

<b>Report to</b>	Communities Scrutiny
<b>Date of meeting</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	Cllr Jason McLellan, Leader and Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation / Tony Ward, Corporate Director: Environment and Economy
<b>Head of Service</b>	Emlyn Jones, Head of Planning, Public Protection & Countryside Services
<b>Report author</b>	Tony Ward, Corporate Director: Environment and Economy
<b>Title</b>	Rhyl Regeneration Programme and Governance

## **1. What is the report about?**

1.1. This report is about the Rhyl Regeneration Programme and governance of the programme.

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

2.1. To examine the effectiveness of the Programme Board's work in delivering the regeneration programme to date.

2.2. To Identify any barriers or slippages and to formulate recommendations to try and address them and sustain the delivery of the programme to secure the regeneration of Rhyl to benefit the economy and the lives of the town's residents and the county in general.

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

3.1. That the Committee discuss the report and provide feedback, as required.

- 3.2. That the Committee confirm that they are satisfied that the necessary governance structures are in place to have effective oversight of regeneration work in Rhyl. Alternatively, to suggest what in addition the Committee would like to see.

## **4. Report details**

- 4.1. The Rhyl Regeneration Programme Board had responsibility for overseeing the strategic direction and delivery of the Rhyl Regeneration Programme for Denbighshire County Council, with a focus on the delivery of Regeneration schemes within the Town Centre on which Denbighshire leads.
- 4.2. The Programme Board therefore managed the Council's contribution to the delivery of the Town Centre Vision along with any related Council led regeneration projects in the town.
- 4.3. The task of the Programme Board was to drive forwards the regeneration in Rhyl through a coordinated approach to ensure effective delivery of existing projects, to identify gaps and opportunities and to drive forward new initiatives. It was also responsible for identifying projects and for acquiring and scheduling appropriate resource to deliver them.
- 4.4. Since the adoption of the 2022-27 Corporate Plan, there has been a rationalisation of specific Boards relating to Rhyl, and it has been agreed that we will work through the new Corporate Plan governance arrangements to delivery our over-arching ambitions for Rhyl. This is because the themes in our Corporate Plan match those WIMD factors that we'd like to address in Rhyl, giving us an opportunity to mainstream the work. Working via the Corporate Plan governance vehicles has the advantage of strong organisation, oversight, engagement, resource allocation, etc.
- 4.5. However, in order to preserve the focus on Rhyl – given that it is our biggest town and has high levels of inequality that we want to address – it has also been agreed that regular reports will be brought to Rhyl MAG and the Rhyl Reference Group providing commentary on progress against each of the Corporate Plan themes on a Rhyl basis (i.e. taking a place-based approach to the themes in our Corporate Plan). For example, Rhyl elements of a Housing Strategy, or updates on economic growth and regeneration on Rhyl will be tabled for discussion at the Rhyl MAG and the Rhyl Reference Group.

4.6. As the Corporate Plan Boards are strategic in nature, we have retained an officer working group who meet more regularly to discuss progress on projects; barriers to delivery; alignment of projects; and priorities for developing a future pipeline of projects. This group is chaired by the Corporate Director: Environment and Economy.

4.7. In recent years, the main funding for regeneration projects in Rhyl has been from Welsh Government. More recently, funding from UK Government has also become available in the form of Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and, Levelling Up Funding (LUF), and we hope that this may also contribute towards major regeneration projects in Rhyl in future.

4.8. The council has overseen the delivery of several Rhyl regeneration projects over the past 12-18 months, including:

- construction of the Queen's Market food hall and event venue
- public realm strategy and design guide
- green infrastructure project
- the purchase and/or demolition of several key eyesore sites
- transformation of 2-16 Aquarium Street (former Houses of Multiple Occupation).

4.9. The past 12-18 months has also seen the development (to various different stages) of several exciting projects that we would be looking to deliver as and when appropriate funding streams become available, for example:

- Promenade scheme (phase 1) to reconnect the top of the High Street to the beach \*
- Town Centre Gateway Project (pocket park) \*
- Town Centre Public Realm Project \*
- Queen's Market future phases (Outline Business Case for mid-range hotel development)

- Renovation and new build projects on Rhyl High Street to provide 10 apartments for Intermediate Rent and ground floor retail units (funding in place and work planned to start in early 2024)
- Redevelopment of the former Goldilocks salon in Queen Street to provide 6 units of one-bedroom apartments (site acquired and cleared)
- Redevelopment of 26 Wellington Rd (adjacent to former post office) to provide 2 residential units and commercial on the ground floor.

4.10. One recent development is the announcement of a provisional allocation (subject to a number of factors) of c.£20m from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) for the Vale of Clwyd. This was only announced on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023, so further discussions are required to fully understand the opportunities presented by this funding. However, it does appear to be the case that the funding has been provisionally allocated to deliver the programme of projects agreed at Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021 and submitted to UK Government for LUF funding in August 2022. The projects marked by an \* in the bullet points above were included in our LUF submission in August 2022, so it's fair to assume that this provisional funding allocation presents an opportunity to deliver these regeneration projects. We also have a governance structure in place to manage the delivery of the LUF, so this will provide further oversight of the Rhyl regeneration work up until April 2026 (the deadline for delivering the new provisional LUF allocation).

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

5.1. No decision is required from this report, but the regeneration of Rhyl remains a key part of our Corporate Plan. Elements of Rhyl regeneration are overseen by the Corporate Plan Boards, in particular the Prosperous Denbighshire Board and the Corporate Plan Housing & Homelessness Board.

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

6.1. Regeneration projects in Rhyl are generally not funded by Denbighshire, but they can place a strain on services in relation to the officer time required to both develop projects and manage delivery.

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

7.1. No wellbeing impact assessment was undertaken for this report.

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

8.1. Discussion have taken place with the Rhyl Member Area Group and Rhyl Reference Group.

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

9.1. The expectation would be that funding for Rhyl regeneration projects will come predominantly from external sources, including Welsh Government and UK Government, to ensure that the work does not place an unmanageable financial burden on the authority via increased borrowing debt and associated repayments. External funding often comes with a match funding requirement, so any new projects would need to be approved via the appropriate mechanisms, e.g., Capital Scrutiny Group, Cabinet, etc.

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

10.1. A risk register was developed to support the Rhyl Regeneration Programme, and those risk continue to be monitored as they are still relevant to the Rhyl regeneration work. Specific risk registers also exist for each of the Corporate Plan Boards.

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

11.1. This report does not require a decision.