

Report to	County Council
Date of meeting	July 8, 2025
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Julie Matthews / Gary Williams
Head of Service	Helen Vaughan-Evans, Head of Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets
Report author	Emma Horan, Strategic Planning and Performance Officer
Title	Council Performance Self-Assessment 2024 to 2025 and Performance Update Report October 2024 to March 2025

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report accompanies the council's Performance Self-Assessment for 2024 to 2025, providing our end of year analysis of achievements and challenges with our key performance objectives (i.e. our Corporate Plan themes), together with our October 2024 to March 2025 Performance Update Report¹

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 Regular reporting reflects our [values and principles](#). It is an essential monitoring requirement of the council's performance management methodology and our statutory duties in relation to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Equality Act 2010 and Wales Measure 2011, and our contributions to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We monitor our performance regularly, taking six monthly reports to Scrutiny and Cabinet, and annual reports to Governance and Audit Committee and County Council.

¹ Please note an update on the [Panel Performance Assessment action plan](#), approved by Council in February, will be provided in our next report, for the period April to September 2025, which will be published in the autumn.

- 2.2 Approval is sought on the content of the Performance Self-Assessment 2024 to 2025 (Appendix I) with a view to publishing and sharing it with relevant parties in line with our statutory duties².

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 County Council to note for information our six-monthly Performance Update Report October 2024 to March 2025 (Appendix II), the update on improvement activities previously updated (Appendix III) and Citizen Voice report (Appendix IV).
- 3.2 County Council notes feedback from Committees summarised at Appendix V.³
- 3.3 Subject to any agreed changes, County Council approve the Performance Self-Assessment 2024 to 2025 (Appendix I).

4. Report details

- 4.1 Appendix I presents our Executive Summary, which seeks to draw out the highlights of our performance against our objectives (i.e. our Corporate Plan themes that are also our Well-being and Equality Objectives) and the seven governance areas prescribed in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Executive Summary, we have summarised our five key achievements and five key challenges.
- 4.2 Appendix II is our six-monthly Performance Update Report (October 2024 to March 2025), which is our process for ongoing self-assessment and embodies all the evidence (internal and external) and analysis that seeks to answer the questions of 'How well are we doing', 'How do we know', and 'What and how can we do better'? It is the first performance report for our newly revised Corporate Plan performance management framework.⁴
- 4.3 Nine improvement actions have been identified through discussions about this report:

² As prescribed in Section 91, 10 (c) of [The Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#).

³ The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires the Council to consider recommendations for change from Governance and Audit Committee in turn and decide on acceptance or otherwise. Where a recommendation for change is not accepted, a rationale for why must be provided. Appendix V provides a summary of Governance and Audit Committees recommendations for change (if any) and response taken / proposed to be taken for Cabinet feedback.

⁴ Our performance management framework includes indicators that reflect the outcomes we aim to achieve. These often relate to long-term challenges - such as poverty, the economy, housing, or carbon emissions - where our influence is limited (e.g., housing waiting lists or business start-ups). Despite this, these outcomes remain central to our ambition to achieve the [Denbighshire We Want](#). Alongside this, we also monitor how effectively we deliver services that are within our control. For example, we track efforts to reduce poverty through homelessness prevention or to improve access to housing by building new council homes.

- I. Consider performance relating to the percentage of damaged roads and pavements made safe within target time (CAT1 - Category 1 defects dealt within timescale), which has fallen short of the 95% target time for some years, noting the recent announcement of additional funding by Welsh Government . The service continues to struggle with meeting the demands of the asset within the limited budgetary and staffing resources available, and a substantive discussion is needed about the prospects of improvement and what continuing poor performance is likely to mean given expected increased impacts of flooding, landslips and heat risks on road condition and community connectivity.
- II. Building on the communication briefings that took place at the start of 2025, the Council needs to improve its communication internally and externally with staff, residents, elected members, partners, businesses and regulators about its Transformation work.
- III. Ensure the mitigating actions in the cumulative impact assessment are delivered and provide an update to the Budget and Transformation Board on progress.
- IV. Review the improvement in completion of one-to-ones and identify the reasons for the remaining quarter of all eligible staff not having had a one-to-one over the last year. The focus of this improvement activity should be on encouraging more one-to-ones as an effective means to support staff and embed a positive culture that is focussed on valuing staff, diversity and promoting well-being.
- V. The whole Council, both elected members and officers, should consider how reduced or changing capacity will impact our commitments around service delivery and quality, especially where these may fall short of customer expectations, and agree mechanisms for better communicating that to stakeholders.
- VI. Noting the £250k pressure to fund delivery of the Climate and Nature Strategy as per the budget approved in February, the Council's Greener Board should examine the gap between current performance and our Net Carbon Zero by 2030 target, assess viable pathways to securing funds and assess our appetite for escalating action.
- VII. In line with the additional £500,000 being pledged to education to help tackle learners' well-being, attendance issues, behaviour problems and poverty, the Council should evaluate the effectiveness of current interventions aimed at reducing the gap in attainment and exclusion rates (between those eligible and ineligible for free school meals) and consider whether more targeted efforts are needed.
- VIII. Consider the Council's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards within our Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2024 to 2025.

- IX. Assess and cost alternative arrangements for meeting our statutory duties in relation to stakeholder feedback, currently met through the annual Stakeholder Survey, to improve confidence in data gathered.
- 4.4 Improvement actions identified through our six-monthly performance update reports are reported upon in subsequent reports. For ease, Appendix III brings together an update on all improvement activities generated since 2023.
- 4.5 Appendix IV presents a new Citizen Voice report, which attempts to triangulate a range of data to strengthen the Council's approach to performance management. Local authorities across Wales are being encouraged to incorporate more service user perspectives into decision-making, placing greater emphasis on outcomes of decisions on people's lives. This initiative follows a national report by Audit Wales, which calls for action in this area. While further work is needed to source appropriate data⁵, the report is a first attempt to bring together a range of different perspectives on our performance in addition to the annual Stakeholder Survey. Our intention is to publish this report [online](#) alongside our other performance reports. By bringing together responses to similar survey questions from different sources - such as tenant satisfaction surveys (positive) and stakeholder survey feedback (negative) on housing - we uncover a picture that is both interesting and complex. Our aim is to highlight stakeholder perspectives while contextualising them within actual performance data, some of which is benchmarked.
- 4.6 Appendix V contains a summary of recommended changes by Governance and Audit Committee (see footnote 3).

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

- 5.1 The Performance Self-Assessment includes an evaluation of the council's success in delivering against its Corporate Plan themes.

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

- 6.1 There is no additional cost associated with this report.

⁵ An improvement action in relation to this is proposed (see 4.3, ix) due to concerns raised by members that the survey approach used is not statistically reliable and findings may not represent majority opinions.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment and what changes have, or will be made to the project or approach as a result of the assessment?

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) is not required for this report. A WIA was undertaken on the Corporate Plan itself, which has been updated as part of the revision of the Corporate Plan, approved by [County Council](#) in February 2024.

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

8.1. The reports have been developed by the Strategic Planning Team, in consultation with council services. Discussion has taken place at a Cabinet and SLT Tranche Review (May 21), Cabinet Briefing (June 2), Governance and Audit Committee (June 11) and Performance Scrutiny (June 12) and Cabinet (June 24).⁶

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. No statement is required with this report.

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

10.1 Failure to publish our Self-Assessment would likely result in statutory recommendations from Audit Wales, with reputational implications. There is a risk of poor performance being reported out of context. On this basis, we have already shared the draft reports with the Communications Team.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Part 6, Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (c.1, s. 89).

11.2. Part 2, Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (s. 13).

11.3. The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 (s.16); and The Equality Act (Authorities subject to the Socio-economic Inequality Duty) (Wales) Regulations 2021.

⁶ Once approved, our Self-Assessment will be shared with parties as prescribed in Section 91, 10 (c) of [The Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#).