roads in good condition	Tbc
Maintaining streets in towns & villages in good condition	Tbc
Maintaining rural roads in good condition	Tbc
City, Town & Community Councillor Survey, % satisfaction with:	
Maintaining main roads in good condition	New for 2013/14
Maintaining streets in towns & villages in good condition	New for 2013/14

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Maintaining rural roads in good condition	New for 2013/14
Indicators	Status
% of A, B & C roads that are in overall poor condition	10.1
% of principal A roads that are in overall poor condition	5.6
% of non-principal/classified B roads in overall poor condition	9.3
% of non-principal/classified C roads in overall poor condition	13.9
No. of successful claims concerning road condition during the year	2

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
<p>The successful delivery of the improvement activities identified for 2012/13 appears highly likely, offering confidence about the council's contribution to this outcome. There were no identified issues that pose a threat to the delivery of these activities, with the exception of the work to formalise plans for dropped kerbs. The project is red because it did not progress as originally intended during 2012/13. However, the council remains committed to delivering this activity because it relates to one of our Strategic Equality Objectives as well as this outcome in the Corporate Plan. Work is now progressing on this activity, and we are currently working to complete and implement a strategy that identifies the priority routes where we would want to ensure that a drop-kerb route is in place.</p> <p>The position with the performance measures for this outcome is also generally positive, which shows that our work is contributing effectively to the successful delivery of the outcome. Our position is "excellent" for the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time, and the percentage of category C (street works) inspections carried out before the guarantee period ends. 93% of our annual structural maintenance expenditure spent on planned structural maintenance was achieved in 2012/13, which we regard as "acceptable". However, only 86% of our planned highways capital maintenance programme was achieved in 2012/13, which we regard as a "priority for improvement". We are currently waiting for data for the measure about the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time. The remaining measures (for the percentage of road condition defects resolved within timescale, and the percentage of key routes where a drop-kerb route is in place) we will begin reporting on in 2013/14.</p>	
Performance Measures	Status
% structural maintenance spend spent on planned structural maintenance	93.0
% timeliness of category C (Final) Street Works inspections	29.0
% of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time	New for 2013/14
% of road condition defects (CRM queries) resolved within timescale	New for 2013/14
% of key routes where a drop-kerb route is in place	New for 2013/14
% of planned Highways Capital Maintenance Programme achieved	86
Improvement Activity	Status
Focus capital maintenance on roads important to communities	Green
Resurfacing works	Green

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Surface dressing works	Green
Major reconstruction of the B4391 in the Berwyn mountains	Green
Review preparations for Highways Winter Maintenance	Green
Formalise plans for dropped kerbs	Red

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

OUTCOME 9: Vulnerable people are able to live as independently as possible

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

Achieving this outcome will mean that the council is successfully supporting vulnerable people to live as independently as possible. The latest information shows that the current position for this outcome is positive, with improvements made or sustained in a number of key areas. Specifically, there has been an increase in the proportion of the adult population in Denbighshire who can live independently, which has now reached a point where it can be described as “excellent”.

To date, our main focus has been on developing short-term support that enables people to live independently and reduces the need for long-term care/support. This reablement approach is starting to show success in Denbighshire. To continue improvements we will be focussing on reducing dependency for people already in receipt of services. This will require continued investment in developing appropriate community-based activities and support networks that promote and support people to live independent lives. The approach is in line with the new Social Services and Wellbeing Bill. However, it will inevitably mean some tough decisions about how we remodel existing services, which will require close working with communities and elected Members.

Despite improvements, Denbighshire still has a higher rate of people who cannot live independently (living in a care home setting) than most Welsh authorities. Part of our strategy for changing this position is to reduce the need for new admissions into care homes. The data relating to new placements shows that there was a clear reduction in the total number of older people requiring residential care support in 2012/13 compared to the previous year. Historically, Denbighshire has always had a higher rate of people living in a care home setting than most Welsh authorities, and this will take time to change. Our ambition is to continue reducing the percentage of the adult population who cannot live independently so that we can reach an “acceptable” position by 2017.

Indicators

Status

% of the adult population who live independently

97.1

% of the adult population who cannot live independently

0.70

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The successful delivery of improvement activities appears highly likely, offering confidence with the council's contribution. At this stage the council identifies no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to delivery. The position with all of the performance measures is “excellent”, which shows that we are working effectively to do the things we can do to have an influence on the outcome. For example, Disabled Facilities Grants are used to provide adaptations in people's homes to support their independence, and we have significantly reduced the time it takes to deliver those adaptations in recent years, to the point where we are now the third best in Wales for this measure.

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In addition, a count of the service users in receipt of assistive technology is included for information. This provides a focus on the range of assistive technologies that are not accounted for in the national performance measurement framework.

Performance Measures	Status
% of people who live independently with modern supportive options	62.0
% of people who live independently with traditional care options	38.0
Rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons	1.09
% of adult clients who do not need social care service after reablement	72.0
Average number of days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant	176
Change in number of local authority adult placements in care homes	-57
No. of service users in receipt of assistive technology	395
Improvement Activity	Status
New Work Connections Project	Green
Commissioning to deliver short-term support	Green
We will research Individual Service Funds	Green

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

OUTCOME 10: Vulnerable people are protected

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>The success of this outcome will mean that Denbighshire is in a better position regarding the protection of vulnerable people. The available information offers the conclusion that the current position for this outcome is positive, with improvements made or sustained in a number of areas. This allows the council to be confident that vulnerable people are being protected effectively. The main indicator for this outcome is the percentage of child referrals that were re-referrals within 12 months. A high percentage indicates that issues may not be dealt with effectively following the initial referral. The position in Denbighshire is “good” compared to other councils in Wales.</p>	
Indicators	Status
% of child referrals that were re-referrals within 12 months	19.5

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
<p>The successful delivery of the identified improvement activities appears highly likely, with no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to delivery, (except with the work to provide targeted support to families facing challenges or complex needs). A comprehensive mapping activity has been undertaken to profile children with disabilities and their families in order to understand the challenges and issues they face. Work is now underway to translate the findings of this activity into a clear commissioning strategy to target support to families facing challenges or complex needs. In addition, work is also underway to expand the Family Support Service from a five-day week to a seven-day week waking hour's service. The council is generally performing very well in its work relating to this outcome, with only one performance measure identified as a priority for improvement. This particular measure is showing gradual improvement and is almost at the point where we can consider the position to be “acceptable”. The position for the other measures are classed as “excellent” or “good”, with performance at - or close to - 100% in most cases.</p>	
Performance Measures	Status
% of adult protection referrals completed & the risk has been managed	96.9
% of child protection reviews carried out within statutory timescales	98.9
% of core group meetings within 10 days of child protection conference	90.4
% of open cases on child protection register with allocated social worker	100
Improvement Activity	Status
Referrals & on-going cases to identify vulnerable children & families	Green
Targeted support to families facing challenges or complex needs	Orange
Training Events: All Wales Adult Protection Policy and Procedures	Green
Training Events: Child Protection	Green

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PRIORITY: Clean and tidy streets

OUTCOME 11: To produce an attractive environment for residents and visitors alike

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>Most of the indicators for this outcome are based on the survey of City, Town & Community Council Members and the Residents' Survey. The overall evaluation will therefore need to be completed following the analysis of these results, which will be distributed before the report is presented to Council on 8th October 2013. Data not yet available.</p> <p>The 2013 version of our Residents' Survey included a number of new questions about the general cleanliness of streets, and specifically about dog fouling (which was identified as a major issue for residents during the development of our Corporate Plan).</p> <p>The Cleanliness Index (which represents the overall standard of cleanliness of relevant highways and land within Denbighshire) is "excellent" compared to other councils in Wales. The scale runs from zero to 100, and a higher score indicates better cleanliness.</p> <p>The data identifies an issue with fly tipping, which is highlighted as a "priority for improvement". Although it has reduced slightly over the past two years, instances of fly tipping in the county appear to be high in the context of Wales. However, we believe that we may be reporting this indicator differently from other councils because we include incidents that we identify ourselves through our street cleaning activities in addition to incidents reported by the public. This indicator may therefore not work as a comparison, and in future we will take a local view as to what "excellence" would look like. Our ambition as behaviour in the community changes is to continue the recent reduction in the rate of fly-tipping.</p>	
Survey Indicators	2013
Residents' Survey, % satisfaction with:	
The cleanliness of the streets (local area)	New for 2013/14
The cleanliness of the streets – dog fouling (local area)	New for 2013/14
The cleanliness of the streets (nearest town)	New for 2013/14
The cleanliness of the streets – dog fouling (nearest town)	New for 2013/14
City, Town & Community Council Survey, % satisfaction with:	
The cleanliness of the streets (C,T&CC area)	New for 2013/14
% of C,T&CC who report improvement with dog fouling	New for 2013/14
Indicators	2012/13
The Cleanliness Index	82.8
The rate of reported fly tipping incidents reported per 1,000 population	22.8
Clean Streets Survey – Improvement Areas	New for 2013/14

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Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The successful delivery of improvement activities appears highly likely, and there appear to be no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to delivery. A similar conclusion can be drawn from the majority of the performance measures, which are mainly positive (“good” or “excellent”). The only exception is with the timely clearing of reported fly tipping incidents, which is identified as a “priority for improvement”. The data for the past three years shows a decline in performance, from 100% in 2009-10 to 84% in 2012-13. However, as with the *indicator* about fly tipping, there are again some issues with the quality of the data for this measure. Our Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) actually makes our performance appear worse than it is because we can only currently measure how long it takes from when the incident is recorded to when it is closed on the system (rather than when the incident was actually cleared, which can often be several days earlier). We are therefore hoping to find a way to improve the recording of this data so that this measure reflects our performance more accurately.

There are two new performance measures that we have started monitoring during 2013/14. These will be reported in next year’s Annual Performance Review, and will improve our overall understanding of the position for this outcome.

Performance Measures	2012/13
% reported fly tipping incidents cleared within five working days	84.0
% of untidy land incidents resolved within 12 weeks	56.0
Average Response time to litter notifications (including dog fouling)	New for 2013/14
The rate of fixed penalty notices (all types) issued per 1,000 population	18.5
The rate of fixed penalty notices (dog fouling) issued per 1,000 population	0.27
Enforcement by the council on untidiness in council house gardens	New for 2013/14
Improvement Activity	2012/13
More enforcement officers on the streets	Green
We will increase publicity on the issue of dog fouling	Green
We will provide sufficient waste bins	Green
We will review our street cleansing methods	Green
We will work proactively to improve cleanliness of neighbourhoods	Green

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PRIORITY: Ensuring access to good quality housing

OUTCOME 12: 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

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

Last year we commissioned some research to help us understand levels of housing need in Denbighshire, and Glyndwr University provided figures for the projected housing requirement until 2015/16. We analysed the projected data and set the following thresholds to determine the status of these outcome indicators:

Excellent	Over 75% of required housing provided
Good	50 – 75% of required housing provided
Acceptable	25 – 50% of required housing provided
Improvement Priority	Less than 25% of required housing provided

Using these thresholds, the current position for this outcome is mixed. Some data quality issues exist for the three housing supply indicators (both within Denbighshire and from external sources, e.g. National House Building Council), which may affect the accuracy of the data. However, based on the available data the main area of concern is with the availability of private affordable housing in Denbighshire, which is identified as a "priority for improvement" with less than 25% of the required housing being provided in 2012-13. The position is more positive for the availability of market housing ("acceptable") and social housing ("good"). Also positive is the council's excellent record in terms of preventing homelessness, which is one of the most extreme forms of social exclusion. Action by the council prevented homelessness for at least six months for 100% of potentially homeless households in 2012-13. We were the only local authority in Wales to achieve this for 100% of potentially homeless households. The Wales average was 62.6% for this indicator, and it was as low as 1% in some parts of Wales.

Indicators	2012/13
The current supply of social housing	44
The current supply of affordable housing	13
The current supply of market housing	149
% potentially homeless households with homelessness prevented	100

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The successful delivery of improvement activities appears highly likely, offering confidence about the council's contribution to this outcome. At this stage the council identifies no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to delivery. The main issues currently relate to the performance measures, where several are identified as a "priority for improvement".

The proportion of householder planning applications determined within eight weeks reduced from 90% in 2011/12 to 82% in 2012/13, meaning that this is now considered to be a "priority for improvement". We hope to improve this position during 2013/14, although we would not

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want to compromise the quality of the service we provide in order to do so. It is expected that the measure of the supply of available housing land will improve during 2013/14, as this is linked to the Local Development Plan (LDP), and a new LDP which identifies potential new housing development land has now been adopted by the council. In terms of the HouseMark measure, 14 core Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified to benchmark with other similar local authorities across the UK. The council currently has three (21%) within the top quartile, but our ambition is to have all 14 in the top quartile by 2017.

An additional measure for information is included to provide an understanding of the proportion of additional affordable housing that is granted planning permission. It only looks at the additional applications that are newly submitted during the year. The aim is to have more affordable housing units granted planning permission and also built in Denbighshire; however, granted planning permission does not ensure that the housing will be built.

Performance Measures	2012/13
% HMO with a full licence	33.5
% private sector dwellings returned to occupation	22.3
% householder planning applications determined within eight weeks	81.8
Supply of housing land by joint housing land availability study	3.50
% council properties achieving Welsh Housing Quality Standard	93.0
% of core KPI benchmarked in HouseMark that are in the top quartile	21.0
% additional affordable housing units granted planning permission	16.0

Improvement Activity	2012/13
	Updated on: 31.03.2013
Explore housing options for people at threat of becoming homeless ⁶	Green
Family support to deal with Welfare Reform Act ⁷	Green
Improve the Housing Options website	Green
Continue to licensing HMOs	Green
External refurbishment of 25 properties in Rhyl ⁸	Green

⁶ The council will explore options such as affordable housing and private renting with people who are under threat of becoming homeless.

⁷ The council will seek to identify individual residents who will be adversely affected by the Welfare Reform Act, and contact them to discuss specific options for dealing with the effects.

⁸ The council will undertake external refurbishment of 25 properties at Millbank Road and Norman Drive, Rhyl, including front boundary walls, in addition to the replacement of windows for two listed buildings in Russell Road, Rhyl.

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

OUTCOME 13: Services will continue to develop and improve

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>Success for this outcome will mean that the council will continue to improve services for its customers, and that this will be reflected by positive feedback (from residents and external regulators); by the delivery of successful council projects; and by the successful delivery of our Outcome Agreement with the Welsh Government. Some of the indicators for this outcome are based on the survey of City, Town & Community Council Members and the Residents' Survey. The overall evaluation will therefore need to be completed following the analysis of these results, which will be distributed before the report is presented to Council on 8th October 2013. Data not yet available.</p> <p>The Wales Audit Office (WAO) undertakes comprehensive assessments of the council's ability to deliver improvements for the benefit of residents, and the non-existence of any statutory recommendations from the WAO is a good indication that the council has delivered improvements. The council did not receive any statutory recommendations from the WAO during 2012/13, which is a positive position.</p> <p>The indicator relating to the anticipated benefits from projects is new, but this is an important area that will be closely monitored as we proceed through our Corporate Plan.</p>	
Survey Indicators	2013
Resident's Survey, % satisfaction with:	
The council is efficient and well-run	tbc
The council acts on the concerns of residents	tbc
Indicators	2012/13
% of project outputs expected to achieve their anticipated benefits	New for 2013/14
No. of statutory recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office	0

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
<p>The council has a clear contribution to make to the success of this outcome because several elements are within the direct control of the council, with many activities based on improving systems that are currently in place (e.g. complaints, the website, etc.) in order to improve services for our customers.</p> <p>The council has significantly improved the proportion of complaints responded to within our published timescales, from 78% in 2011/12 to 95% in 2012/13. This position is now considered to be "acceptable", but our ambition is to continue to improve in future years.</p> <p>The proportion of the Outcome Agreement grant received from the Welsh Government is an indication of the council's ability to deliver improvements linked to national priorities, and we again received 100% of the grant in 2012/13 for our performance in 2011/12. Chapter 1.3 provides further information about our Outcome Agreement performance in 2012/13, but we again expect to receive 100% of the grant once our self-assessment has been evaluated by</p>	

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the Welsh Government.

The only major issue we have in relation to the improvement activities is with the transfer of assets. Due to staffing changes in the council, this was not pursued to the extent initially expected during 2012/13. However, we do expect that this will be taken forward during 2013/14 now that dedicated resource has been identified.

Performance Measures	2012/13
% of Outcome Agreement grant awarded to Denbighshire	100
% of complaints responded to within corporate timescales	95
% of eligible modernisation projects with a post-implementation review	New for 2013/14
The number of complaints received	660
Improvement Activity	2012/13
Customer Service Standards ⁹	Green
System to improve customer communication ¹⁰	Yellow
Customer feedback ¹¹	Yellow
Self analysis from improvement tools ¹²	Green
We will introduce "The Hwb"	Green
We will develop a new website for the council	Green
Town & Community Councils: Charter ¹³	Green
Town & Community Councils: (co) managed assets ¹⁴	Orange
Map services for childcare provision and 11-25 year olds	Yellow

⁹ To develop Customer Service Standards and publish them so our customers know what level of service they can expect from us.

¹⁰ To implement a system that will enable customers to share their ideas with the council and improve their local area.

¹¹ To use feedback as a learning mechanism and improve services.

¹² To analyse learning from improvement tools, sharing experiences and skills across the council.

¹³ The Charter between the council and Town & Community Councils (T&CCs) will be further developed, launched, and promoted among staff.

¹⁴ The council will ask all T&CCs if they would like to take up any opportunities for managing (or co-managing) community assets and services.

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

OUTCOME 14: More flexible and effective workforce supported by cost efficient infrastructure

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>The overall position for this outcome is reasonably positive; although much more work is needed before we will be satisfied that the outcome has been delivered. This is not a concern to us at this stage because the outcome was included in the Corporate Plan because we knew this was an area for improvement, and we always knew that it would take time to deliver the necessary changes. The recent improvements in our sickness absence record continued in 2012/13, with the average number of days lost per full time employee (FTE) down to 8.6 days. This actually places us in a very good position in relation to other councils in Wales, but we only view the position as “acceptable” because we compare our position with the average for the private sector the UK, where sickness absence levels are much lower. We will continue to focus on reducing sickness absence levels because we feel that further improvements are achievable. Levels of sickness absence ranged from three days per FTE to 14 days per FTE within different council services, so clearly there is still room to improve in some areas.</p> <p>There were some very positive results from the most recent staff survey, which give us confidence in terms of developing a flexible and efficient workforce. 97% of staff felt that they have the skills to do their job effectively (which is considered to be “excellent”) and 94% felt that they were clear about what was expected of them (which is considered to be “good”). Although these results are positive, we will not become complacent about those figures. There is, of course, always room for improvement.</p> <p>Despite the positive results, there remain some areas of concern: one being the accessibility of information and information technology required to work efficiently. This is identified as a “priority for improvement”, with almost one in five staff feeling that they don’t currently have access to the tools to enable them to work efficiently.</p>	
Indicators	2012/13
No. of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per FTE	8.60
Staff Survey, % of positive responses to:	
I know what is expected of me	94
I have the skills to do my job effectively	97
I can access the information & I.T. that I need to work efficiently	82

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
<p>The council has a big role to play in the delivery of this outcome because many elements are within the direct control of the council, with activities designed to have a positive effect on both the performance measures and outcome indicators.</p> <p>A number of the performance measures are new (developed specifically to measure our contribution to this outcome), and data collection will therefore begin in 2013/14. This makes</p>	

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it impossible to make a full assessment of the council's contribution to this outcome at this stage. However, from what is known there are no reported issues regarding the delivery of the planned activities. The completion of the work-styles task (aimed at analysing the technology required to make each specific council role more flexible and efficient) was delayed due to a redefinition of the scope of the project. Originally, the scope was to establish the *current* work styles of staff, but this later changed to explore the *potential* for flexible work styles across the council.

Although it has no status (because excellent thresholds have not yet been established), the office space measure offers encouraging results, as the amount of space occupied by the council reduced from 261,538 to 223,234 in 2012/13 (based on the amount - m² - of heated floor in the entire non-domestic public building stock in the current year). However, carbon emissions are now at the highest point during the past eight years, so that is clearly an area for improvement. Business miles not only represent an expense for the council, they also represent 'down time' where people could have been working rather than travelling. Technology such as videoconferencing will help change our behaviour and reduce mileage. Some benchmarking against other authorities has been done, and a discussion as to where to set the thresholds is needed. The improvement activities were designed to lay the platform for us to begin to reduce our operational costs, so it is encouraging to know that they are largely progressing according to plan in terms of time and cost.

Performance Measures	Status
% of performance appraisals due that were completed	92.0
Carbon emissions per m ² of office space (kg/m ²)	50.3
The amount of heated floor in the entire non-domestic public building stock (m ²)	223,234
Average number of business miles recorded per FTE	945
% of mobile staff that have remote access to their work I.T. systems	New for 2013/14
% of proposed savings through the Modernisation programme achieved	New for 2013/14
No. of key tasks prioritised for channel shift taking place via the web	New for 2013/14
Improvement Activity	Status
Expansion of wireless provision in council buildings	Green
Continued removal of all desktop printers	Green
Develop "work-styles" for all council roles and equip to deliver roles ¹⁵	Yellow
Develop new Service Performance Challenge process ¹⁶	Green
Analysis from Office Rationalisation ¹⁷	Green

¹⁵ The development of work-styles for all council roles (e.g. office-based, mobile and home-based) and equip them with the technology to make them flexible and efficient.

¹⁶ Improve our use of benchmarking information to support Service Performance Challenges.

¹⁷ To analyse lessons learnt from office rationalisation, hot-desking, electronic document management, and pilots in mobile working technology as a foundation for rolling out flexible working across the council.

1.2 Strategic Equality Plan

OUTCOME 1: Reduce Health Inequalities

KEY PROTECTED GROUPS

Older people, younger people, women and disabled people will particularly benefit from our planned actions to support this objective.

RATIONALE

Regional research and information from engagement suggests different outcomes experienced by protected groups across a range of health issues. The council believes it can best contribute in the fields of promoting healthy lifestyles and promoting dignity in care for older people.

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 1:1

Increase the number of people choosing healthy lifestyles in under-represented groups

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
Success of this outcome will mean that a greater number of people in under-represented groups will participate in healthy lifestyle activities. The available information offers a conclusion that the current position for this outcome is extremely positive, with all indicators achieving the goal of increased participation rates for people with protected characteristics.	
Indicators	2012/13
Attendance (7-16 year olds) in Sport and Physical Activity opportunities	91,708
Attendance at leisure activities by disabled people	13,981
No. of female Denbighshire Leisure Card Users	4,683
No. of older people (aged 60 and over) participating in physical activity	1,607
No. of visits (aged 16 and under) who participate in the Free Swim Initiative	43,386
No. of visits (aged 60 and over) who participate via the Free Swim Initiative	27,383
No. of people completing the Training Young Sports Leaders course	192
No. of young people (aged 11-16) engaged in Physical Activity	1,000

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome
The successful delivery of the identified improvement activities appears highly likely, offering confidence about the council's contribution to the outcome. At this stage, the council identifies no major outstanding issues that pose a threat to the delivery of those activities. Publicity and engagement activities have positively influenced the numbers of people with targeted protected characteristics attending leisure centres this year. The engagement activities were targeted at parents and carers to encourage increased participation by young, older people and disabled people. The involvement of local disability groups has also provided feedback on the current programme, and established what they would like to see at our leisure centres see in the future.

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Improvement Activity	2012/13
Targeted promotion of exercise and active leisure opportunities	Green
Deliver exercise and active leisure programmes to target groups	Green

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 1:3

Improve the care of older people, ensuring they are treated with dignity and respect

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
The success of this outcome will mean that older people will be treated with dignity and respect. The available information offers a conclusion that the current position for this outcome is positive, with all indicators achieving an “excellent” status.	
Indicator	Status
% of clients with a care plan that was reviewed during the year	94.5
Rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons (aged 75+)	1.09

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
The successful delivery of improvement activities appears highly likely, offering confidence about the council's contribution to this outcome. The council did identify some issues with the planned activities that required management attention and, although slow to start, the work to embed and deliver the Dignity in Care Action Plan has gained momentum and is progressing well. Work has progressed well to involve service users in the development of their own care plans, and to ensure that care plans are reviewed in a timely fashion. This work will continue during 2013/14. The council is also using a Safeguarding Framework to ensure that a minimum standard of service is provided when dealing with vulnerable people.	
Improvement Activity	Status
Deliver Regional Dignity in Care Action Plan	Yellow
Involve service users in the development of their own care plans	Green
Ensure that care plans are reviewed in a timely fashion	Green
Ensure that safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable older people	Yellow

1.2 Strategic Equality Plan

OUTCOME 2: Reduce unequal outcomes in Education to maximise individual potential

KEY PROTECTED GROUPS

All protected groups will benefit from our work to tackle identity based bullying and boys will particularly benefit from our work on educational attainment.

RATIONALE

Regional and local research, and information from engagement has demonstrated a gap in educational attainment between Boys and Girls throughout key stages and other examinations. Regional research has also demonstrated the need to tackle identity based bullying in schools throughout Wales.

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 2:1

The educational attainment gap between different groups will be reduced

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

Overall, the educational attainment gaps between boys and girls did not reduce during 2012/13¹⁸ but, in most cases, the gap didn't become wider either. However, the positive development is that attainment levels for boys have increased across the board. Clearly we would not want to see a reduction in attainment levels for girls in order to reduce the gap; we would want to see the gap narrowing within the context of overall improvements in educational attainment. That is exactly what we are seeing for some indicators but, more often than not, the gap remains largely the same in the context of increased attainment.

Attainment overall at the Level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents has risen in excess of 20% since 2010/11, and the gender gap has also narrowed from 16% in 2010/11 to 12% 2012/13.

However, when considering performance at the level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents and including English/Welsh and Maths, the gender gap has actually widened by a further 4.3%. Again, it is important to remember that attainment overall has risen, so the actual position for boys has got better rather than worse.

The overall capped point score continues the trend of overall improvement for boys and girls, but again the gender gap has not reduced. The gap in 2012/13 was 33 points compared to 32 points in 2011/12.

From the evidence available it is apparent that having English as an Additional Language (EAL) does not significantly hinder our students in terms of attainment. Although the percentage of EAL students achieving the level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents is slightly lower than the performance of non-EAL students, non-EAL students are

¹⁸ The 2012/13 financial year reported on in this report relates of the 2011/12 academic year.

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outperformed across all other indicators in Denbighshire (actually becoming a Priority for Improvement in relation to achieving the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2). While this is positive in terms of equalities, it's a trend that is consistent nationally and does not necessarily equate to "excellent" performance within Denbighshire.

Girls (86.5%) outperform boys, EAL and non-EAL students at Key Stage 2 in 2012/13, with boys performing least well of all these groups (80.6%). The gender gap actually closed slightly for this indicator too, from 6.8% in 2011/12 to 5.9% in 2012/13, and all within a context of overall improvement for boys and girls. Although not a significant gap, Denbighshire's performance across all categories only achieved an Acceptable status when benchmarked nationally.

At Key Stage 4, girls again outperformed boys (48% of boys achieving the Core Subject Indicator compared to 58% of girls). Since 2010/11, girls have seen an improving trend in performance, while improvement for boys has been less consistent. This has led to a fluctuating gender gap in terms of attainment at level 4 (in favour of girls), with the gap in each year as follows: 2009/10 = 10.8%; 2010/11 = 3.8%; 2011/12 = 10%.

The status attributed to boys' and girls' performance for the indicators below are based on projecting the performance of pupils in other council areas because actual data for all councils in Wales is not currently available. The projection method looks back at the trend over the last five years to predict future attainment levels. The actual status will be updated once all-Wales data becomes available. The only exception is for Key Stage 2 results, which are based on actual comparisons with other council areas in Wales.

Indicator	2012/13
% of boys achieving level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents	77
% of girls achieving level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents	89
% of EAL achieving level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents	82.8
% of Non-EAL achieving level 2 threshold or vocational equivalents	85.6
% of boys achieving level 2 threshold, inc. English/Welsh & maths	50
% of girls achieving level 2 threshold, inc. English/Welsh & maths	60
% of EAL achieving level 2 threshold, inc. English/Welsh & maths	69.0
% of non-EAL achieving level 2 threshold, inc. English/Welsh & maths	56.2
Average capped points score for boys at Key Stage 4	323
Average capped points score for girls at Key Stage 4	356
Average capped points score for EAL at Key Stage 4	353
Average capped points score for non-EAL at Key Stage 4	349
% of boys who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2	80.6
% of girls who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2	86.5
% of EAL who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2	85.2
% of Non-EAL who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2	83.5

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% of boys who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 4	48
% of girls who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 4	58
% of EAL who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 4	69.0
% of Non-EAL who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 4	54.5

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 2:2

Identity-based bullying in schools reduces

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>The indicator that we want to track has been identified for this outcome, but we recognised that we did not have a reliable, effective data source during 2012/13. Hence, a key part of our contribution for this year was to develop a means of data collection. Some further work is also needed to understand what we would expect to see with this indicator. Any project to proactively tackle identity-based bullying will inevitably involve encouraging people to report such incidents more. This may show that the number of incidents initially increases as pupils (hopefully) become more confident about reporting. We would then expect this to stabilise and then reduce as measures to tackle identity-based bullying have an impact.</p>	
Indicator	2012/13
The number of reported occurrences of identity based bullying in schools	New for 2013/14

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
<p>A database has now been developed to capture the reporting requirement for a range of educational services, to include incidents of bullying and harassment. The inclusion service (areas such as educational social work, behaviour support, and educational psychologist teams) has access to the "One Database" so that users are able to run their own reports and view pupil level data. This will enable us to analyse management information on bullying, and take necessary steps to reduce the number of occurrences.</p>	
Improvement Activity	2012/13
Education Information Reporting Project	Green

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OUTCOME 3: Reduce inequalities in Employment and Pay

KEY PROTECTED GROUPS

All protected groups will benefit from our work to identify and address pay differences, and women will particularly benefit from our work on gender pay difference.

RATIONALE

Statutory duties, regional and local research, and information from engagement have all demonstrated the need to identify and address employment and pay differences between men and women, and between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 3.1

Inequalities within recruitment, retention, training and promotion processes are identified and addressed

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>As the Strategic Equality Plan was developed it became apparent that the Trent system did not hold the Equal Opportunities information necessary to enable us to report on the experience of people with the protected characteristics within these processes. Hence, an action was created to develop this capacity for 2013/14. This action has been completed, and we will therefore be able to report against these indicators in our 2013/14 Annual Performance Review. To enable better consideration of all of our customers' needs, it was agreed that all HR policies should have an Equality Impact Assessment. In 2012/13, we only achieved this for 68% of the HR policies published on our intranet, which means that this has been identified as a "priority for improvement". We expect to increase this to 100% during 2013/14.</p> <p>Our staff survey responses were compared to see whether there is any evidence to suggest that people who share particular protected characteristics have a different experience of working for Denbighshire County Council. Importantly, no difference was found in the working experience of staff based on: gender, ethnicity, language, pregnancy, sexuality, or religion. However, members of staff who considered themselves to be disabled were slightly less likely to feel in control of their work, and more likely to feel that they have experienced discrimination, harassment or bullying from their line managers and/or colleagues. They were also more likely to report feeling stressed because of relationships with colleagues.</p> <p>The information from the staff survey will be considered by the council (initially by the Corporate Equality Group) to determine what actions could be taken to tackle the differences that exist in responses from disabled members of staff.</p>	
Indicator	Status
% of HR policies on the intranet that have been Equality Impact Assessed	68.0
The proportion of the workforce with one (or more) of the protected	New for 2013/14

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characteristics	
The proportion of the workforce with one (or more) of the protected characteristics that has accessed training	New for 2013/14
The proportion of the workforce with none of the protected characteristics that has accessed training	New for 2013/14
The proportion of the workforce with one (or more) of the protected characteristics that has accessed promotion	New for 2013/14
The proportion of the workforce with none of the protected characteristics that has accessed promotion	New for 2013/14
The proportion of women in the workforce that have accessed training	New for 2013/14
The proportion of men in the workforce that have accessed training	New for 2013/14
The proportion of women in the workforce that have accessed promotion	New for 2013/14
The proportion of men in the workforce that have accessed promotion	New for 2013/14
The proportion of people (overall) agreeing with the statement: My relationships with my current colleagues are not causing me to feel too much stress	90%
The proportion of disabled people agreeing with the statement: My relationships with my current colleagues are not causing me to feel too much stress	71%
The proportion of people (overall) agreeing with the statement: I have not experienced discrimination by my managers	93%
The proportion of disabled people agreeing with the statement: I have not experienced discrimination by my managers	76%
The proportion of people (overall) agreeing with the statement: I have not experienced harassment / bullying from council employees / managers	88%
The proportion of disabled people agreeing with the statement: I have not experienced harassment / bullying from council employees / managers	70%

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

In recognition of the fact that improved management information relating to protected characteristics was required, our direct contribution to this outcome during 2012/13 was mainly to amend our systems so that we will be able to report against the additional indicators in 2013/14. These activities have all progressed well, and no problems are envisaged with reporting in 2013/14. We will then be able to identify any inequalities that exist, and consider how they can be addressed.

Improvement Activity	Status
Transfer Equal Opportunities form to iTrent	Green
Develop a deployment plan for Equal Opportunities form	Green
Promote the Equal Opportunities form	Green
Analyse staff survey by protected characteristics	Green

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OUTCOME ACTION AREA 3.2

Any pay gaps between different protected characteristics are identified and addressed

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>The Indicators reflect the percentage value of any pay gaps, showing as a -% if females are paid less than males and a +% if females are paid more than males.</p> <p>The pay difference between male and female employees at the mean FTE salary across all terms and conditions was -7.98% (where women earn less than men), which we recognise is higher than the acceptable range recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)¹⁹. This FTE salary calculation includes the full-time equivalent salary of those that work part-time, and the large gender pay gap reflects the fact that more women than men work in part-time roles that tend to be lower paid.</p> <p>However, the gender pay gap for the majority group of employees on NJC terms and conditions has reduced by 2.3% to -3.33% since the implementation of Single Status in 2008, and is much closer to the acceptable range recommended by the EHRC.</p> <p>When we look at the gender pay gap between actual full time employees, the position is again much closer (at -2.07%), which is below the threshold where the EHRC suggests we should be concerned. The pay gap for part time employees is more favourable to women.</p> <p>We have also audited the pay gap between disabled and non-disabled employees, and Black Minority Ethnic and White employees. However, the high proportion of employees who have declined to specify their disability status and ethnicity is skewing the overall figures, and has therefore not been reported on this year.</p>	
Indicator	Status
The mean pay gap (full time equivalent salary) at 31 March	-7.98
The mean pay gap (full time equivalent salary) at 31 March - only includes those staff on NJC terms and conditions.	-3.33
Gender pay gap between full time employees using the mean annual salary for 2012.	-2.07
Gender pay gap between part time employees using the mean annual salary for 2012.	+9.81
Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
<p>Each year we produce, and publish, a report on pay gaps between employees who share protected characteristics, and those who do not. This report will be presented to the council's Corporate Equality Group, who will recommend any priorities for the council in terms of addressing any pay gaps. This is due to take place during 2013/14.</p>	
Improvement Activity	Status
Produce a report on pay gaps	Green

¹⁹ The EHRC suggests that pay gaps between 3% and 5% maybe symptomatic of discrimination and that gaps of 5% or above should be investigated further.

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OUTCOME 4: Reduce inequalities in Personal Safety

KEY PROTECTED GROUPS

All protected groups will benefit from our work to tackle hate crime, and women will particularly benefit from our work to tackle domestic violence.

RATIONALE

Regional research and information from engagement have all demonstrated the need to tackle domestic violence and hate crime.

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 4.1

The reporting of hate crime and harassment increases, and steps are taken to reduce hate crime and harassment

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
There are still significant data gaps which limit our ability to fully determine the current position of this outcome. We anticipate that this data will become available before the report is presented to Council on 8 th October 2013.	
Indicator	Status
No. of hate crime and harassment crimes recorded by North Wales Police	tbc
No. of hate crime and harassment reports involving local authority tenants	1 (harassment)

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome	
The Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is working to encourage hate crime reporting to the police. However, it is recognised that some people will be reluctant to approach the police, so they are then encouraged to report through the charity 'Safer Wales'. Safer Wales is a unique scheme built in partnership with the police forces of Wales for the people of Wales. It enables victims, witnesses or other parties to report all hate incidents and hate crimes in confidence. We are promoting our support via Safer Wales by including a link to Denbighshire County Council's Housing Services, but will add further links to areas such as the Family Information Service during 2013/14.	
Improvement Activity	Status
Community Safety Partnership: encourage reporting of hate crime	Yellow

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ACTION AREA 4.2

The reporting of domestic abuse increases and steps are taken to reduce domestic abuse

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

The reported rates of all types of domestic crime are little changed compared to 2011/12. The initial paradox is that it would be an improvement to see an increase in these figures because of the widely held view that domestic violence is heavily under-reported. There are many unofficial occurrences, so victims may not be able to access the support services that are available to them. It is difficult to come to any firm conclusions about the success of this outcome by looking at the change in data between 2011/12 and 2012/13. We will probably require several years' worth of data to be able to say whether the indicators are moving in the right direction.

There has been little change in Denbighshire in 2012/13 in the number of crimes identified as "domestic" based on the offender / victim relationship. Most crimes are violent (78.5%) but a large number of these are without injury. The Rhyl wards have the highest level of domestic crime, and last year these offences were more frequent between April and August, peaking in May. Offenders are mostly likely to be male aged 20-29 and victims are most likely to be female aged 20-29.

All domestic non crimes are classed as domestic abuse with no powers of arrest, of which there were 1,596 in 2012/13, an increase of 5.8% on 2011/12.

The number of referrals to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC) has decreased in Denbighshire by over 19% since 2011/12. This may be because the police have been running a pilot in Denbighshire where they have been targeting the lower level cases (those that wouldn't be referred to MARAC). This may have had an impact on the number of high level MARAC cases.

There has been a small reduction (3.4%) in the number of violent domestic crimes reported in 2012/13. There has been a significant decline in assaults without injury and threats to kill, while there has been a small increase in harassment and public fear, alarm or distress. There has been little change in the number of incidents in the busiest wards, with most incidents occurring in the Rhyl wards. May to July 2012 was the peak period for violent domestic crimes.

Denbighshire Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) figures are 23.3% lower than in 2011/12. However, sickness issues and some problems with data collection (from Feb 2013) will account for low figures. There was also a period during June / July 2012 where there was no IDVA in place.

The CAADA²⁰ DASH²¹ RIC²² training is risk assessment training for frontline staff to identify signs of domestic and sexual abuse. The target was to train a minimum of 80 staff from a

²⁰ CAADA = Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse – a national charity supporting a strong multi-agency response to domestic abuse

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variety of agencies every 12 months, and considerably more were trained during 2012/13, as was the case during 2011/12.

Indicator	Status
No. of calls to the domestic abuse helpline	tbc
No. of domestic crimes recorded by North Wales Police	738
No. of domestic incidents (non crimes) recorded by North Wales Police	1,596
No. of repeat victims of domestic abuse	tbc
No. of reports of domestic abuse involving local authority tenants	8
The number of referrals to MARAC ²³	161
No. of violent domestic crimes recorded by North Wales Police	576
No. of cases dealt with by the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor	182
Increase agencies / staff trained to use CAADA DASH RIC	128

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The council works with partners to contribute to this outcome, and many of the activities listed below have been delivered with the support of the Strategic Partnership Board via The BIG Plan. Domestic abuse is an issue that demands a multi-agency approach to tackle it. The strategy has been two-pronged: 1) offer support for victims of domestic abuse directly (and help people to spot the signs of abuse), and 2) raise awareness of issues as a preventative technique. Most of this activity has been progressing as expected, which provides confidence that we are contributing effectively to the successful delivery of this outcome.

The Domestic Abuse Forum meets quarterly and oversees the delivery of a one-day Basic Domestic Abuse Awareness training course approximately 3- 4 times per year. The forum also provides the opportunity for practitioners to share good practice.

CAADA DASH RIC is a risk assessment process used to support the staff of frontline services in identifying all forms of abuse to enable intervention at the earliest stage. The Community Safety Partnership Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Coordinator has been responsible for organising and delivering training for this risk assessment process to hundreds of members of staff within health and social care services in Conwy and Denbighshire.

The Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's) role is to support victims of domestic violence through the criminal justice system from the point at which an arrest has been made up until the court proceedings have ended. The IDVA will keep victims updated about court

²¹ DASH = Domestic Abuse, Stalking and 'Honour'-based Violence

²² RIC = Risk Identification Checklist

²³ MARAC is the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

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dates, and court and bail application outcomes, and offer general support. There are two IDVAs in operation across Conwy and Denbighshire.

During 2012-13, the Conwy & Denbighshire's Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) aimed to work with the MARAC Steering Group to map current provision for domestic abuse, and develop a model for future provision. Unfortunately, limited progress was made during the year, mainly due to confusion over the relationships between different domestic violence projects and initiatives, and their governance. A local action plan will now be developed during 2013-14.

Towns and cities across Great Britain took part in the White Ribbon Relay, a national relay between 23rd June and 26th July 2012 to raise awareness of the relationship between violence against women and girls and major sporting events, such as Euro 2012 and the Olympic Games. Conwy and Denbighshire were chosen to represent North Wales and organized a marathon relay to carry the torch by road from St Asaph to Cheshire. More than 50 volunteers and various agencies were involved.

Funded through the Families First Programme in Denbighshire, the Family Resilience Project is run through a Consortium comprising of five partners. The Consortium provides support to families where areas of concern have arisen (e.g. domestic violence), to help prevent issues from escalating further and to encourage the families themselves to be empowered to address areas of concern. In this way, families are more independent, self-reliant and have positive future aspirations. Of those completing the DART (Domestic Abuse: Recovering Together) Programme: 54% of parents felt the DART programme helped them; 54% parents felt it helped their child; 54% of children felt it helped them; and 54% of children felt it helped their mum.

Improvement Activity	Status
Establish a Domestic Abuse Forum	Green
CAADA DASH RIC Agency Training	Green
Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) in place	Green
LSCB & MARAC: map and model current provision for domestic abuse	Orange
White Ribbon Relay	Green
Families First funded Family Resilience project	Green

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OUTCOME 5: Reduce inequalities in Representation and Voice

KEY PROTECTED GROUPS

All protected groups will benefit from our work to identify underrepresented groups.

RATIONALE

National research and information from engagement have all demonstrated that some protected groups remain underrepresented on decision making bodies. This may also be true for decision making bodies in Denbighshire.

ACTION AREA 5.1

Decision making bodies become more representative of the communities they serve

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

The profile of current County Councillors in Denbighshire shows that the council is not representative of the community it serves. This is a position that is reflected nationally rather than it being unique to Denbighshire County Council. However, it seems that some areas are more severely under-represented in Denbighshire than in other parts of Wales. This will be something that the council will consider in terms of how it might address the balance in the next local government elections in 2017.

Sex

Among county councillors, 28% are female nationally, whilst 19% are female in Denbighshire. Overall, 52% of the 18+ population are female in Denbighshire, so there is evidence of under representation.

Ethnicity

The majority of candidates in Denbighshire identify with the White – Welsh / Scottish / English / Northern Irish or British ethnicities (over 95%) - although the precise numbers cannot be published for data protection purposes. Across Wales we can see a trend of under representation of ethnic minorities. However in Denbighshire the numbers do not allow for any firm conclusions.

Religion

Nationally, 83% of the sample of elected Councillors said they were Christian in comparison to 70% of unelected candidates (from 2012 local elections). In Denbighshire, 92% of elected Councillors were Christian compared with 55% of unelected candidates. Of all candidates, 86% were Christian. The 2011 census reported 64.1% of Denbighshire's population as Christian, so we can see proportionately lower participation and representation from non-Christian groups.

Sexual Orientation

Nationally, 2% of elected Councillors identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in comparison to 5% of unelected candidates. In Denbighshire, the majority of candidates were heterosexual/straight (over 95%), although the precise numbers

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cannot be published for data protection purposes. It is difficult to reach any firm conclusions from the data.

Disability

Nationally, 14% of elected Councillors considered themselves to be disabled. Denbighshire County Council is in line with this national position, with 14% of all candidates and 12% of elected Councillors considering themselves to be disabled. However, according to the 2011 Census 23.47% of Denbighshire's population has an activity limiting condition, which suggests this is an area of under-representation.

Age

Nationally, the majority of elected Councillors are over the age of 60; 57% of County Councillors and 61% of Community Councillors. In Denbighshire, 71% of County Councillors and 62% of Town and Community Councillors answering the survey were over 60. In each case the over 60s are over-represented relative to the proportion of people over 60 in the relevant populations. The 2011 Census found that 21% of Denbighshire's population to be 65+.

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

A survey of all county council election candidates was undertaken, and the results sent to the Welsh Government in September 2012. In common with the picture across Wales, some protected groups appear to be under-represented in terms of participation as candidates in County Council and Town & Community Council elections. The Council has a responsibility to promote participation under the local government (Wales) measure 2011.

In the run up to the local government elections 2012 potential candidates were advised that Denbighshire County Council (DCC) would be instigating a more flexible way of working for its elected members. Existing members were canvassed via e-mail, online surveys, focus groups and presentations (to the Member Area Groups (MAGs) with regard to their thoughts and opinions on council meetings (frequency, timings, locations) and the use of technology as a tool to improve engagement. Although limited in number, initial responses to the canvassing were either strongly in favour of or strongly opposed to change.

The majority of elected Members wished to retain the status quo with reference to meetings: to be held at County Hall, Ruthin, during office hours. However some Members find the schedule and location inflexible. Improved scheduling (taking into account meeting attendees and timings and appropriate attendance) was seen as possible areas for improvement. The council is investigating the use of technology to remove barriers to participation in meetings.

Improvement Activity	Status
A survey of all candidates at the May 2012 local government elections	Green
Project to raise awareness of opportunities to become a County Councillor	Green

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 5.2

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Consultation and Engagement is improved through strengthening links between the Public Sector and local and national groups representing people from all protected groups.

Summary of the **current position** for the outcome

No indicators or performance measures were identified for 2012/13. This is an area in need of development, and we will be working with other members of the Regional Equality Network to develop some meaningful indicators for this regional equality objective during 2013/14.

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

The council's new Community Engagement Strategy has been developed and delivered to all stakeholders. It includes information relating to the need to engage with those who share protected characteristics, with a specific focus on children and young people. Further advice is also provided in the accompanying Engagement Toolkit. This will be developed during 2013/14 to include further information on how to effectively engage with people who share protected characteristics.

The North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (of which the council is a member) has an action for 2013/14 to produce a number of guidance documents to help public sector authorities show due regard to equality legislation. These include:

- 10 Top tips on Equality Impact Assessments and Due Regard
- 10 Top tips on organising accessible events

“Your Agenda” is a piece of work developed by the council to improve engagement with people (and local groups who support people) who share protected characteristics. The local groups will be contacted at the beginning of each calendar year, and the results of our engagement activities will be combined with local and national research to develop and review “intelligence” reports on each protected characteristic. These intelligence reports are used by the council to support the Equality Impact Assessment of proposals we are developing and decisions we are taking.

Improvement Activity	Status
Updated on:	31.03.2013
Implement new Community Engagement Strategy	Green
Development of “Your Agenda” project	Green

1.2 Strategic Equality Plan

OUTCOME 6: Reduce inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment

KEY PROTECTED GROUPS

Disabled people, older people and people from minority ethnic groups will particularly benefit from our work to improve accessibility.

RATIONALE

Regional and local research and information from engagement has demonstrated the need to ensure that our services are accessible and that we promote accessibility in the wider environment.

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 6.1

Access to information and communications and the customer experience improve

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
Some of the indicators for this outcome are based on the Residents' Survey. The overall evaluation will therefore need to be completed following the analysis of these results, which will be distributed before the report is presented to Council on 8 th October 2013. Data not yet available.	
Indicator	Status
% of customers who are satisfied with the way customer care dealt with their most recent inquiry (resident's survey by protected characteristic)	tbc
% of customers that feel well informed overall about the services the council provides (resident's survey by protected characteristic)	tbc

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome
<p>The main area of activity contributing to this outcome in 2012/13 was the development of a new website, whose navigation will be fully accessible using web-readers, and could make a big difference to the accessibility of information and communication. Though not live in 2012/13, most of the work to construct the website in the new software was undertaken during 2012/13, ahead of its launch in August 2013.</p> <p>The current Corporate Communication Strategy was developed in 2011, and will be a continuously developing document. It will be reviewed again during 2013/14 and presented to the Corporate Equality Group to ensure that it provides sufficient information about how to communicate effectively with people who share protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Equalities section of the council's internal intranet features a section on "Interpretation and Communication", with one of the most popular resources being the "Frequently Asked Questions" on interpretation and translation.</p> <p>Online payments of general invoices and bailiff charges were enabled during 2012/13, thus improving the range of ways to pay by removing the need to visit a council office.</p>

1.2 Strategic Equality Plan

The Assisted Bin Collection application form has been simplified and is now easier for older and disabled people to complete. At present the form is available in hardcopy only, but the proposal for 2013/2014 is to enable access and completion on the new website.

The project to develop and publish dashboard reports on progress of the councils' Strategic Equality Plans was put on hold because we discovered that the nationally procured software package used in most councils in Wales (Ffynnon) did not enable us to develop and maintain these dashboards without investing a disproportionate amount of time and effort. We are now waiting until we have access to new software before we continue with this activity, and this is likely to be during 2014/15.

Improvement Activity	Status
Revise the Corporate Communication Strategy	Yellow
Update equalities section of the intranet to advise staff	Green
New, accessible website	Green
Improve range of "ways to pay"	Green
Simplify the Assisted Bin Collection application form	Green
Develop & publish dashboards to report progress of Strategic Equality Plan	Red

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 6.1

Physical access to services, transport, the built environment and open spaces improve

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
<p>A survey was undertaken in 2012/13 on the 19 meeting rooms available to council staff. From the property surveys, technical reports have been produced using the Institute of Public Finance disability survey questionnaire. Elements covered include: Approach and Car Parking; Routes and Street Furniture within Site; Entrances (Main) including Reception; Horizontal Movement & Assembly; Vertical Movement & Internal Level Change; Internal Doors, and WC provision generally. The results show that levels of physical accessibility vary, particularly when access is dependent on use of lifts (which often can't be used as evacuation lifts) and there is need to provide refuge areas. Work is being done to ensure hearing loops are available at all venues.</p> <p>The council is also working to ensure no access audits will be more than two years old, and would expect to maintain a 100% completion rate once the initial work is complete. However, access audits have revealed emerging problems that current budgets cannot easily address, compromising our level of compliance. The key source of accessibility problems in relation to civic public buildings is with Prestatyn Library. These problems will be addressed in the development of the new library.</p>	
Indicator	Status
No. of meeting rooms reasonably accessible to all	15.0
% of council buildings with completed access audits less than two years old	85.0

1.2 Strategic Equality Plan

% of council-owned public buildings that are physically accessible	50.0
% of leisure, library and youth facilities that are physically accessible	90.0

Summary of the **council's contribution** to the outcome

Work has begun to improve accessibility to council services, but progress has perhaps been slower than we would have anticipated. However, the activities are still relevant and the council has pledged to address any outstanding issues during 2013/14.

The review of bus services in the county was completed. The proportion of service buses that are accessible in the county is 94%, which will rise to 96% in 2013/14. There was no funding for bus stop improvements apart from the strategic routes in 2012/13, and we're currently unsure as to whether TAITH will contribute funding in 2013/14.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Access for All' assists developers in access and design elements of planning proposals. Planning Officers will not validate a planning application unless it includes a Design and Access Statement. They may also refuse a planning application on the basis that the Design and Access Statement does not contain sufficient information and data. Planning Officers have developed standard planning conditions relating to access issues which, if relevant, could be imposed on a planning permission.

Work to develop a strategy for dropped kerbs at key locations was not started in 2012/13 as initially anticipated. However, work is now progressing on this activity, and we are currently working to complete and implement a strategy that identifies the priority routes where we would want to ensure that a drop-kerb route is in place.

A review of the travel time to key sites in the county was complete. Other than Rhyl, Prestatyn & Llangollen, no other DCC centre could achieve a 30 minutes journey to a major A & E by bus, owing to the distance.

We pledged to appraise the options available for siting a Changing Places facility. At March 2013, appropriate sites had been identified, and the size and service requirements of the unit had been confirmed. The remainder of the work will be completed in 2013/14.

Improvement Activity	Status
Improve accessibility of buses, promote take-up of bus passes	Green
Improve information on planning processes and access statements	Green
Formalise plans for dropped kerbs	Red
Bus journey review from town centre to A&E hospitals	Green
Review accessibility of buses	Green
Provide information on facilities available at council buildings	Yellow
Options appraisal: where to site a Changing Places facility	Yellow

1.2 Strategic Equality Plan

OUTCOME 7: Managing identified equality and fairness issues as part of our Business Planning and Performance Management Framework

KEY PROTECTED GROUPS

People with any one (or more) of the protected characteristics will benefit from this Outcome, as we fully integrate Equality into our existing Business and Community Planning activities.

RATIONALE

Fully integrating Equality into our existing Business Planning and Performance Management Framework will help to ensure that equality issues are adequately considered, and that any areas of weakness are identified and addressed.

OUTCOME ACTION AREA 1.1

Integrate Equality into our existing business and community planning activities

Summary of the current position for the outcome	
During 2012/13 there was an emphasis on implementing our Strategic Equality Plan and embedding good practise throughout the organisation. Part of the work for 2012/13 was to develop suitable indicators to enable reporting during 2013/14.	
Indicator	Status
The percentage of proposals presented to Council or Cabinet that have an Equality Impact Assessment	New for 2013/14
The number of people accessing the Respect Booklet	New for 2013/14

Summary of the council's contribution to the outcome
<p>Our focus during 2012/13 was on embedding the Equality Framework and associated good practise. We have done this by ensuring the work to support our equality objectives sits within our Service Plans, rather than it sitting separately in a stand-alone document. We have also designed a new Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit to support decision making. We have made it a requirement that all papers going to Cabinet, Council or for delegated decision are supported by an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and the new template with supporting guidance is available on the council's intranet.</p> <p>To support the culture change required to ensure that EqIA is used consistently throughout the council, the Corporate Improvement Team Manager has delivered a workshop for the management team of each council service. This covered such things as why we need to do EqIA; when we should do EqIA; how to do EqIA; and what help is available. These workshops began in 2012/13, and were concluded early in 2013/14.</p> <p>A <i>Respect Booklet</i> was produced and made available via the intranet in 2012/13. It is compulsory for all staff to read the booklet, so a mechanism for counting the number of people that have accessed and read it was also developed in 2012/13, enabling us to measure compliance during 2013/14.</p>

1.2 Strategic Equality Plan

Improvement Activity	Status
Incorporate actions relating to the Equality objectives into service plans	Green
Design a new Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit	Green
Meet with each service management toolkit to ensure understanding of the Equality agenda and how to respond to it	Green
Make the Respect booklet available via the intranet	Green
Develop a means of counting how many people have accessed the Respect booklet	Green

1.3 Outcome Agreement

The council, like all councils in Wales, has developed a set of ten Outcome Agreements with the Welsh Government. The Outcome Agreements set out how we will work towards improving outcomes for local people within the context of the Welsh Government's national priorities. By their nature, the delivery of most citizen centred outcomes requires the involvement of multiple organisations for successful delivery. As a result, Outcome Agreements must have a strong collaborative element, as well as evidence of partnership working in order to have the greatest impact.

PREDICTED OVERALL SCORE (2012/13)	SELF-ASSESSMENT (2012/13)
27 out of 30	Excellent

Our self-assessment suggests the potential for the maximum loss of three points due to some missed targets. We expect to receive confirmation shortly of the assessment from the Welsh Government, but we remain confident of satisfying the requirement for the full Outcome Agreement grant for 2012/13, as any score between 25 and 30 will result in the full payment of the grant.

OUTCOME	SELF-ASSESSMENT	PREDICTED SCORE
Quality of Life	Fully successful	3 out of 3
Good Social Care	Fully successful	3 out of 3
Reduce Poverty	Fully successful	3 out of 3
Children's Well-Being	Partially successful	2 out of 3
Education and Skills	Partially successful	2 out of 3
Community Safety	Fully successful	3 out of 3
Low Waste Society	Partially successful	2 out of 3
Environmental Protection	Fully successful	3 out of 3
Culture and Heritage	Fully successful	3 out of 3
Value for Money	Fully successful	3 out of 3

1.4 National Strategic Indicators

Denbighshire's performance in the statutory indicators is excellent, with 17 in the top quartile (which is more than any other council) and fewer in the bottom half than any other councils in Wales (8 out of 30).

YEAR		2012/13		
NSI	CODE	Denbighshire	Quartile	Improvement
1	SCA019	96.91	2	↑
2	SCC004	8.13	2	↓
3	SCC041a	100.00	1	↑
4	SCC011	52.88	1	↑
5	SCA001	1.09	1	↓
6	SCA002a	53.44	4	↓
6	SCA002b	21.61	3	↑
7	SCC002	6.12	1	↑
8	SCC037	261.13	2	↑
9	SCC033d	100.00	1	n/a
9	SCC033e	88.89	3	n/a
9	SCC033f	77.78	1	n/a
10	HHA013	100.00	1	↑
11	PSR002	176.00	1	↑
12	PLA006	27.67	3	n/a
13	PSR004	22.75	1	↑
14	EDU003	83.50	3	↑
15	EDU006ii	18.68	1	↓
16	EDU017	54.72	2	n/a
17	EDU002i	0.82	4	↓
17	EDU002ii	0.00	1	↔
18	EDU011	504.87	1	↑
19	EDU015a	100.00	1	↔
19	EDU015b	100.00	1	↔
20	WMT009b	58.02	1	n/a
21	WMT004b	37.44	1	n/a
22	STS006	88.19	3	↑
23	THS007	88.05	2	↑
24	LCS002	5739.68	4	n/a
25	LCL001	6825.34	1	↓

1.5 External Regulation and Inspection Work

Like all councils in Wales, our work is scrutinised by external regulators to ensure that we use public money efficiently and effectively to deliver benefits for our communities. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) has an annual programme of audit and assessment work which it undertakes in the council, and the conclusions from all this work are brought together in an Annual Improvement Report. Other regulators undertake further work relating to specific service areas, and the main ones are Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW). A summary of the main conclusions from recent external audit and assessment work is provided below.

WALES AUDIT OFFICE

Each year, the Wales Audit Office reports on how well each council is planning for improvement and delivering their services. The latest Annual Improvement Report for Denbighshire was issued in May 2013, and contained no new recommendations for improvement. Overall, the report concluded that the council is making good progress in delivering its improvement programme but that there is scope to improve the quality of some of the performance measures and evidence that the council uses to judge its effectiveness. The report also contained the following conclusions:

1. The council made good progress in delivering improvement in its priority areas:
 - Performance continues to improve in most aspects of the council's work to adapt service delivery to address demographic change.
 - There has been progress in supporting regeneration projects in Rhyl but, in challenging economic times, progress has been slow in supporting economic growth across Denbighshire as a whole.
 - The council provides good quality education services for children and young people and prospects for further improvement are good.
 - The council's programme to improve roads is progressing but, following the 2012 floods, an independent investigation will determine whether actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the county is appropriately managed in the future.
 - The council continues to make good progress with its planned actions to improve the way it works.
2. The council's corporate performance management arrangements support reliable self-evaluation but there is scope to improve the quality of some of the evidence the council uses to judge its effectiveness.
3. The council's arrangements to support improvement are good. In particular:
 - The council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure.

1.5 External Regulation and Inspection Work

- The council has complied with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and its Welsh Language Scheme.
- The council continues to make good progress in addressing the proposals for improvement identified in our previous assessments.

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN WALES (Estyn)

Every few years, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) undertake an inspection of each council's education services for children and young people. The conclusions from these inspections are presented in a report, and the most recent report for Denbighshire was published in February 2012. The report contained the following conclusions:

- The council provides good quality education services for children and young people and prospects for further improvement are good.
- Although deprivation measures in Denbighshire had increased at a faster rate than across Wales in the three years preceding the inspection, educational performance had also improved at a faster rate than across Wales in both key stages 2 and 4.
- Particular groups of learners, including vulnerable groups and those with additional learning needs, are generally attaining their expected levels. Learners are making good progress in gaining skills in first and second language Welsh, and generally achieve good standards in both subjects.
- The percentage of learners leaving primary school with functional literacy improved in 2011, and was better than the average across Wales.
- The percentage of Year 11 learners not in education, training or employment has decreased steadily in recent years and was better than the average for Wales.
- Support for school improvement had improved significantly since the previous inspection, and that the council has very good arrangements to support and challenge schools.
- Systematic weakness in school leadership and management is addressed effectively to make sure that schools improve quickly enough.
- Overall value for money in education services was good. The budgets per pupil for both primary and secondary education were just below the Wales average, but attainment at most key stages was above average.
- The council is well placed to deliver its plans for 21st century schools, and has made good progress in delivering its Modernising Education programme.

1.5 External Regulation and Inspection Work

CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE WALES (CSSIW)

An annual review of Council Social Services performance is undertaken by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (the CSSIW). The CSSIW annual report provides an overall evaluation of performance and identifies areas of progress and areas for development. The most recent CSSIW report about Denbighshire was published in October 2012, and it contained the following overall conclusions:

- There was positive change and improvement in Adult Services, but the assessment of the needs of carers remained an area for improvement.
- The council has made progress in developing a wide range of services and mainstream local community facilities to encourage independence. A reablement service has been successfully implemented. Two-thirds of people referred to it do not require a further service and the majority of people surveyed provide positive feedback of their experience. The council is seeking ways to extend the reablement service model to people provided with services by the independent sector.
- The council had succeeded in providing alternatives to residential care through an increased provision of extra care housing, and the further development of existing sheltered housing and community living schemes.
- Many services are provided in partnership with health, the independent or voluntary sector. Other positive developments include the extension of telecare to 450 additional people and delivering over 80% of equipment that helps to maintain people's mobility and independence within five working days.
- The council has introduced specific measures to increase the involvement of users of social services in their planning and delivery.
- A number of initiatives have been used to improve services to carers, and all carers who are assessed are provided with a service. However, only approximately one third of carers were offered or provided with an assessment or review. A waiting list for assessments was developed in 2011/12 and increased funding has been made available to address increased demand. This is an area that the CSSIW identified as requiring improved performance.

1.6 Collaboration

Working in Collaboration

We do not always work on our own to provide benefits for the community. Sometimes it is possible to reduce costs or improve services by working in collaboration with other councils or agencies. In December 2011, the Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) signed the COMPACT, which was an agreement setting out a number of potential collaborative ventures. Each council in Wales was then asked to sign up to delivering the COMPACT. In January 2012, Denbighshire County Council agreed to play a role in implementing the full range of collaborations set out in the COMPACT provided that: a) there are demonstrable service improvements for Denbighshire residents, or b) there are resource savings and the proposed new service models provide a service to Denbighshire residents that is at least as good as the service it proposes to replace.

In summary, the COMPACT has three contracts:

1. The Education Implementation Contract
2. The Social Services Implementation Contract
3. The Other Services Implementation Contract

Although there are fewer commitments in Contracts 1 and 2, these are in fact where more significant change is expected to take place. Many of the commitments in Contract 3 are smaller scale or commitments to review (rather than change) things. The current position is as follows:

The more significant commitments in the COMPACT have broadly been delivered, and Denbighshire County Council has played a constructive - and often a leadership - role in many of them. These include the establishment of the Regional School Improvement Service, the Regional Social Services Hub for commissioning services for vulnerable adults requiring 'low incident, high cost' care and the National Procurement Service.

These collaborations should lead to improve consistency, better resilience and, in the cases of the social services hub and the National Procurement Service, significant medium to long term financial savings. The Emergency Planning and Transport collaborations should improve planning and response and also deliver efficiencies.

Some of the commitments in the COMPACT are 'progressing' rather than completed, but most of these are relatively minor and involve reviewing existing arrangements rather than committing to major change.

1.6 Collaboration

In addition to the COMPACT, Denbighshire County Council is involved in a number of sub-regional collaborations, mainly with Conwy and Flintshire. These include the following:

- Joint Local Service Board with Conwy
- Joint Local Safeguarding Children Board with Conwy
- Joint Procurement with Flintshire (currently developing a joint service)
- Joint Emergency Planning with Flintshire (currently developing into a regional service)
- Joint Emergency Duty Team (Social Services) with Flintshire and Wrexham
- Mental Health Partnership with Conwy (currently developing into a regional partnership)
- Procurement of Food Waste with Conwy and Flintshire
- Youth Offending Services with Conwy

Sub-regional collaborations are generally initiated by individual councils rather than the Welsh Government, whose approach has been to develop regional collaborations. These collaborations are working well, and the council will continue to look for opportunities where sub-regional collaboration can either improve the resilience of a service and/or save money.

However, there have been some setbacks with sub-regional collaboration, most notably the decision by both Denbighshire and Conwy not to pursue the merger of their Highways and Infrastructure Services. This resulted in the deletion of the joint Head of Highways and Infrastructure post. Denbighshire and Conwy also decided not to pursue further integration of their Public Protection Services.

Ironically, the decision not to pursue the merger of Highways and Infrastructure actually led to efficiency savings because Denbighshire decided to merge the Highways and the Environment Services, leading to immediate senior management savings and the potential for improved efficient use of resources within the council.