

# Public Document Pack

**Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr**  
Chief Officer (Governance)  
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



Contact Officer:  
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To: Cllr Teresa Carberry (Chair)

Councillors: Bill Crease, Paul Cunningham, Gladys Healey, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Ryan McKeown, Andrew Parkhurst, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Jason Shallcross and Arnold Woolley

**Co-opted Members:**

Lisa Allen, Lynn Bartlett and Wendy White

26 January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING**  
**EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, 1ST FEBRUARY, 2024 at 2.00 PM**

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum  
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the Lord Barry Jones Council Chamber, Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire or on a virtual basis.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. The live streaming will stop when any confidential items are considered. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

# A G E N D A

## 1 **APOLOGIES**

**Purpose:** To receive any apologies.

## 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

**Purpose:** To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

## 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 5 - 12)

**Purpose:** To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on the 30 November, 2023.

## 4 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING** (Pages 13 - 26)

Report of Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

**Purpose:** To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Education Youth

## 5 **COUNCIL FUND BUDGET 2024/25** (Pages 27 - 36)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Corporate Finance Manager - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure, Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement

**Purpose:** To review and comment on the cost pressures, proposed cost reductions, and associated risks.

## 6 **LEARNER OUTCOMES - GCSE AND A LEVEL RESULTS 2022/23** (Pages 37 - 46)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

**Purpose:** To provide the Committee with the GCSE and A-Level results across Flintshire from the summer 2023.

## 7 **REVISION OF POST 16 STRATEGY** (Pages 47 - 56)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

**Purpose:** To outline how the new national commission was developing.

**8 FEEDBACK FROM YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE PEER REVIEW (Pages 57 - 80)**

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

**Purpose:** To Provide Members with an overview of the outcomes from the recent peer review.

**9 COUNCIL PLAN 2023-24 MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORTING (Pages 81 - 96)**

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

**Purpose:** To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.

***Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours***

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## **EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **30 NOVEMBER 2023**

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Thursday 30 November 2023.

### **PRESENT: Councillor Teresa Carberry (Chair)**

Councillors: Bill Crease, Gladys Healey, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Andrew Parkhurst, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Jason Shallcross and Arnold Woolley

**CO-OPTEEES:** Lisa Allen, Lynne Bartlett and Wendy White

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Councillors: Bernie Attridge and Chrissy Gee attended as observers

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillors: Paul Cunningham, Ryan McKeown and Ian Roberts.

### **CONTRIBUTORS:**

Councillor Mared Eastwood (Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure); Councillor Christine Jones (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing); Councillor Dave Hughes (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy); Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement); Chief Officer (Education & Youth); Senior Manager (School Place Planning and Provision) and Senior Manager (Business Support Services)

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officers

## **34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

No declarations were received.

## **35. MINUTES**

14 September 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14 September 2023 were presented for approval.

The minutes of the meeting were approved, as moved and seconded by Councillors Bill Crease and Carolyn Preece.

19 October 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 October 2023 were presented for approval.

The minutes of the meeting were approved, as moved and seconded by Councillor Dave Mackie and Mrs Lynne Bartlett.

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 14 September and 19 October 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**36. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING**

In presenting the report, the Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator outlined the items listed on the Forward Work Programme which was attached at Appendix 1 and referred to the Youth Justice Peer Review which had been moved to the February meeting.

Referring to the Action Tracking report at Appendix 2 it was confirmed that the majority of the actions from the last meeting were completed. The Out of County report had been included on the Forward Work Programme for the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee with a request for a Workshop on Out of County Placements for new Members passed to the Democratic Services Manager. An update was provided on the request for a report on Retention and Recruitment.

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) suggested that the purpose for the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales Act item listed for the Joint Scrutiny meeting on 27 June be amended to reflect a whole overview of pre and post 16 Education.

Councillor Andrew Parkhurst asked why the "Tackling the Impact of Inequality on Education Outcomes" was still listed as an item to be scheduled. The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator agreed to take this as an action from the meeting to ensure that it was allocated to a meeting date.

Councillor David Mackie referred to his request at the last meeting for a list of professional learning courses offered by GwE and to the document which he had received saying that it was difficult to understand. The information that he had requested had been around:-

- What training was being offered to teachers in Flintshire;
- What training was being devised;
- What was the purpose of the training;
- How many people were expected to attend the training.

Councillor Mackie referred to the training information provided by GwE and felt that it would be helpful if more detail was included around what courses and training opportunities were made available for schools. He believed that a better understanding could then be made if an analysis of training in Flintshire schools could be compared with other Counties.

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) advised that the appendix that the Senior Manager (School Improvement) had sent Councillor Mackie was provided by GwE and outlined all of the professional training and support provided to Flintshire schools. It was also confirmed that a meeting had been arranged between Councillor Mackie, the Senior Manager (School Improvement) and Officers from GwE to enable a better understanding of the information that was being requested.

Councillor Mackie referred to the action from the last meeting which related to a report on demography and asked why it was not showing in the items to be scheduled. The Chief Officer explained that the information on the impacts of pupil demography would be included in budget reports however if Members required more information on this then a workshop could be arranged. Councillor Mackie wondered if a regular update report could be provided, similar to the information provided around school balances, as he felt it would be helpful. This was agreed by the Chief Officer.

Councillor Parkhurst referred to the condition grades within schools and to the information provided and asked as the data was collected in 2016/17 and this was re-assessed on a 5-year cycle, were there more schools now placed in Category C. In response the Senior Manager (School Place Planning and Provision) explained that information provided related to a point in time and that some improvements had been undertaken with the situations of some buildings improving. There was a delay because of Covid but the portfolio's technical team, together with the support of an external consultancy team commissioned by Welsh Government, were due to commence a full-scale review of the school network to enable up to date condition information to be provided.

Councillor Carolyn Preece asked if information on the new Inspection Framework from Estyn for Schools could be provided to the Committee as either a workshop for all members or a report to a future meeting. This was agreed.

In response to questions on the budget and a request for portfolio information to be included moving forward from Councillor Parkhurst, the Chief Officer agreed with the comments made saying that previously the portfolio budget figures had been included. A detailed overview was provided with regard to budget pressures, the use of grant funding and the risks for the portfolio. She added no officer suggestions were included as there was nowhere left to go to find savings and that the budgets were supporting statutory services for children and young people with no flexibility.

In response to questions on Out of County Placements and Residential Care Costs from Councillor Parkhurst, the Chief Officer explained that it was the objective of the portfolio to maintain as many learners as possible in their local schools and communities. The Senior Manager (School Inclusion) would be able to provide more detail when the Annual Report was presented to the Joint Committee meeting in June. The Chief Officer referred to the funding which was delegated to schools to support children who had identified with additional learning needs and the work undertaken by the Moderation Panel when determining whether a young person's needs were beyond the remit of the school. The funding was insufficient to support the growing number of young people presenting with complex needs and an overview of the rigorous processes around the allocation of that funding in consultation with Head Teachers was given. The Specialist provision was available in schools to assist children with needs

such as speech, language and moderate learning difficulties. There were, however, a number of children where the support of an external provider was required but the market was limited with the providers holding all the cards and setting the rates. It was explained that the authority could become embroiled in a bidding war when there were so few places available, which came with significant costs for education and residential care. Welsh Government were implementing a policy where the provision of these places should be on a not-for-profit basis which had implications for provisions in Wales. The portfolio did what it could with the resources available.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services agreed saying that the out of county budget was challenging with the market very competitive when trying to place a child with an appropriate provider. This was a challenge for all authorities in Wales in a very competitive market.

Councillor Dave Mackie felt there was currently a budget pressure for the revenue funding for an extra 20 places in special provision and it could be argued that the question asked by Councillor Parkhurst was in the process of being satisfied as this provision was already built and that the money added into the budget was for the staff to run that provision. He asked if the out of county budget was moved to the Council's own provision would it be possible to get a better return on the money. Councillor Parkhurst confirmed that the amount was so great but the needs of the children should not be lost sight of. This was about spending the money in the best way to look after the children but also to get the best value for our residents.

The Chief Officer confirmed that this was what the Portfolios were trying to achieve, and she referred to reports taken to the joint Committee which outlined a range of strategies to increase the Council's in house provision. She referred to the work undertaken by Children's Services, the new Children's home facilities, the increased capacity at the specialist primary school and enhancing the resource provision, which had been achieved at Flint High School and the Pupil Referral Unit. The Portfolios were constantly looking at ways to get better value for money by delivering that provision in house, using grant funding from WG when available, to expand that provision to support more children locally. Information was provided on the rigorous monitoring process around the out of county budget with monthly meetings held which included the Principal Accountants, herself and the Chief Officer for Social Services, the Senior Manager (Children's Services), the Senior Manager (Inclusion & Progression). An overview of the report provided by the Principal Accountant was given and it was confirmed that he also attended the moderation meetings held by the multi-agency professionals and that he tracked every individual learner. This information fed into the monthly budget monitoring reports.

Councillor Bill Crease felt that everyone wanted the best outcomes for these young people, but the problem was the Authority had to compete in an imperfect market. He felt that the only way to achieve this was to compete and it was very important that time, effort and money was committed to ensuring the provision was available in Flintshire.

Councillor Gladys Healey agreed with all the comments and hoped that Flintshire was able to establish its own provision and called on Welsh Government to provide the resources to enable the Council to do this.



The Chair agreed saying that there was a general consensus that we wanted our children to remain in Flintshire but that this was not possible at this time.

The Chief Officer referred to the Moderation Panel saying that it was a significant multi agency Panel with representatives from every department in Education, Health and the Finance Team. Every case was looked at in detail with a significant amount of evidence which had to be submitted and reviewed to ensure the process was applied equitably and consistently when difficult decisions had to be made. She reassured members that the Panel were constantly trying to be creative using grant funding wherever possible, utilising resource provision and planning for the next round of Sustainable Learning Communities Funding. She referred to the WG funding for schools and explained the two specialist schools in Flintshire were full and she was heartened to hear the comments today around supporting children locally. Because of the currently financial situation every programme that was proposed came with a cost pressure to the Council because of the levels of intervention rates from WG. It was how this could be done as efficiently, effectively and what could be delivered locally.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Carolyn Preece and seconded by Councillor Dave Mackie.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the progress made in completing the outstanding actions be noted.

**37. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING UPDATE**

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) introduced Jennie Williams, the Senior Manager, (School Planning and Provision) to committee and outlined the areas of work which she covered.

In presenting the report the Senior Manager (School Planning and Provision) highlighted the progress which had been made with regard to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, previously referred to as the School Modernisation Programme. The last update was presented to committee in February 2022 and this report highlighted the progress made in a number of areas and included information on the challenges and pressures which were being faced. The Senior Manager provided information on the grant funding which had been made available and the small team which were tasked to deliver this. She then highlighted some key points within the report and provided an update on the Childcare Programme and the Ysgol Croes Atti site which would be the second net zero carbon school and first new build Welsh Medium school. An update on the 3 to 16 Campus at Mynydd Isa was provided which included information on the excellent social value team and the impacts it was making within the community and wider school network. The Senior Manager

confirmed that the portfolio had executed the statutory proposals to increase capacity in Drury and Penyffordd which were completed in December 2022 and that the next stage of extensions and refurbishment had commenced. Information was then provided on the engagement process for the Saltney and Broughton Area Review which had been completed and would be presented to Cabinet. The Senior Manager then provided an update on the Universal Primary Free School Meals Grant which was progressing well and this had enabled some resource and refurbishment changes to be made in primary schools. Referring to Additional Learning Needs (ALN), the Senior Manager confirmed that capital grant funding of £2m had been received and it was confirmed that some money had been directed to the shared Hydro Pool used by the Special Schools and other learners. Work was being undertaken to increase the capacity for learners who required ALN support. The Senior Manager confirmed that the service had accessed the Community Facility Grant and Sports Wales Grants which had enabled works to be undertaken on school sites to support community access of those facilities.

Councillor Bill Crease referred to the Saltney Broughton Area Review and St David's High School and raised a number of questions around the public consultation, the condition survey and funding for maintenance at the school. He also asked if any Senior Officers or Members had attended the school this year to see what was happening there.

In response, the Senior Manager recognised that this review had taken some time to progress as there were complex circumstances around the school site and flooding in this area. An update would be provided to Cabinet and the Committee with regard to the outcomes of the engagement process. She explained that she and other officers had visited the school as there had been some significant repairs and maintenance issues which were not flagged with the authority until fairly recently. As soon as the team were made aware they had visited and enabled some significant investment to be made to resolve them and improve the heating issues at the school. There were concerns with regard to demographics with learners bypassing the school with a range of responses received around why this was happening. The information would need to be considered when a decision was made as to what was best for the area.

Councillor Crease said the flooding issues were not a concern when the previous proposed plans to build on the site were made. Referring to demographics, he understood the numbers were increasing in the school and that the Local Development Plan was enabling a significant amount of house building within 2 or 3 miles of the school. In response, the Senior Manager explained technical work had been undertaken with regard to TAN 15 which confirmed that the flooding as a result of global warming had ramped up changes in areas which would have been developed previously. This included Saltney and limited the potential options for the area. Consideration had been given to demographics and birth rate information from 2020 which posed a significant drop which would flow through the school systems. There were sufficient learners in the Saltney area which could make the school sustainable but currently the numbers were not where they needed to be. This was a concern.

Councillor Dave Mackie referred to the issues of flooding saying that there were very few areas in Flintshire which were not affected by it and that it was the view of the Planning department that these sites had to be built on at some stage. He said the

previous discussions and delays concerning Saltney had resulted in the money being moved to the Mynydd Isa site. With regard to the consultation with local residents he assumed that prior to the previous development around the Saltney site, that a public consultation was undertaken. He asked what the outcome of that consultation had been and presumed the outcome enabled the progression of the Saltney development to where a site was allocated. He also referred to the Holywell High School development where one of the arguments was that a high school was needed in that area. There were similar issues with regard to pupil demographics at that site and he reported on a conversation with the Chief Education Officer at the time who said that the new school could just be the answer that parents needed. Referring to local developments at the Airfields and the two developments within Hawarden, there could be a situation when the current LDP ends in 2035 that 300 high school places could be required in that part of the county. He understood the school allocation policy allowed for the catchment areas to move depending upon demand and this was a pressure within the Hawarden area.

In response the Senior Manager commented that forecasting on demographics was difficult and reported on the areas in Penyffordd and Hawarden which were being monitored. In Hawarden it was explained that cohorts were coming into the school even though it was not in their catchment area. The situation was continually monitored especially around the shifts and PLASC (the electronic collection of pupil and school level data provided by all maintained sector primary, middle, secondary, nursery and special schools) data.

Councillor Mackie referred to the Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) rollout and understood that some schools were having difficulties because children were not eating their meals quickly enough to enable another group to have their meals. The Senior Manager reported on the audits carried out in schools with regard to their kitchen facilities and it was recognised that this did have impacts on some schools in terms of sittings. A survey was undertaken with parents, carers, learners and schools to assess the impact and ascertain if there were significant problems. She was not aware of any issues but would like to speak to Councillor Mackie outside of the meeting to get more information to enable this to be investigated. The roll out had been successful for learners to have this meal within the primary sector.

Councillor Mackie also referred to the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) saying that one of the problems which had been highlighted was that the two schemes were running alongside each other which had confused parents. He asked if Welsh Government (WG) were aware of these issues and the impacts that the new curriculum, budget pressures and ALN were having on schools with them all coming in at the same time. In response the Chief Officer commented that this particular report referred only to the Capital Programme which included some provision for Additional Learning Needs provision, not the changes to ALN legislation which Cllr Mackie was referring to. She explained that members would receive an update on the challenges of the implementation of the new ALN legislation, and the two systems being referred to by Cllr Mackie in the ALN report which would be presented at the joint committee in June. She was proud of the way that the team had supported schools with legal and complex matters which were new for everyone including officer teams. There had been a joint effort with Head Teachers and Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators to prepare schools for the implementation. She explained that she was Chair of the National

Group of Education Directors, and the Senior Manager (Inclusion and Progression) was the Vice Chair of the National Implementation Group for ALN. Concerns were raised with Welsh Government around the pace of change and the number of initiatives that schools had to manage and through conversations with other authorities she felt that Flintshire had done incredibly well supporting schools and that they had received a positive response from Estyn's Local Area Link Inspector with regard to this.

Councillor Jason Shallcross reflected on his time as a pupil at St David's School and said that parents had the choice on whether to send their child to Hawarden and the two high schools across the border. He said that looking forward as there were no future plans to build in Saltney or Broughton and when he talked to residents, he told them that if the school was not used it would be lost.

In response to further comments by Councillor Crease, the Chief Officer confirmed that they were working through options and the purpose of this early informal engagement process with the school and local community in Saltney was to have that discussion as everyone wanted the best outcome for all learners and to find a sustainable affordable model. Once the responses had been received and collated, they would be reported to the Committee with public information being made available shortly as Welsh Government were expecting the authority to outline its priorities for the next phase of the Sustainable Learning Communities by March 2024.

The recommendation, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Bill Crease and seconded by Councillor Jason Shallcross.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee note the contents of the report and progress of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

**38. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.37 pm)

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**Chair**



## EDUCATION YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> February, 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
<b>Report Author</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work programme of the Committee of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Education Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The report also shows actions arising from previous meetings of the Education Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. Any outstanding actions will be continued to be reported to the Committee as shown in Appendix 2.

### RECOMMENDATION

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.
3	That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING</b>
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?</li><li>2. Is it an area of major change or risk?</li><li>3. Are there issues of concern in performance?</li><li>4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?</li><li>5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?</li><li>6. Is the issue of Public or Member concern?</li></ol>
1.03	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. Following a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committees, as 'Matters Arising' was not an item which can feature on an agenda.
1.04	It was suggested that the 'Action tracking' approach be trialled for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Following a successful trial, it was agreed to extend the approach to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
1.05	The Action Tracking details including an update on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme Appendix 2 – Action Tracking for the Education Youth & Culture OSC.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee as identified in Appendix 2.  <b>Contact Officer:</b> Ceri Shotton Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702305 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk">ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<b>Improvement Plan:</b> the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan.

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**CURRENT FWP**

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible / Contact Officer
<p><b>Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2024</b></p> <p><b>2.00pm</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 17</p>	<p><b>Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan</b></p>	<p>To update on how the Council is meeting the requirements of the Welsh Government Anti-racist Wales Action Plan in line with the development of the new Curriculum for Wales.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Senior Manager for School Improvement</p>
	<p><b>Tackling the Impact of Inequality on Education Outcomes</b></p>	<p>To provide an update on how the Education &amp; Youth Portfolio support schools to tackle the impact of inequality. To also provide an update on the 'Ask Ceri' resource and what impact this was having following its re-launch.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Senior Manager for School Improvement</p>
	<p><b>Emergency Planning</b></p>	<p>To provide information around emergency planning and response, local EMRT arrangements, and the response to possible bus service withdrawal.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Emergency Planning Officer</p>
<p><b>Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2024</b></p> <p><b>2.00pm</b></p>	<p><b>Attendance and Exclusions</b></p>	<p>To provide Members with an overview of school attendance and exclusions and the role of the Portfolio's support services in this area. The Home-Schooling Officer to also be invited to the meeting to outline the work and support being provided.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth), and Senior Manager Inclusion Services</p>

	<p><b>Estyn Inspection Framework</b></p>	<p>To provide information on the new Inspection Framework for Schools from Estyn.</p>	<p>Information Sharing</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth),</p>
	<p><b>Revised Local Government Inspection Framework</b></p>	<p>To provide information on the revised Local Government Inspection Framework.</p>	<p>Information Sharing</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth),</p>
<p><b>Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2024</b></p> <p><b>Joint meeting with S&amp;HC OSC - 2.00pm</b></p> <p>Page 18</p>	<p><b>Safeguarding in Education including Internet Safety and Social Media</b></p>	<p>To provide an update on the discharge of statutory safeguarding duties in schools and the Education portfolio. To include information on Relationship and Sexual Education and how this was contributing to reducing harm.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth) and Healthy Schools Practitioner</p>
	<p><b>Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018</b></p>	<p>To outline the approach to the identification and commissioning of education for Flintshire young people.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Senior Manager – Inclusion &amp; Progression</p>
	<p><b>Children Looked After in Flintshire</b></p>	<p>To provide an update on the provision for Looked After Children. And to provide an update on the challenges, positive working and how young people were supported through the pilot to provide funding directly to looked after children leaving care.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Senior Manager – Inclusion &amp; Progression</p>

	<b>Social Media and Internet Safety</b>	To provide Members with an update on the Portfolio’s Social Media and Internet Safety policy and provision.	Assurance Monitoring	Learning Adviser - Health, Well-being and Safeguarding
<b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2024</b>  <b>2.0pm</b>	<b>Council Plan 2023-24 Year-End Performance</b>	To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
<b>September/ October 2024</b>  <b>Date to be confirmed</b>	<b>School Reserves Year Ending 31 March 2023 and Demographics</b>	To provide the Committee with details of the closing balances held by Flintshire schools at the end of the financial year and information on changes in demographics.	Assurance Monitoring	Strategic Finance Manager (Schools)

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**INFORMATION REPORTS/BRIEFING PAPERS TO BE CIRCULATED TO THE COMMITTEE**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Purpose of information report</b>	<b>Month</b>
Health & Safety in Schools	Information report on accidents during the academic year and the actions taken to support schools in achieving healthy and safe environment.	December
Parking Outside Schools	To provide information from the Highways Team on legislation around parking outside schools and the mechanism in place for joint working with the Police and Schools.	-
Policies for dealing with bullying in schools	To provide information on School Policies for dealing with instances of bullying.	-

**Items to be scheduled**

- Recycling School Uniforms – **Referred to the Committee from the Environment & Economy OSC.**
- Healthy Schools Scheme and Healthy & Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS) – That the Committee be advised / consulted on the aims & objectives when the scheme is relaunched – **suggested at July 2023 meeting**
- Consultation on Member Role Descriptions - To consult Members on the draft role descriptions as provided in the revised draft Model Constitution – **moved from October, 2023 to be allocated to a new meeting date**
- Leeswood Transition Club – To receive a fuller report on the success of the scheme – **suggested at October meeting**

**REGULAR ITEMS**

Page	Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
22	February/ March	<b>School Modernisation</b>	To update Members on the progress made with School Modernisation.	Senior Manager School Planning & Provision
	<b>May</b>	<b>Attendance &amp; Exclusions</b>	To provide Members with an overview of school attendance and exclusions and the role of the Portfolio's support services in this area.	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
	<b>September</b>	<b>Self-evaluation on education services &amp; learner outcomes</b>	To update Members on overall service performance including Learner Outcomes.	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
	<b>June</b>	<b>Additional Learning Needs</b>	To update members on the implementation of national ALN reforms in schools and the role of the Portfolio's support services in this area.	Senior Manager – Inclusion & Progression

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
September	<b>Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)</b>	To receive an update on progress with the development of the regional school effectiveness and improvement service, to include a presentation from the Chief Officer of GwE.	Chief Officer (Education & Youth) & GwE Senior Officers
September	<b>School Balances</b>	To provide the Committee with details of the closing balances held by Flintshire schools at the end of the financial year.	Finance Manager
Annually	<b>Learning from the School Performance Monitoring Group (SPMG)</b>	To receive the annual report on progress and learning from the SPMG.	Senior Manager – School Improvement;
Annually	<b>Social Media &amp; Internet Safety - now part of Safeguarding Report to the Joint Scrutiny Committee</b>	To receive an annual report assurance/monitoring.	Healthy Schools Practitioner

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**ACTION TRACKING FOR THE EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken	Timescale
19.10.2023	4. Budget 2024/25 – Stage 2	As shown in recommendation (e) that a report on issues around recruitment and retention be added to the FWP. It was explained that this was a wider issue affecting all portfolio's, therefore consideration would need to be given on how this could be taken forward.	Ceri Shotton		
19.10.2023	4. Budget 2024/25 – Stage 2	Cllr Andrew Parkhurst referred to the increase in demand and complexity of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) and asked whether the reduction in the need for external placements could reduce the cost estimated for 2025/26. Liz Thomas explained that the budget pressure shown for 2025/26 was a gross position of increasing costs of staff and resources needed at Plas Derwen. She said that she would speak to Jeanette Rock following the meeting around what information on estimates could be provided to the Committee following the meeting.	Jeanette Rock	Information circulated to Members of the Committee on 25.01.24	Completed.
30.11.2023	4. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Claire Homard suggested that the purpose for the Additional Learning Needs item listed for the Joint Scrutiny meeting on 27 <sup>th</sup> June be amended to	Ceri Shotton	Purpose of report amended on FWP.	Completed

		reflect a whole overview of pre and post 16 education.			
30.11.2023	4. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Cllr Andrew Parkhurst asked why the Tackling the Impact of Inequality of Education Outcomes was still listed as an item to be scheduled. It was agreed that this would be reviewed following the meeting in order for a report to be allocated to a meeting date.	Claire Homard / Ceri Shotton	Report added to FWP to be submitted to the Committee meeting scheduled for 21.03.2024	Completed
30.11.2023	4. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	<p>Cllr David Mackie referred to the professional learning data that had been circulated to the Committee following the meeting. He said that this had not provided the information he had requested which had been around:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What training was being offered to teachers in Flintshire;</li> <li>• What training is being devised;</li> <li>• What was the purpose of the training;</li> <li>• How many people are expected to attend the training.</li> </ul> <p>Claire Homard advised that a meeting was being arranged for Cllr Mackie with Vicky Barlow and officers from GwE to better understand the information being requested.</p>	Ceri Shotton / Vicky Barlow	Meeting held between Cllr Mackie, Vicky Barlow and GwE officers on 14 <sup>th</sup> December, 2023.	Completed.



## ACTION TRACKING

## APPENDIX 2

30.11.2023	4. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Cllr Dave Mackie referred to the action relating to a report on Demography being added to the FWP and highlighted that it was not showing in the FWP. Claire Homard explained that information on demography would be included in budget reports and that a workshop could be held for Members if further information was required. It was suggested that the Committee receive a regular report on Demography, the same way it receives information around school balances.	Jennie Williams / Ceri Shotton	Information to be included in Annual School Balances report to be presented to the Committee in September/October. FWP amended to reflect this.	Completed.
30.11.2023	4. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Cllr Carolyn Preece asked if information on the new Inspection Framework for Schools from Estyn could be provided to the Committee at a workshop or as a report to a future meeting.	Claire Homard / Ceri Shotton	Report added to FWP to be submitted to the Committee meeting scheduled for 30.05.2024	Completed

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## EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday, 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Council Fund Budget 2024/25
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure  Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value & Procurement
<b>Report Author</b>	Corporate Finance Manager and Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From last summer onwards members have received regular updates on the Council's challenging budget position for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Welsh Local Government Provisional Settlement was announced on 20 December 2023 as planned with responses to the consultation on the settlement invited by the deadline of 2 February 2024. A summary of the key headlines were set out in a report to Cabinet on 16 January which also updated on the 'remaining gap' of £12.946m which the Council will need to bridge to enable it to set a legal and balanced budget.

As a result of this position, all Portfolios were asked to revisit their cost base to re-look at potential ways of reducing budgets or removing cost pressures to contribute more to meeting the remaining gap.

The purpose of this report is to provide details of additional proposals for the Education and Youth Portfolio.

The report also updates on the current proposals for school budgets.

The Committee is invited to review and comment on the cost pressures, proposed cost reductions, and associated risks.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
1	Review and comment on the Education and Youth portfolio's options to reduce budgets.
2	Review and comment on the proposals for the delegated schools' budget.

## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE BUDGET POSITION 2024/25																								
1.01	From last summer onwards members have received regular updates on the Council's challenging budget position for the 2024/25 financial year.																								
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1.03	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide details of additional proposals for the Education and Youth Portfolio that will go towards meeting the gap to enable the Council to set a legal and balanced budget.</p> <p>The report also updates on the current proposals for School budgets.</p>																								
1.04	<p><b>Education and Youth – Proposals for budget reductions</b></p> <p>These are set out in the paragraphs which follow.</p>																								
1.05	<p><b><u>Table 1: Education and Youth – Budget Reductions</u></b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Budget Reduction Proposals and New Pressure Identified</th> <th>£m</th> <th>RAG</th> <th>Note</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>GwE Reduction in contribution</td> <td>0.099</td> <td>G</td> <td>1.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>School Improvement – Early Entitlement Reduced Numbers</td> <td>0.075</td> <td>G</td> <td>2.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>School Improvement – Adult Community Learning</td> <td>0.010</td> <td>G</td> <td>3.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Youth Services – Building - Asset transfer of some buildings</td> <td>0.032</td> <td>A</td> <td>4.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Support Review</td> <td>0.032</td> <td>G</td> <td>5.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Budget Reduction Proposals and New Pressure Identified	£m	RAG	Note	GwE Reduction in contribution	0.099	G	1.	School Improvement – Early Entitlement Reduced Numbers	0.075	G	2.	School Improvement – Adult Community Learning	0.010	G	3.	Youth Services – Building - Asset transfer of some buildings	0.032	A	4.	Business Support Review	0.032	G	5.
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Business Support Review	0.032	G	5.																						

School Planning and Provision – Temporary Classrooms	0.010	G	6.
School Planning and Provision – Transition Funding	0.010	G	7.
Inclusion and Progression – Contribution towards a PEP Caseworker	0.020	G	8.
Additional capacity for supporting schools with Safeguarding	0.015	G	9.
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.303</b>		

**Notes:**

**1. GwE Reduction in contribution (£0.099m)**

Reduction of 10% in relation to our contribution to GwE, the regional school improvement service.

**2. School Improvement – Early Entitlement Reduced Numbers (£0.075m)**

Reduced numbers of pupils accessing the Early Entitlement provision. The proposed budget reduction has been calculated based on actual numbers accessing Early Entitlement in 2023/24, however, if demand were to increase or grant funding is reduced, this could result in a future pressure.

**3. School Improvement – Adult Community Learning (£0.010m)**

Reduction in core budget for Adult Community Learning and utilisation of grant to meet any additional requirements. If additional grant funding does not materialise, service delivery will be adjusted in line with the available budget.

**4. Youth Services – Building – Asset transfer of some buildings (£0.032m)**

Asset Transfer of buildings within the Youth Service which includes the transfer of responsibility and running costs of the buildings at Penyffordd and Saltney and hire back of the space to continue the delivery of Youth services in these areas.

**5. Business Support Review (£0.032m)**

Rollout of Access Management Information System will allow the release of one post from the Business Support team.

**6. School Planning and Provision – Temporary Classrooms (£0.010m)**

Reduction in expenditure on temporary classrooms due to the ending of leases – risks remain around emergency requirements for temporary classrooms.

**7. School Planning and Provision – Transition Funding (£0.010m)**

Reduction in the Transition Funding budget which relates to project-based expenditure and therefore costs will be carefully managed in line with the budget reduction.

**8. Inclusion and Progression – Contribution towards a PEP Caseworker (£0.020m)**

A provision had been made within the Inclusion & Progression budget to contribute towards a PEP (Personal Education Plan) Caseworker – this post has never been filled and therefore the contribution can be released from the budget. The post would have supported wider access to intervention for children who are looked after from educational services and lead to improved outcomes.

**9. Additional capacity for supporting schools with Safeguarding (£0.015m)**

This is a reduction in the pressure previously submitted, to increase the base budget available for the Safeguarding element of the Health, Wellbeing & Safeguarding Post from 0.5 FTE to 1 FTE. Upon review, this pressure can be reduced to 0.3 FTE, taking the post to 0.8 FTE in the base budget.

**1.08 Schools’ Budget – Cost pressures and proposals for budget reductions**

These are set out in the paragraphs which follow.

**1.09 Table 2: Schools Budget – Cost Pressures**

<b>Cost Pressure Title</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>Note</b>
NJC Pay Award April 2023 – Est. shortfall in base	1.033	1.
NJC Pay Award Estimate – 2024/25	1.718	2.
Teachers Pay Award Sept 2022 – Shortfall in base	1.152	3.
Teachers Pay Award Sept 2023 – April to Aug 2024	1.671	4.
Teachers Pay Award Sept 2024 Estimate – Sept 2024 to March 2025	2.472	5.
Management of Specialist Foundation Provision	0.105	6.
Specialist Primary – Revenue costs of 2 additional classrooms	0.218	7.
Free School Meals (Term Time)	0.615	8.
Transitional Rate Relief (Schools element)	0.065	9.
NDR Multiplier	0.082	10.
New Pressure – Inclusion and Progression Specialist Mobile Classroom Provision	0.167	11.
<b>Total Cost Pressures</b>	<b>9.298</b>	

**Notes:**

**1. NJC Pay Award April 2023 (£1.033m)**

The current budget (2023/24) contained an estimate of the costs of the in-year NJC pay award from April 2023 for schools at 5%. The final offer from the employers was a flat rate of £1,925 on all scale points which was higher than what was included in the budget. The pressure reflects the recurring shortfall in the base budget affecting 2024/25.

**2. NJC Pay Award estimate 2024/25 (£1.718m)**

An estimate of the costs of the April 2024 NJC pay award for schools currently calculated at 5%.

**3. Teachers Pay Award Sept 2022 (£1.152m)**

An estimate of the costs of the teachers' pay award from September 2022 for schools was included in the current budget for 2023/24 at 5%. The Minister for Education made an amendment to pay for teachers in Wales in March 2023 (after budgets had been set) which increased the recurring element of the September 2022 pay awards to 6.5% from the 5%. The pressure reflects the recurring shortfall of 1.5% in the base budget.

**4. Teachers Pay Award Sept 2023 – April to August 2023 (£1.671m)**

The pressure reflects the costs of the September 2023 5% pay award in the new financial year from April – August 2024.

**5. Teachers Pay Award Sept 2024 Estimate – September 2024 to March 2025 (£2.472m)**

An estimate of the costs of the September 2024 pay award for teachers calculated at 5%. This will have a part year effect on the 2024/25 financial year from September 2024 to March 2025.

**6. Management of Specialist Foundation Provision (£0.105m)**

During the recent Estyn inspection of Plas Derwen concerns were raised about the suitability of the management of specialist foundation provision which is where responsibility currently resides. Options have been considered and the preferred option is to transfer responsibility for management of provision from Plas Derwen to a specialist setting the specialist primary school, Ysgol Pen Coch and negotiations have been initiated with the school.

**7. Specialist Primary – Revenue costs of 2 additional classrooms (£0.218m 2024/25 and £0.156m 2025/26)**

The number of pupils requiring education in our specialist schools continues to grow. The primary school, Ysgol Pen Coch is full, and pupils are being educated in mainstream settings in resources but would be better placed in our specialist schools to meet their needs. WG capital grant has been received to

fund works linked with additional learning needs and that enables 2 additional modular classrooms to be built at the school, increasing its capacity by 20 learners. The pressure relates to the revenue costs associated with increasing the number of pupils at the school over the academic year 2024/25 which crosses over both financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26.

**8. Free School Meals Term Time - £0.615m**

Pressure in relation to the price charged per meal and the increased uptake of eFSM.

**9. Transitional Rate Relief - £0.065m**

Withdrawal of NDR Transitional Rate Relief – schools’ element.

**10. NDR Multiplier - £0.082m**

This reflects the increase in NDR charges to schools based on the change in the NDR multiplier rate.

**11. New Pressure – Inclusion and Progression Specialist Mobile Classroom Provision (£0.167m)**

This is a new pressure, relating to the revenue costs associated with the provision of temporary classroom space to create additional capacity in our Specialist schools from September 2024, to make provision for children who are currently waiting for access to specialist provision or require this from September 2024. The full year cost of this will need to be factored into the 2025/26 budget. Risks remain around the cost of this pressure, due to the ever-increasing demand for Specialist provision.

1.10

**Schools Delegated Budget – Budget Reductions**

Ensuring our learners receive the highest standards of education in our schools has always, and continues to be, a priority for the Council. The Council has always sought to protect front line education services (schools’ budget) as far as possible.

The schools’ budget is the largest budget in the Council. The schools delegated budget was reduced by 3% in setting the 2023/24 budget (after fully funding costs pressures for pay and energy inflation and demographic increases). Given the scale of the challenge in being able to set a balanced budget again in 2024/25 a further reduction of 3% is proposed.

**Table 3: Schools Delegated Budget – Budget Reductions**

<b>School Budget Reduction Title</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>Note</b>
Energy Reductions	-0.600	1.
Demography	-0.675	2.
Pension Contribution Reduction	-0.432	3.
Inclusion and Progression – Management of Specialist Foundation Provision	-0.105	4.



Inclusion and Progression – Specialist Primary additional capacity	-0.218	5.
<b>Revised net uplift for Schools</b>	<b>7.268</b>	
Reduction to Delegated budget (3%)	-3.273	6.
<b>Total Increase for Schools</b>	<b>3.995</b>	

**Notes:**

**1. Energy Reductions (£0.600m)**

Reduction in energy budgets for schools, based on the actual energy charges being incurred in 2023/24.

**2. Demography (£0.675m)**

A budget reduction based on falling pupil numbers across all sectors, based on September 2023 numbers on-roll data.

**3. Pension Contribution Reduction (£0.432m)**

This budget reduction is reflective of the impact on schools of the reduction in the Local Government Pension Scheme employers' contribution rate.

**4. Inclusion and Progression – Management of Specialist Foundation Provision (£0.105m)**

Delay of pressure in respect of the relocation of the management responsibility for the Specialist Foundation Provision at Canolfan Enfys from Ysgol Plas Derwen to Ysgol Pen Coch, due to a delay in commencing the statutory notice process to expand the capacity at Ysgol Pen Coch.

**5. Inclusion and Progression – Specialist Primary additional capacity (£0.218m)**

Delay of pressure in respect of additional capacity at the Specialist Primary school, Ysgol Pen Coch, due to challenges around the site development in relation to a modular building.

**6. Reduction to Delegated Schools Budget (£3.273m)**

This has been calculated based on a 3% reduction to schools delegated budgets, following the inclusion of the identified pressures and budget reductions for schools.

1.11

**Ongoing Risks**

A number of ongoing risks, outlined below, are being monitored and given further consideration which may change the additional budget forecast requirement further.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reliance on WG grant funding – ALN, Specialist Provision and EOTAS.</b> The Inclusion and Progression service has seen significant increases in demand and complexity for Additional Learning Needs, Specialist Provision and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) which is currently being further supported by additional Welsh Government grant. There are risks relating to the continuation of grant funding into 2024/25 which need to be kept under review. The service is doing everything it can to mitigate the increase in demand such as increasing in-house provision where possible. However should the grant reduce without notice from Welsh Government, steps being currently taken to mitigate increase in demand may not have been in place long enough to avoid the need to include a budget pressure for 2024/25.</li> <li>• <b>Increase in the cost of employer teachers’ pension contributions.</b> It is anticipated that employer teacher pension contributions will increase by 5% from April 2024 which would be a significant estimated cost pressure of around £3m. It is anticipated that the costs will be fully funded by UK Government although Welsh Government are seeking formal confirmation.</li> </ul>								
1.12	<p><b>Out of County Placements</b></p> <p>The position on Out of County placements remains an ongoing risk and the projected overspend in the current financial year is now £1.603m. An amount of £0.500m is included in the current forecast which will need to be reviewed as part of final budget setting.</p>								
1.13	<p><b>Budget Timeline</b></p> <p>An outline of the local budget timeline at this stage is set out in the table below:</p> <p><b><u>Table 4: Budget Timeline</u></b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="288 1379 1353 1547"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Event</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 to 9 February 2024</td> <td>Overview and Scrutiny Committees</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20 February 2024</td> <td>Cabinet and Council – Final Budget Setting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27 February 2024</td> <td>WG Final Budget/Settlement</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Event	1 to 9 February 2024	Overview and Scrutiny Committees	20 February 2024	Cabinet and Council – Final Budget Setting	27 February 2024	WG Final Budget/Settlement
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27 February 2024	WG Final Budget/Settlement								

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	<p><b>Revenue:</b> the revenue implications for the 2024/25 budget are set out in the report.</p> <p><b>Capital:</b> there are no new implications for the approved capital programme for either the current financial year or for future financial years – the capital programme will be subject to a separate report</p>

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet</li> <li>• Member Budget Briefings July and October 2023</li> <li>• Specific Overview and Scrutiny Committees</li> <li>• Corporate Resource Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings</li> <li>• Meeting with Headteachers and Chairs of Governors Jan 24</li> </ul>

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	As set out in the report.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	None.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTFS and Budget 2024/25 Cabinet Report July 2023</li> <li>• MTFS and Budget 2024/25 Cabinet Report September 2023</li> <li>• Member Briefing Slides</li> <li>• Cabinet Report December 2023</li> <li>• Cabinet Report January 2024</li> <li>• Member Briefings January 2024</li> <li>• School Forums 2023/24</li> </ul>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS):</b> a written strategy which gives a forecast of the financial resources which will be available to a Council for a given period and sets out plans for how best to deploy those resources to meet its priorities, duties and obligations.</p> <p><b>Revenue:</b> a term used to describe the day to day costs of running Council services and income deriving from those services. It also includes charges for the repayment of debt, including interest, and may include direct financing of capital expenditure.</p> <p><b>Budget:</b> a statement expressing the Council's policies and service levels in financial terms for a particular financial year. In its broadest sense it includes both the revenue budget and capital programme and any authorised amendments to them.</p> <p><b>Budget Requirement:</b> The amount of resource required to meet the Councils financial priorities in a financial year.</p>

**Forecast:** An estimate of the level of resource needed in the future based on a set of demands or priorities.

**Capital:** Expenditure on the acquisition of **non-current assets** or expenditure which extends the useful life of an existing asset.

**Revenue Support Grant:** the annual amount of money the Council receives from Welsh Government to fund what it does alongside the Council Tax and other income the Council raises locally. Councils can decide how to use this grant across services although their freedom to allocate according to local choice can be limited by guidelines set by Government.

**Specific Grants:** An award of funding from a grant provider (e.g. Welsh Government) which must be used for a pre-defined purpose.

**Welsh Local Government Association:** the representative body for unitary councils, fire and rescue authorities and national parks authorities in Wales.

**Financial Year:** the period of 12 months commencing on 1 April.

**Local Government Funding Formula:** The system through which the annual funding needs of each council is assessed at a national level and under which each council's Aggregate External Finance (AEF) is set. The revenue support grant is distributed according to that formula.

**Aggregate External Finance (AEF):** The support for local revenue spending from the Welsh Government and is made up of formula grant including the revenue support grant and the distributable part of non-domestic rates.

**Provisional Local Government Settlement:** The Provisional Settlement is the draft budget for local government published by the Welsh Government for consultation. The Final Local Government Settlement is set following the consultation.

**Funding Floor:** a guaranteed level of funding for councils who come under the all-Wales average change in the annual Settlement. A floor has been a feature of the Settlement for many years.



## EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Learner Outcomes – GCSE and A level results 2022/23
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report explains the gradual return to pre pandemic examination arrangements for year 11 and year 13 learners and the national and local authority performance measures outcomes for 2022/23. Given the varying examination arrangements for learners since 2019, caution must be exercised when comparing outcomes between subsequent years.

Welsh Government restarted the reporting of key stage 4 outcomes at a school level using the approach adopted prior to the pandemic in 2018/2019. This approach saw the introduction of new transitional interim measures for secondary schools that looked to ensure a greater focus on raising aspirations for all learners. For key stage 5, the 2021/22 and 2022/23 examination periods were also transitional. In 2022/23, Qualifications Wales set the results at a national level at a midway between 2018/19 and 2021/22.

The Local Authority, in partnership with the Regional School Improvement and Effectiveness Service (GwE), endeavours to secure high quality outcomes for learners. All Flintshire schools benefit from bespoke support according to their identified school improvement priorities.

Welsh Government determined in 2019 that performance data traditionally aggregated for comparison at local, regional and national level be removed. All benchmarking, comparisons with other establishments, and the placing of schools and local authorities in rank order is no longer acceptable or possible. The only comparative data available to local authorities in these key stages are the national averages.

There is now a greater focus on the use of data by schools in their self-evaluation processes rather than for public comparison. In this context, data should be analysed on a local level and as a starting point to inform local priorities.

Welsh Government's expectation is that performance information is used to support schools and local authorities to understand their own context and improve their own offer. It should not be used in isolation to judge performance or compare schools.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the outcomes for key stages 4 and 5 examinations in 2022/23 and recognise the hard work of secondary schools in Flintshire in supporting their examination year groups.
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## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>Explaining Learner Outcomes – GCSE and A level results 2022/23</b>
1.01	<p>Interim performance measures for key stage 4.</p> <p>These transitional measures, introduced in 2019 removed the narrow focus on C/D borderline grade outcomes to instead recognise the achievement of all learners at key stage 4. As previously reported, these measures were paused during the pandemic. Welsh Government announced that these measures would be restarted for summer 2023 key stage 4 results. This includes the policy of counting only first entries of examinations.</p> <p>For the academic year 2022/23, this means that Welsh Government will be publishing the following headline indicators, all based on point scores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capped 9 Indicator (interim measures version)</li> <li>• Literacy indicator</li> <li>• Numeracy indicator</li> <li>• Science indicator</li> <li>• Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate indicator</li> <li>• A*-A grades</li> </ul> <p>The analysis of results is based on year 11 GCSE and age 17 A level results for pupils in maintained schools, pupil referral units and pupils educated other than at school in Wales.</p>
1.02	<p>Examination and centre assessed grades.</p> <p>2021/22 and 2022/23 were transitional years, where qualifications returned to written examinations following the disruption of the pandemic. This was not yet a complete return to pre-pandemic arrangements. In 2022/23, some support still remained in place for learners sitting examinations, through the provision of advance information to exam centres and a supportive approach to grading. Qualifications Wales set the results at a national level broadly between 2018/19 and 2021/22 outcomes.</p>

	Given the varying examination arrangements for learners since 2019, caution must therefore be exercised when comparing outcomes between subsequent years.									
1.03	<p>Individual school data will be published by Welsh Government on the <i>My Local School</i> website under the section on Attainment. The website was updated in December 2023 to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on the publication of attainment and attendance information</li> <li>• Updated FAQs</li> <li>• Secondary attendance data for 2022/23</li> <li>• Financial reserves for 2022/23</li> <li>• School budget per pupil for 2023/24</li> <li>• Number of pupils and characteristics</li> <li>• Free school meal (FSM) eligibility – 3-year average</li> <li>• Teacher numbers and Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR)</li> </ul> <p>Performance measure data for 2022/23 is expected to be updated on the website in early 2024.</p>									
1.04	<p>National outcomes at key stage 4 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2022/23, the average Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version) was 356.5 points. This was a small increase from 354.4 points in 2018/19.</li> <li>• The average Skills Challenge Certificate indicator was 31.6 points.</li> <li>• Learners scored highest in the literacy indicator. The average literacy indicator was 39.7 points, the average numeracy indicator was 37.1 points, and the average science indicator was 36.9 points.</li> </ul>									
1.05	<p>National outcomes at key stage 4 by pupil characteristics 2022/2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Females scored higher in the Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version). However, the gap between males and females narrowed from 32.9 to 24.4 points from 2018/19</li> <li>• Pupils not entitled to free school meals scored higher in the Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version) with 293.8 points than pupils eligible for free school meals with 382.6 points and the gap widened since results in 2018/2019 from 77.3 points to 88.7 points.</li> <li>• The gap between White British learners and Black, Asian and minority ethnic pupils widened in the Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version), with Black, Asian and minority ethnic pupils achieving better outcomes than White British pupils.</li> </ul>									
1.06	<p>Flintshire outcomes at key stage 4 in 2022/23</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Performance Measure</th> <th>Flintshire 2023</th> <th>Wales 2023</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Capped 9 points score (interim) *</td> <td>351.6</td> <td>356.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>% of Capped 9 points score (interim) contribution made up of non-GCSEs (other 6 slots only) *</td> <td>25.5</td> <td>29.3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Performance Measure	Flintshire 2023	Wales 2023	Capped 9 points score (interim) *	351.6	356.5	% of Capped 9 points score (interim) contribution made up of non-GCSEs (other 6 slots only) *	25.5	29.3
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1.07	<p>Flintshire pupil characteristics at key stage 4 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Females scored higher in Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version) at 365 points than males with 339.2. This was a slightly wider gap at 25.8 points in comparison with the national gap of 24.4 points.</li> <li>Pupils not entitled to free school meals scored higher in the Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version) with 375.5 points than pupils eligible for free school meals with 287.4 points. The gap was slightly smaller at 88.1 points compared to the national gap of 88.8 points.</li> <li>In the subject indicators of literacy, numeracy and science, females scored higher than males in literacy and science but slightly lower in numeracy. The widest gap was in literacy where males scored 37.5 compared to females who scored 42.2. This is a slightly smaller gap of 4.7 points in Flintshire compared to the Wales gap in literacy between girls and boys at 5 points.</li> <li>The science indicator is statistically higher than the Wales average points score (38.0 compared to 36.9)</li> <li>The 5+A*-A is lower than the Wales average (17.9 compared to 20.3)</li> </ul>																		
1.08	<p>Comparisons on modelled outcomes based on FSM eligibility in 2022/23</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Performance Measure</b></th> <th><b>Flintshire 2023</b></th> <th><b>Modelled score</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Capped 9 (interim)</b></td> <td>364.1</td> <td>368.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Welsh Bacc Skills Challenge Certificate</b></td> <td>35.3</td> <td>35.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Literacy Indicator</b></td> <td>41.1</td> <td>41.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Numeracy</b></td> <td>38.7</td> <td>38.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Science</b></td> <td>39.4</td> <td>38.4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Flintshire 2023</b>	<b>Modelled score</b>	<b>Capped 9 (interim)</b>	364.1	368.2	<b>Welsh Bacc Skills Challenge Certificate</b>	35.3	35.5	<b>Literacy Indicator</b>	41.1	41.2	<b>Numeracy</b>	38.7	38.2	<b>Science</b>	39.4	38.4
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1.09	<p><b>National A level context 2022/23</b></p> <p>The 2021/22 and 2022/23 examination periods were transitional. In 2022/23, Qualifications Wales set the results at a national level at a midway between 2018/19 and 2021/22. For 2022/23, the percentage of A levels awarded A*- A and A*-C was still higher than before the pandemic.</p>																		



	<p>Given the varying examination arrangements for learners since 2019, and work on developing new consistent performance measures at post 16, caution must be exercised in making any comparisons about outcomes between subsequent years.</p>
1.10	<p><b>Consistent performance measures for post -16.</b></p> <p>Since 2014/2015, Welsh Government has been committed to developing new performance measures in the post 16 sector, that will enable measurement of learner outcomes on a programme basis and to do so consistently across sixth forms and colleges for the first time. The timescale for this work was impacted by the pandemic.</p> <p>These new performance measures at post 16 replace the previous separate measures of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sixth forms - the Level 3 threshold and points scores, based on learners who take exams; and</li> <li>• colleges - learning activity success rates, based on learners enrolled and their outcomes within a single year of study.</li> </ul> <p>They are intended to be used together to give a rounded picture of sixth forms' and colleges' outcomes, with no one measure being more important than the others. They are not used to derive an overall 'score' or rating for each provider.</p> <p>The three measures are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement - a measure of the completion and attainment of learners undertaking A level, vocational and Welsh Bacculaureate learning programmes.</li> <li>• Value added - a measure of the progress made by learners, over and above what would normally be expected based on their prior attainment and gender.</li> <li>• Destinations - a measure of the proportion of learners who progress into further learning (including higher education) and/or employment.</li> </ul> <p>The reports provided to schools and colleges to date as these new measures are rolled out and refined, are specifically intended for internal use. It is the intention of Welsh Government to publish provider level outcomes to a wider audience at a future date via an online portal, currently in development. This portal is expected to be similar to <i>My Local School</i> with a mix of tables and graphs. Welsh Government do not expect the portal to be in place before 2024/25, recognising the Covid-related disruption to assessment processes.</p> <p>Welsh Government currently produces an annual report on the completion and success rates of learners on vocational programmes, general education programmes (including A levels) and the Welsh Bacculaureate. The release date for the report covering August 2022 – July 2023 is scheduled for March 2024.</p>

1.11	<p>National outcomes for A level pupils aged 17 (sixth form outcomes) as at 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2022/23 the percentage of A Level entries awarded A*-A, A* to C and A*-E grades decreased from 2021/22. The largest decrease was at A* - A, with a decrease of 7.2 percentage points.</li> <li>• The percentage of pupils awarded A*-A grades was 34.2%</li> <li>• The percentage of pupils awarded A*- C grades was 80.5%</li> <li>• The percentage of pupils awarded A*-E grades was 99.4%</li> </ul>
1.12	<p>Outcomes for A level pupils nationally aged 17 (sixth form) by pupil characteristics up and includes the results of successful appeals up to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Females outperformed males at A*-A and A* -C grades; the gap at A*-E was negligible.</li> <li>• The gap between White British pupils and Black, Asian and minority ethnic pupils widened at A*-A and A-C grades with Black, Asian and minority ethnic pupils achieving better outcomes than White British pupils; the gap at A*-E was negligible.</li> <li>• There is no figure for free school meal entitlement because the number of such pupils in the cohort is too low to allow meaningful comparisons.</li> </ul>
1.13	<p>Outcomes for A level learners in Flintshire aged 17 (sixth form) (WJEC results only, August 2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total number of entries in Flintshire was 1048</li> <li>• The percentage A*-A grades awarded was 32.3%</li> <li>• The percentage A*-C grades awarded was 79.4%</li> <li>• The percentage A*-E grades awarded was 98.3%</li> </ul> <p>This data does not include any minor adjustments as a result of any successful appeals by learners; post results day raw data is not made available at local authority level. National 2022/23 achievement data will be made available in March 2024. This will include the national publication and individual school and college reports which will be sent directly to each institution (containing their own data). Destinations data is provided on a different timescale to the achievement measures to allow time for learners to progress into a sustained destination and for their data to be collected, matched, and analysed. For destinations, the latest data published is for 2020/21 and the 2022/22 data is expected to be available next September.</p>
1.14	<p>All Flintshire schools with sixth forms are supported by the local authority and GwE to have access to value added data through a system called ALPS, to support their self-evaluation work at post 16. ALPS data supports schools in looking at the value that they add to the learning and attainment of their learners. For A level outcomes, the starting point is an average GCSE score. This helps schools to identify strengths and plan improvement priorities at subject level and for groups of learners. Analysis of this value-added data based on information submitted by schools suggests progress of students post-16 is strong. In 2023, all six Flintshire schools with post 16 provision had a 'red' strong three-year T score. The three- year T score is</p>

	the average of the 3 grades over three years and gives a sense of performance over time.
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<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
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2.01	The Council commissions its school improvement services through GwE via an Inter-Authority Agreement with the other North Wales councils. This sets the value of the financial contribution from Flintshire which can be reviewed every three years.
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<b>3.00</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
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3.01	<p>There are no specific risks arising from this report and subsequent actions.</p> <p>The Council's Education Portfolio has a detailed risk assessment that outlines key risks related to the delivery of education services and method statements which describe how these risks are managed. These are regularly reported to the Education, Youth and Culture Overview Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Anti-poverty Impact – The local authority seeks to mitigate the impact of poverty through its partnership work programme and through the careful monitoring by GwE Supporting Improvement Advisers (SIAs) of how schools use their Pupil Development Grant (PDG) to support those pupils at risk of potential underachievement. Schools are also required to publish their plans for the use of PDG annually.</p> <p>Equalities Impact – The 2019 inspection of Flintshire's education services undertaken by Estyn recognised good practice in provision for pupils' wellbeing and additional learning needs. This continues to be reflected in Flintshire's values, strategy, provision and outcomes.</p>
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<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT</b>
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4.01	Learner outcome data is a core element of the annual self-evaluation procedures undertaken by the Education & Youth Portfolio and this is consulted upon with all key education stakeholders.
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<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
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5.01	There are no appendices to this report.
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<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>Welsh Government Statistical Release, examination results 2022/23</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.wales/examination-results">https://www.gov.wales/examination-results</a></p> <p>My Local school <a href="https://mylocalschool.gov.wales/">https://mylocalschool.gov.wales/</a></p> <p>WG Consistent performance measures post -16</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.wales/consistent-performance-measures-post-16-learning-learner-destinations">https://www.gov.wales/consistent-performance-measures-post-16-learning-learner-destinations</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Vicky Barlow, Senior Manager for School Improvement  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704054 Cymraeg/ Welsh 01267 224923  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk">vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
8.01	<p><b>Average Capped 9 indicator (interim measures version)</b> – Introduced in 2018/19 and is reached by adding a pupil’s 9 best examination results which must include English or Welsh First Language, Mathematics or Numeracy and a Science GCSE. A single A* grade at GCSE = 58 points, an A grade = 52 points, a C grade = 40 points and so on. This does not indicate the range or distribution of scores for pupils, who individually will have a wide range. This indicator is intended to reflect outcomes for schools and not to assess individual pupil performance.</p> <p><b>The Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC)</b> – forms part of the Welsh Baccalaureate and is assessed at either Foundation Level 1 or National Level 2. National Level 2 is graded A*- C and Foundation Level 1 is graded as Pass* and Pass. The SCC focuses more on coursework completed during the academic year rather than final examination.</p> <p><b>Subject Performance Indicators (Literacy, Numeracy and Science)</b>- the headline subject indicators show the average score of all included pupils in Wales. The highest average points score possible is 58 (should every pupil achieve an A*) and the lowest average points score is 16 (should every pupil achieve a G)</p> <p><b>Free School meals</b> – pupils are eligible for free school meals if their parents or guardians are in receipt of certain means-tested benefits or support payments.</p>

**GwE** – Regional School Effectiveness & Improvement Service for North Wales

**ALPS Education** - Value added system measuring progress against a standardised starting point. For A level outcomes, the starting point is an average GCSE score.

**The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)** is a membership organisation representing the eight largest national awarding bodies offering qualifications in the UK. These qualifications include GCSEs, A levels, Scottish Highers as well as vocational qualifications.

**The Welsh Joint Education Council (WJEC)** is an examination board, providing qualifications and exam assessment to schools and colleges in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and independent regions. WJEC is the largest provider in Wales.

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## EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Revision of Post-16 Strategy
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been developed to provide an overview of the work to review and revise the post-16 strategy for Flintshire learners in light of national reforms to post-16 learning.

In January 2020, the then Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, announced that the reform of the post-compulsory education, training and research sector would be part of the bigger national mission to reform education in Wales. The ambition set out was to bring for the first time, higher education, further education, mainstream sixth form provision and work-based learning under the auspices of one organisation.

The Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act became law on the 8 September 2022 and established the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research, (CTER) a new Welsh Government sponsored body, and will dissolve the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) once operational.

In preparation for this anticipated reformed way of working in the post-16 sector, the local authority has been working with all providers in the sector, including the six schools who offer sixth form provision, to ensure that we continue to deliver a sustainable strategy for post-16 education in Flintshire, underpinned by robust, inclusive and aspirational provision.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members confirm they have received an appropriate level of assurance regarding the work of the Education & Youth Portfolio in supporting schools with sixth provision to be able to meet the requirements of the new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research.
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## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>Explaining Revision to Post-16 Strategy</b>
1.01	<p>The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research will be established in September 2023 and will be operational in April 2024, when it will become responsible for the strategy, funding and oversight of the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• further education (FE), including colleges and school sixth-forms</li><li>• higher education (HE), including research and innovation</li><li>• adult education and adult community learning</li><li>• apprenticeships and training</li></ul> <p>This will be the first-time funding, planning and regulation of post-16 education and research will be managed and coordinated by one body. As part of the change, the Commission will take over functions from many post-16 education areas currently within the Welsh Government, and all the functions of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW).</p> <p>CTER's new framework for this broad sector will contribute to the goals set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A future proof framework equipped to strengthen Wales' economic and social foundations in changing times.</li><li>• A flexible framework which responds to learner interests and employer needs for high quality education and training, research and innovation.</li><li>• A framework embedded in, and adding value to the communities it serves whilst being international in its outlook, contributing to the civic mission you have heard me speak of so often.</li></ul> <p>CTER working closely in partnership with the sector will have the tools to help create a highly skilled society. One which is equitable, that produces excellence and one where background, geography or circumstances do not determine your future.</p>
1.02	<b>Responsibilities of the Commission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take a whole system approach to research and innovation funding with an ability to provide funding to a wide range of HE and FE institutions.</li><li>• Protect the interests of learners, ensuring vocational and academic learning are equally valued.</li><li>• Align education and training more closely with the needs of employers.</li><li>• Monitor performance and governance whilst protecting the academic freedom of institutions.</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and promote improvement in education and training providers.</li> <li>• Increase the availability of Welsh-medium tertiary education and to encourage individuals to learn through the medium of Welsh.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Board was appointed in December 2022 and a Chief Executive took up post in September 2023.</p> <p>The Commission will be operational from April 2024 with a transitional phase applying. During this time, it will be building capacity and culture and working relationships with significant bodies across the sector.</p>
1.03	<p><b>CTER Strategic Vision</b></p> <p>'Working together, we will deliver a more engaged, excellent and equitable Tertiary Education and Research (TER) sector in Wales that prioritizes the interests of learners and contributes to national prosperity. We wish to see a joined up TER system in Wales that is easy for all learners to navigate, is valued by the public, creates a highly skilled society, tackles inequalities, is globally renowned for excellent education, training, research and innovation, and has a civic mission at its heart. Our approach will enable learners to move seamlessly from compulsory to tertiary education, building on our national mission for education reform.'</p>
1.04	<p>CTER is currently working on its Statement of Priorities, a high level, strategic set of priorities that will shape the operational workings of the Commission. Throughout 2024/25, there will be various points for the sector to be engaged and to influence those priorities.</p>
1.05	<p><b>Flintshire Context</b></p> <p>There are six high schools in Flintshire with sixth forms and one further education college with a dedicated A level centre. Two high schools work in partnership for their sixth form provision.</p> <p>Across Wales, approximately two-thirds of secondary schools have their own sixth forms. In Flintshire, 58% of schools have a sixth form.</p>
1.06	<p>Flintshire Post-16 Network exists to ensure all post-16 learners have the very best opportunities and outcomes. The network consists of headteachers from schools with sixth forms and senior representation from Coleg Cambria. The network provides strategic direction and local support and monitoring for Post-16 provision in Flintshire. The focus is on ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sustainable post-16 strategy is developed.</li> <li>• Partnership working with GwE in developing and sharing good practice (teaching and learning) across the regional post-16 sector is supported.</li> <li>• Analysis on progression, recruitment and retention from KS4 to KS5</li> <li>• Advice and guidance for post-16 learners is up-to-date and appropriate.</li> <li>• Concrete partnership working between post-16 providers, Higher Education Institutions, industry and learners utilising the Ambitions North Wales intelligence.</li> </ul>
1.07	<p>'A review of the current 16-19 curriculum in Wales', Estyn October 2022</p>

	<p>This thematic review included a cameo of Flintshire’s post-16 network. The Flintshire post-16 network consists of headteachers from six local schools with sixth forms and a representative from Coleg Cambria. The network provides strategic direction and local support and monitoring for post-16 provision in Flintshire. For example, the group ensure that, through the regional school improvement service, there is support for developing and sharing good practice in teaching and learning across post-16 providers. The group analyses progression, recruitment and retention of learners between key stage 4 and key stage 5 to support strategic planning. The recommendations in this review, were that post-16 education and training providers should work together to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all learners have equitable access to vocational options, and that these options are valued as equally as general education options</li> <li>• Ensure that all learners have equitable access to Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>• Ensure that all learners in key stage 4 receive impartial information, advice and guidance that covers all post-16 options available in their local area</li> </ul>
1.08	<p><b>Current funding arrangements</b></p> <p>Schools and Further Education (FE) colleges are funded differently. FE colleges and local authorities are funded directly by the Welsh Government for the learning programmes they provide to 16 to 19-year-old learners. Local authorities use their allocations to fund individual school sixth forms. The Welsh Government uses a common methodology to determine FE sector funding.</p> <p>Programmes are the main vehicle for funding, planning, delivery and monitoring under the Post-16 Planning and Funding Framework. Local authorities and further education colleges submit programme plans annually for approval. Each eligible programme attracts a funding value that is used to plan, monitor and account for the use of funds. Programmes are also being used to engage with Regional Skills Partnerships and external providers on the configuration of provision in Wales and strategies for the development of that provision to meet current and emerging needs.</p> <p>School sixth form plans are submitted to the local authority and analysed to ensure a breadth of provision that not only meets the learning and skills measure but is also responding to local, regional and national priorities.</p>
1.09	<p><b>16- 19 Curriculum</b></p> <p>The expectations for the current 16-19 curriculum are set out in legislation through the Learning and Skills Act (2000), the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 and associated guidance. Within each local authority, a curriculum offer should contain a minimum of 30 eligible courses approved by Qualifications Wales at level 3 comprising of different elements but with a minimum of five general courses and five vocational courses from the following five learning domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mathematics, science and technology</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• business, administration and law</li> <li>• services for people</li> <li>• arts, media, culture and languages</li> <li>• humanities, social sciences and preparation for life and work</li> </ul>
1.10	<p>The Post-16 Learning Adviser has met with Flintshire headteachers of schools with sixth forms to evaluate current provision and assess future need. Work is currently underway on refreshing the Post-16 strategy. This will be finalised in line with the operational work of the new Commission. The focus remains on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring sufficient access to high quality and relevant education for all, including students with additional learning needs</li> <li>• Providing an offer that meets all needs including the needs of students and wider economic and employment needs</li> <li>• Building on strong reputations and specialisms within school sixth form provision</li> <li>• Ensuring Post-16 provision is sustainable, resilient, and efficient and delivers maximum value</li> </ul>
1.11	<p>During 2023-24, headteachers, heads of sixth form and a sample of students are participating in a research project to gather first-hand evidence to inform the revised post-16 strategy. The research aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capture the voice and aspirations of post-16 students including their knowledge of the local and regional economic developments.</li> <li>• Provide an analysis of post-16 entry requirements, geographical reach and travel to school, breadth of curriculum offers, level, and type (subject sector), class sizes, pastoral offer delivery methods, number of students on role, and destination of pupils.</li> <li>• Provide an analysis of the overall mix and balance of the curriculum offer across Flintshire schools with sixth forms.</li> </ul>
1.12	<p><b>Welsh Education Strategic Plan</b></p> <p>Flintshire County Council is committed to supporting, expanding and promoting Welsh-medium education within the whole community, increasing the number and percentage of pupils receiving Welsh-medium education in compliance with the Welsh Government’s ‘Welsh-Medium Education Strategy’ of developing learners who are fully bilingual (i.e. fluent in both English and Welsh). The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032, approved by Welsh Government following consultation, sets out how we will work towards achieving this goal.</p>
1.13	<p>To ensure there is an inclusive, sustainable and responsive post-16 sector, the LA works in partnership with Seren:</p> <p>Seren is a Welsh Government initiative dedicated to helping Wales’ brightest state educated learners achieve their full academic potential and support their education pathway into leading universities in Wales, the UK, and overseas.</p>

	<p>It is a collaboration between the Welsh Government, schools, colleges, leading universities, Seren graduates, local authorities and third sector organisations to provide extensive national and regional activities.</p> <p>Seren is a fully funded programme available to year 8 to 13 learners from state schools and further education colleges across Wales, regardless of their economic background, personal situation, or location.</p> <p>The Seren Academy invites the most academically able learners in years 12 and 13 across Wales to join the programme. It offers interactive activities and unique study experiences to support ongoing learning, and expert guidance to help learners make informed decisions as they prepare to apply to leading universities.</p>
1.14	<p>The local authority also encourages providers to engage with E-sgol:</p> <p>E-sgol is a blended learning initiative to deliver online teaching and learning opportunities using direct, real-time and interactive learning approaches. Using the range of tools and services available through Hwb, E-sgol provides support to schools around the skillsets and the range of pedagogical approaches needed to maximise learner’s experiences. The benefits of the project are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow schools to be able to offer Welsh medium, as opposed to bilingual, options at Post-14</li> <li>• Enable schools and local authorities to retain learners at post-16 level, by supporting them to study the subject of their choice at Key Stage 5.</li> <li>• Enable staff to continue teaching at Key Stage 5, through sharing practitioners within given clusters and further afield.</li> <li>• Develop the skills of independent learning of the learners.</li> <li>• Support the Welsh Government’s aim of 1million Welsh speakers by 2050, by enabling</li> </ul>
1.15	<p>The North Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) is also a key partner in supporting post-16 provision. The ambition of the RSP is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be confident and cohesive, focused on improving the region’s economic, social and environmental well-being.</li> <li>• To see the region develop in a sustainable way, with opportunities for people to gain new skills for the future and develop rewarding careers. To see businesses grow and communities prosper.</li> <li>• To do this while being champions of our language, culture and heritage and in line with the well-being goals for Wales.</li> </ul> <p>The Partnership brings together employers, skills providers and key local stakeholders to better articulate skills demand and challenges at a regional and local level. The partnership works to identify current and future regional skills needs, and uses this intelligence to ensure the most suitable and relevant provision is available for our future generations. Working closely with the Regional Skills Partnership, Flintshire ensures that planning is evidence-based and is responsive to the changing needs of the North Wales economy and its businesses.</p>

	Flintshire Education and Youth Portfolio is represented on the RSP Board.
1.16	<p>Flintshire Priorities for post-16</p> <p>Flintshire local authority is ambitious for all children and young people to have the very best provision and where children and young people are at the heart of decision-making. We recognise the importance of working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively</li> <li>• Collaboratively</li> <li>• Strategically</li> </ul> <p>Flintshire’s current priorities for post-16 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor post-16 provision in the implementation of the work of CTER</li> <li>• Effective communication around new performance measures to key stakeholders</li> <li>• Converting AS outcomes into A level outcomes</li> <li>• Increase percentage of pupils achieving A*-A grades at A level</li> <li>• Further improve destinations of individual learners to ensure it is appropriate to ability</li> <li>• Maintain low levels of young people/adults Not in Education, Employment or Training</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for apprenticeship and employment and promote Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects in schools</li> <li>• Establish concrete partnership working with Ambition North Wales and Regional Skills Partnership</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing agenda addressed in all sixth forms through collaborative working with the local authority, health and third sector organisations</li> </ul>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	The Education and Youth Portfolio has increased capacity for post-16 support for schools alongside capacity for adult learning provision through the post of Learning Adviser for post-16.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
3.01	<p>There are no specific risks arising from this report.</p> <p>The Council’s Education Portfolio has a detailed risk assessment which outlines key risks related to the delivery of education services and method statements which describe how these risks are managed. These are regularly reported to the Education, Youth and Culture Overview Scrutiny Committee.</p>

<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT</b>
4.01	Regular discussions are held between Officers and the Flintshire Headteacher Federation and Post-16 Network. This information is used to inform the Portfolio's ongoing cycle of self-evaluation and improvement.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	There are no appendices to this report.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>Implementing the new post-16 Framework  <a href="https://www.gov.wales/implementing-new-post-16-framework">https://www.gov.wales/implementing-new-post-16-framework</a></p> <p>Tertiary Education reform; background information  <a href="https://www.gov.wales/tertiary-education-reform-background-information-html">https://www.gov.wales/tertiary-education-reform-background-information-html</a></p> <p>Estyn thematic review of the current 16-19 curriculum  <a href="https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-report/review-current-16-19-curriculum-wales">https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-report/review-current-16-19-curriculum-wales</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Vicky Barlow, Senior Manager for School Improvement  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704054 Cymraeg/ Welsh 01267 224923  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk">vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Dawn Spence, Post-16 and Adult Learning Adviser  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:dawn.spence@flintshire.gov.uk">dawn.spence@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
8.01	<p><b>The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research(CTER)</b> will become responsible for the strategy, funding and oversight of the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further education (FE), including colleges and school sixth-forms</li> <li>• higher education (HE), including research and innovation</li> <li>• adult education and adult community learning</li> <li>• apprenticeships and training</li> </ul>

**Seren** is a Welsh Government initiative dedicated to helping Wales' brightest state educated learners achieve their full academic potential and support their education pathway into leading universities in Wales, the UK, and overseas.

**E-sgol** is a blended learning initiative to deliver online teaching and learning opportunities using direct, real-time and interactive learning approaches.

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## EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Flintshire Youth Justice Service Peer Review
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Flintshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a multiagency statutory partnership established in April 2000, further to the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The chief aim of the Flintshire YJS is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people aged 10-17 years in Flintshire. The Youth Justice Service has a statutory obligation under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop an annual Youth Justice Plan which outlines its priorities for the forthcoming year in addition to reporting on governance, resources accountability and performance.

As part of the service's commitment to continuous improvement, the Youth Justice Executive Management Board requested a Peer Review from the Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (YJSIP) to review our current approach to leadership and governance.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That members note the recommendations from the Peer Review.
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## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE
1.01	The Flintshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a multiagency statutory partnership established in April 2000, further to the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The chief aim of the Flintshire YJS is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people aged 10-17 years in Flintshire.
1.02	Governance and strategic oversight of the Youth Justice Service is provided by a multi-agency Executive Management Board which is chaired currently by the Local Authority Chief Executive. Representation includes Chief Officers (Education and Youth, Housing and Communities, Social Services), Elected Members (Education and Youth, Social Services) Senior Managers (Social Services for Children, Integrated Youth Provision, Community Safety) Senior Managers from external partners (North Wales Police, National Probation Service, Action for Children, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Coleg Cambria) and representatives from HM Courts and Tribunal Service and Head Teachers Federation. The Board considers the strategic and operational elements of the Youth Justice Service, monitors key themes which impact on the multi-agency service e.g. funding, recruitment, workload and is also focused on improving practice and reviewing performance.
1.03	As part of our commitment to continuous improvement we requested a Peer Review from the Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (YJSIP). The YJSIP is a partnership between the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and Association of YOT Managers (AYM) which trains Peer Reviewers from other Youth Justice Services across England and Wales to undertake this work.
1.04	<p>The Flintshire YJS Executive Management Board scoped out the Peer Review and the following key lines of enquiry (KLOE's) were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strength of strategic board representation – are the right people at the table?</li> <li>• The extent to which partners are able to respond to the evolving youth justice strategic landscape and key performance indicator (KPI) developments.</li> <li>• The effectiveness with which board members advocate youth justice within their own services and with partners.</li> </ul> <p>Additional 'golden threads' are also included as standard as part of any Peer Review and include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice of the Child.</li> <li>• Anti-Discriminatory Practice, Diversity &amp; Disproportionality</li> </ul>
1.05	The Peer Review took place between 16 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> October and involved the peer review team interviewing Board Members, partner agencies, including

	practitioners and managers and several direct observations of YJS activities.
1.06	<p>The findings identified a number of key strengths within the service (refer to appendix 1 for a copy of the final report). At a strategic level, services and agencies were appropriately represented at the Management Board and were supported to undertake their role. They had a good understanding of the Youth Justice landscape. Another positive feature was that YJS practitioners are also included in strategic discussions and kept up to date on the work of the Board. It was noted that having the Chief Executive of the Council as Board Chair was a significant strength which provided appropriate ownership and leadership of Youth Justice issues. The Peer Review Team identified that there was good advocacy of YJS issues including linked to recruitment and retention.</p> <p>However, the Peer Review Team have suggested that the Board review the levels of seniority of other Board members to ensure that partners provide better connection to other regional and national forums, in addition to promoting advocacy within their own services to advance issues within youth justice.</p>
1.07	<p>The information produced and submitted by the YJS to the Board was identified as detailed and of good quality and that the YJS is making progress on its priorities and plans.</p> <p>However, it was assessed that external partners need to take additional ownership of strategic issues and become more involved in agenda, priority setting and performance monitoring.</p>
1.08	<p>We were particularly encouraged that the Peer Review Team identified that our commitment to Child First and Trauma Informed approaches was evidenced across the workforce and wider partnership, which was also supported in a number of observations undertaken by the Peer Review team. The team also identified that there was a collective ownership of our cohort by the partnership and a desire for positive outcomes. Board Members also had a good understanding of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) linked to Youth Justice, but it was identified but that the partnership should review collective responsibilities in how these are delivered and achieved and consider resource implications. Of particular note was how the Board and Service would prioritise work around supporting victims.</p>
1.09	<p>Progress against our annual Youth Justice Plan is currently overseen by our Delivery Group which reports into our Management Board. However, it was identified by the Peer Review Team that there was an over-reliance on the YJS and local authority to drive actions. Improvements were suggested by the Peer Review Team to strengthen how the Delivery Group approaches aspects of our plan.</p>
1.10	<p>The Peer Review Team have also suggested that the Management Board specifically consider a few thematic areas linked to youth justice provision including, health needs – specifically speech language and communication resource, implementation of Outcome 22 and remand reduction.</p>

1.11	The Peer Review Team observed “exceptional” child focus, trauma awareness and professional curiosity about child/parents’ lived experience when they observed one of the scrutiny panels. Case studies are brought to the Board, and these are valued by members. Case studies also help the Board with the development of Youth Justice priorities and meeting agendas to ensure a continuous focus on improving outcomes for justice-involved children. Practitioners were also commended for their creative ways of engaging with children and young people. The YJS was noted for its proactive approach in reviewing disproportionality within the justice system and creating opportunities to gain an understanding of disproportionate groups.
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<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
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2.01	The Peer Review Team have made a number of recommendations linked to their findings. All Management Board Members have received a copy of the report and the Board has a series of sessions planned to develop actions to the recommendations.
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2.02	The Board is currently reviewing partnership representation and seeking to review our forward work plan to prioritise key strategic and operational areas. Work is also underway to ensure that Board Members are tasked to lead on specific thematic areas within our Youth Justice Plan and increase advocacy and promotion of these priorities within their services.
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2.03	<p>The YJS has made progress with North Wales Police to agree the use and implementation of Outcome 22 where an Out of Court Disposal can be applied which allows no further action to be recorded against a lower-level offence where the child or young person has voluntarily engaged in intervention with the YJS.</p> <p>The YJS Delivery Group has been re-tasked and re-focused to consider a number of critical thematic areas linked to reducing the use of remand, responses to children looked after and decriminalisation opportunities and management of complex cases.</p> <p>In light of a recent report commissioned by the Senedd linked to Speech and Language within YJS (see Accessible Documents), which recommends the Welsh Government should work with local authorities to develop plans for embedding speech and language therapists within every Youth Offending Team in Wales, discussions continue to take place between Speech and Language Services, Youth Justice Services, Youth Justice Board and Welsh Government.</p>
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2.04	We have given additional prominence to the voice of victims and are exploring opportunities to expand resourcing in this area which will help us develop mechanisms to promote diversion via the use of restorative justice and ensure that we provide support to victims. However, it should be noted that analysis of recent feedback from victims is positive towards this area of the service. We have committed to undertaking further engagement with victims in 2024-25 to develop a longer-term victims and restorative justice strategy.
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2.05	Given the current financial climate within the Local Authority and partnership, aspects to enhance or develop services may be curtailed. We continue to explore and maximise the use of additional grants and funding streams.
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<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
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3.01	YJS Board Members have been appraised of the Peer Review Report and are actively engaged in helping the service to implement the recommendations. The YJS Team have also been informed of the findings and have been commended for their support and contribution.
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3.02	All Youth Justice Services are inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The Service was last inspected in 2016 and will be due a further inspection prior to October 2024. The Inspectorate will review the following areas: Leadership and Governance, Court Disposals, Out of Court Disposals and Resettlement.
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<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
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4.01	Ongoing risks linked to partnership financial and 'in-kind' contributions due to budget pressures which can impact on service development, resources and innovation linked to Key Performance Indicators
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<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
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5.01	<b>Appendix 1</b> - YJSIP (2023) Flintshire Youth Justice Service Peer Review – Final Report.
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<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
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6.01	<p>Senedd (2023) 60% - Giving them a voice Speech, language and communication needs in the youth justice system  <a href="https://senedd.wales/media/excbag12/cr-ld15786-e.pdf">https://senedd.wales/media/excbag12/cr-ld15786-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Key Performance Indicators for Youth Justice (2023)  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-performance-indicators-for-youth-justice-services">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-performance-indicators-for-youth-justice-services</a></p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> James Warr, Senior Manager, Flintshire Youth Justice Service &amp; Flintshire Sorted  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 701125  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:james.warr@flintshire.gov.uk">james.warr@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>
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7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p><b>ACE's</b>- Adverse Childhood Experiences are traumatic events that affect children while growing up, such as suffering child maltreatment or living in a household affected by domestic violence, substance misuse or mental illness.</p> <p><b>AYM</b> – Association of YOT Managers, a body that represents Youth Justice Managers in England.</p> <p><b>Bureau</b> - Framework for diverting young people out of formal Youth Justice processes by tackling underlying causes of youth crime through mechanisms that promote pro-social behaviours, children’s rights, youth and parent/carer participation and delivered by universal services.</p> <p><b>FTE</b> - First time entrants to the service.</p> <p><b>HMIP</b>- His Majesty’s Inspectorate Probation.</p> <p><b>KPI</b> – Key Performance Indicators – Statutory indicators required by the Youth Justice Board.</p> <p><b>Outcome 22</b> – Police Out of Court disposal which allows a no further action to be recorded against a lower level offence where the child or young person has voluntarily engaged in intervention with the YJS.</p> <p><b>YJSIP</b> – Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership – Sector Professional Body in collaboration with Youth Justice Board and Association of YOT Managers.</p>



**Youth Justice Sector  
Improvement Partnership**

## **Flintshire Youth Justice Service**

### **Peer Review - Final Report**

**October 2023**

**Jacqui Belfield-Smith (Stockport)**  
Youth Justice Peer Review Team Lead/Mentor

**Dan Bride (Kent)**  
Youth Justice Peer Review Team Co-Lead

**Dr Ali Davies (Neath & Port Talbot)**  
Youth Justice Peer Review Team Co-Lead

**Chris Sweeting (Kirklees)**  
Peer Reviewer



### 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### 2. BACKGROUND

### 3. DETAILED FINDINGS

#### Key Lines of Enquiry:

- The strength of strategic board representation – are the right people at the table?
- The extent to which partners are able to respond to the evolving youth justice strategic landscape and key performance indicator (KPI) developments.
- The effectiveness with which board members advocate youth justice, within their own services and with partners.

#### Golden Threads:

- Voice of the Child.
- Anti-Discriminatory Practice, Diversity & Disproportionality

### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS



## 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Peer Review is not an inspection, but an exploration of issues identified by the host area, with agreed key lines of enquiries, which leads to a summary of findings carried out by trained peers and supported by the Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (YJSIP) and the Association of YOT Managers (AYM).

The Peer Review in Flintshire was conducted from 16<sup>th</sup> October to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

The Peer Review Team (PRT) was represented by senior youth justice leaders:

**Lead: Jacqui Belfield-Smith (Stockport)**

Strategic Lead: Youth Justice, Targeted Youth Support, Serious Youth Violence, Complex Safeguarding. *Also Chair of the AYM (Association of YOT Managers)*

**Co-Lead: Dan Bride (Kent)**

Assistant Director, Adolescent Services (Social Work, Early Help, Youth Work, Children's Centres, Response Team, Youth Justice) and Head of Youth Justice, Kent

**Co-Lead: Dr Ali Davies (Neath & Port Talbot)**

Principal Officer, Youth Justice & Early Intervention Service, Leaving Care (Route 14) and Pathway Plus.

Gwasanaeth Cyfiawnder Ieuenctid ac Ymryrath Gynnar NPT, Gadael gofal a llwybr plws

**Peer Reviewer: Chris Sweeting (Kirklees)**

Current Board Programme Manager (recent Service Manager): Youth Justice Service

**YJSIP Representative:** Laura Kinsey, YJSIP Co-ordinator

The Peer Review Team (PRT) would like to express their thanks and appreciation for the welcome and hospitality provided by Flintshire YJS and the Management Executive Board and would like to thank everybody that they met during the process for their time and contributions.

The PRT would like to express special thanks to Flintshire colleagues, for their business support and logistics prior to, and during, the review.

The PRT would also like to express particular thanks to Jamie Warr, Senior Manager for Flintshire Youth Justice Service and Sorted and the youth justice team for taking such excellent care of us whilst on site.

The team would also like to thank Laura Kinsey from the YJSIP for her support prior to and during this Peer Review.

## 2. BACKGROUND

A Peer Review is a voluntary process undertaken at the invitation of the local Youth Justice Partnership. This report is a summary of the findings of a youth justice sector-led Peer Review carried out by trained peers and supported by the YJSIP.

The report reflects the findings of the PRT, which were shared with representatives of Flintshire YJS Management Board on the final day of the review.

The Peer Review process is designed to be an opportunity for Youth Justice Services and local partners to gain a fresh perspective from peers.

It is not the role or purpose of Peer Review to comment specifically upon any inspection outcomes or to provide reassurance in advance of any future inspection.

Likewise, it is distinct from any formal improvement work undertaken by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) or any other regulatory agencies.

The review represents a snapshot of the workings of Flintshire, and all points and issues identified in the report will have been verified and triangulated, as far as possible, to ensure that the process is as useful as possible to the Youth Justice Partnership.

We would encourage all involved with the Youth Justice Partnership to celebrate their achievements, some examples of which we note and report back on and then the Service can build upon what they do well going forward.

The scope of the review was explored during a meeting between the CEO for Flintshire (and Chair of the Executive Management Board), the Senior Manager for Flintshire Youth Justice Service, the PRT lead, a PRT co-lead and the YJSIP representative in August 2023.

It was agreed that the Executive Management Board would act as the sponsor, and that the PRT would be asked to examine the following key lines of enquiry:

1. the strength of strategic board representation – are the right people at the table?
2. the extent to which partners are able to respond to the evolving youth justice strategic landscape and key performance indicator developments
3. The effectiveness with which board members advocate youth justice, within their own services and with partners.

All Peer Reviews will consider the following:

- Voice of the child.
- Anti-discriminatory practice, diversity, and disproportionality.

### 3. DETAILED FINDINGS

*It is important to note that this Flintshire Youth Justice Peer Review was a 'bespoke' review with a specific request to focus on 'Governance and Strategic Leadership', with a particular focus on the strength of the Executive Management Board. There were 3 Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) that the Peer Review Team (PRT) were asked to examine, and they broadly covered 'representation', 'responsiveness' and 'advocacy' of the strategic youth justice agenda. Some of the key lines, therefore, can be read interchangeably. This is also true for some of the recommendations which are presented at the end and drawn out within the report.*

#### **Key Line of Enquiry 1:**

**The strength of strategic board representation – *are the right people at the table?***

#### **Strengths:**

Board members reported that having the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as the Chair of the Executive Management Board gave the seniority and sense of gravitas and importance to the work of the Board, and this helped to raise the profile of youth justice across the partnership. The Peer Review Team (PRT) were advised that this ensured good attendance, papers were read, and members were appraised of key messages about the youth justice strategic landscape. All Board members involved in the review expressed a general understanding of the changing landscape of Youth Justice. The CEO demonstrated a dedication, passion and genuine interest to the youth justice agenda and commitment to resourcing.

The PRT noted that Board representation was in line with good practice and included the key statutory partners at the Board, and other partnership agencies who were able to contribute and influence the youth justice agenda. Board Members reported to the PRT that they valued the induction process, and this allowed them to understand their expectations and responsibilities.

There is a breadth of data and information routinely brought by the Local Authority to the Board and it is reflective of emerging themes and national priorities, that aim to assist members' understanding of how they can contribute and influence the youth justice agenda.

The Board is also supported by the Delivery Group, which acts as a sub-group. Partners expressed confidence in the youth justice leadership and were advised of several links through the Youth Justice Service (YJS) to operational meetings with internal and external partners.

Youth justice practitioners reported that they valued the opportunity to observe and participate at the Board as they reported that this helped them to feel that the most senior managers across the partnership understood and were supportive of their work. Attending the Board also helped front line staff to understand where they fit in the

strategic landscape and enabled them to understand the importance and impact of consistency in their data/recording and performance. They described this as 'empowering.

Staff reflected that they felt their managers advocated for them at the Board and they felt supported by members, highlighting the challenge of recruiting, and retaining staff, due to the short-term and annualised funding model. Examples were given of the Chair having taken what staff perceived as a risk, in making staff permanent despite the financial climate.

### **Areas for consideration:**

The PRT were provided with some information from the Police & Crime Commissioner's Office, the North Wales Police Force and Community Safety priorities. It was not immediately clear to the PRT what the priorities for Youth Justice were, and how the Flintshire Youth Justice Partnership was influencing this agenda at a regional level.

The PRT were unable to determine to what extent the Board had oversight of, and accountability for, other relevant strategic plans and partnership groups, and subsequently how these dovetailed with, or supported, the work of the Board. The PRT received some feedback about a feeling of 'inconsistency across the patch.'

It was clear to the PRT that the Chair of the Board was keen to empower members to be more visible and proactive and ensure that they hold each other to account for their contributions. Therefore, the Board may want to consider development time to explore and clarify expectations about what partners could bring to the Board, through their individual expertise and collective agency contributions to inform and support the youth justice agenda. Strong partnerships see contributions routinely informing performance reports, and ensuring emerging evidence and themes from their own agencies are included within Board agendas. There are good examples nationally of partners contributing to deep dives and presenting thematic, or focussed reports, led by the partner or jointly with the Youth Justice Service.

The PRT did not find sufficient evidence during the review, that partners actively contributed to agenda setting or that Board meetings involve enough reflect constructive challenge to ensure discussions are informed by the wider partnership landscape and expertise. This Board may wish to reflect on what constitutes meaningful engagement of partners at the Board to ensure that it is not perceived as passive. This includes the partnership work that takes place outside the Board, as this was not always clear within the evidence that the PRT were provided with, although we accept that this was a snapshot and may not reflect the reality of what takes place over longer time periods.

The PRT observed a reliance on the local YJS to provide data and reports to the Board. Features of strong Boards and services include all members understanding each other's roles and contributions, both to the Board, and to the service. The PRT did hear some examples of this, noting the Office for the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC) having presented on the Serious Violence Duty (SVD) and 'Sorted' having presented emerging substance misuse trends/issues. However, the Board might want

to consider if priority areas, such as Serious Youth Violence, would be further enriched with police data and health analysis, rather than a reliance on local authority data alone.

Board agendas appeared to both the PRT, and to some of the board members, to be decided unilaterally by the Local Authority, which may or not reflect the reality but was the perception based on the evidence provided. It wasn't immediately clear how individuals contributed to the agenda, set priorities, or held each other to account, which made it difficult to ascertain if there was a shared sense of ownership. The Board may wish to review how Board administration mechanisms could support this, for example, how they evidence partners' contributions to setting the agenda.

Board meetings did not appear to have a Forward Plan, or a dynamic agenda, with an over-reliance on the YJS presenting performance data and the Delivery Group report. The PRT did note a Risk Register for the Board, but it did not appear prominent, where closer attention might support the Board to drive priorities, timescales, and evidence impact of the Board actions and decisions. The Board may wish to clarify a shared position on actions and accompanying recommendations, and if necessary, record any dissent.

### **Key Line of Enquiry 2:**

**The extent to which partners are able to respond to the evolving youth justice strategic landscape and key performance indicator developments.**

The PRT found a consistent recognition and commitment to trauma-informed approaches. Partners commented on the YJS driving the agenda to embed trauma-informed language and practice, across the workforce and the partnership. Most members also recognised the principles of a *Child First* youth justice system and noted the Enhanced Case Management System. There was feedback that acknowledged the police understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences, and the PRT also noted this in their own observation of the Out of Court Diversion (OoCD) Scrutiny Panel. This panel also evidenced Board members demonstrating a good understanding of desistance, and a focus on outcomes and not just tasks.

Board members spoke about oversight and awareness of contextual safeguarding & risk, child sexual exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour. Members noted that the Board had agreed the development of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) in response to identified need.

The PRT found consistent evidence of board members being aware that there are revised national Youth Justice Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). Some members were able to articulate the importance of education for children, and especially for the youth justice cohort, with this being given prominence by the YJS sitting in the Education Directorate. Some Board members reflected on the new KPIs including children's education, attainment, and levels of engagement. The PRT heard examples of challenges in education being brought to the Board, particularly in respect to short-term funding, and packages of support for children who could not be in school, for example, due to sexual offences. There was a strong sense that the Board understood the education challenges and responded to them. There was positive feedback about AIM harmful sexual behaviour training having been delivered to schools, and this was impacting on schools being less likely to exclude children who exhibit harmful sexual behaviours. The PRT also heard that the 2019 SEND inspection identified an increased level of exclusion due to drugs and knives, and that the substance misuse policy had been refreshed in response to this.

Board members were generally very positive about the YJS and seemed interested in the youth justice landscape. Members expressed pride in how the Executive Management Board, the YJS, and the wider partnership has developed over the years, and there were consistently positive remarks about 'good relationships,' and 'professional respect.' The visibility and diligence of the Youth Justice Senior Manager across the partnerships was consistently highlighted.

The effectiveness of the Youth Justice Senior Manager to share information to and from the Board across the youth justice workforce and various stakeholders was expressed consistently as a strength, with a high degree of trust in his commitment, work ethic and efforts.

Board members reported that qualitative information, such as case studies, are valued when they are brought to the Board. Staff felt that bringing case studies which illustrate the journey of the child helped to get buy-in from senior managers across the partnership. They also felt that their work was appreciated, valued and that the front-line work force received praise, and that case studies being presented supported this recognition.

Some Board members expressed to the PRT they felt that Flintshire was 'ahead' in respect of presenting data to the Board.

### **Areas for Consideration:**

Whilst Board members demonstrated awareness of the new Key Performance Indicators, it was not clear to the PRT the extent to which Board members understood the impact of having to report and achieve these. The Board may want to assure itself that the partnership is clear about their individual and collective responsibilities for facilitating, delivering, and achieving the KPIs, including the level of resource needed to achieve them. It is also vital that it is recognised that these responsibilities extend beyond that of the YJS.

It was not always clear to the PRT to what level the Board had meaningful oversight of, and accountability for, the Delivery Group. Most of the actions arising from the Board emanated from the Delivery Group, of which most attendees were Local Authority staff. There was limited evidence of partnership contributions, and an apparent over-reliance on Local Authority resources, and specifically youth justice management, to drive the actions.

The seeming lack of clarity about partner contributions and limited visibility and accountability of some, was described as causing some drift and the work of the Delivery Group not progressing as a result. Clear timescales and accountability for actions was not always evident and there was some comment that 'things can take years' to progress.

The scope of the Delivery Group appeared very broad, and the YJS and its Management Team were perceived as being very 'busy'. It was unclear how the Board supported the Delivery Group to prioritise and to set realistic timescales for work undertaken outside of the Board. For example, the PRT heard that a 'Reducing Custody Strategy' would be taken to the next Board, but also noted that remands into the secure estate were extremely low and therefore it was less likely to be a priority for Magistrates. It was unclear at the time of the review if the strategy was the work solely of youth justice, or if the courts had been involved in the development. It was also unclear if other partners, who would be expected to contribute to robust community remand programmes (such as police), would contribute to the strategy.

The Executive Management Board may want to assure itself that practitioners are able to gain oversight of some areas of multi-agency practice in relation to priorities and emerging trends, for example case level data on low level drugs use and links to



exclusions. This might provide an opportunity for more holistic and individualised support to be offered.

The PRT consistently heard that the voice of victims needed a higher profile, and the Board may wish to review the current victim offer and consider this more within its priority-setting. The new KPIs, which includes victim information, will assist the Board's understanding in this area, to set an ambition for the victim's voice to be heard and to consider what resources would be needed to achieve this.

Similarly, it was unclear how the Board can influence the implementation of Outcome 22, as the PRT heard that there is disagreement regionally at a Force wide level about whether Outcome 22 should be offered to children who do not admit guilt. This did not appear to have come to Flintshire's Board to take a view on. It also was not clear if current board members had the capacity and influence to facilitate and drive the implementation of Outcome 22 at a regional level.

### **Key Line of Enquiry 3:**

**The effectiveness with which board members advocate youth justice, within their own services and with partners.**

#### **Strengths:**

The PRT saw good examples of strategic partnership working through, and with the Executive Management Board. A common thread was that the CEO being the chair added value and status to the management board, which in turn has had a positive impact in terms of corporate ownership by partners for the youth justice cohort in terms of recognising them as 'our children'. The PRT heard justice-experienced young people, those that are care-experienced, and young people with additional learning needs were often the same children. There seemed a collective responsibility and a 'we are all in this together' attitude, which placed children and young people at the heart of service provision, which then filtered back to individual partner organisations.

It was also evidenced that the Chair values service integrity, through the willingness to consider contingency planning that challenges annualisation of funds, to ensure sustainability of delivery. This in turn demonstrates a value in youth justice staff and creates stability within the workforce.

Board members and partners that the PRT spoke to, recognised regional differences across North Wales, for example, there was a higher focus on substance misuse than knife crime in Flintshire based on the data and intelligence received, but recognition that there were differing community safety needs in neighbouring authorities and the wider regional area.

The PRT found a strong commitment to understand and respond to local need which permeated through all agencies. The YJS seemed respected and considered a valuable resource, with its personnel often being asked to attend and/or chair multi-agency meetings with other partners.

Board members seemed open, reflective and engaged in this Peer Review with what appeared a keen interest to consider potential 'blind spots' with a culture to improve.

There was extensive recognition and comment on the outstanding work achieved by the Youth Justice Senior Manager, and his knowledge, visibility, skills, experience, and approachability were key features in most conversations that the PRT held. While this is undoubtedly an asset for the Board and the YJS, it was not always apparent to the PRT the essential role other members of the service undertook, to support Board business and partnership liaison.

### **Areas for consideration:**

The PRT found limited evidence of how other partnership boards, such as the Safer Communities Board and the Children's Safeguarding Board proactively inform or influence the youth justice agenda, and vice versa.

As detailed earlier, the PRT could not see a consistency in partners contributions to the board agenda and how they utilise their expertise to collectively address issues that arise or respond to emerging trends. The Board may want to consider steering the agenda to include presentations from partners to highlight how they are contributing to the priorities set by the board, as well as identifying their own agency priorities which crossover with the youth justice agenda. It may also be helpful to set the agenda thematically, encouraging partners to present on thematic areas, ensuring that partner agencies assess, and recognise the promotion of the youth justice throughout their own organisations.

The PRT observed Board minutes noting that members had seen the Health Needs Assessment and the ensuing recommendations. However, it was not clear if Board members had individually or collectively considered these and if there was a shared position and response. For example, there were recommendations made about Youth Justice Speech and Language provision. The PRT had received several comments that people were aware of this recommendation, and broadly acknowledged there was a lack of provision, but it remained unclear to what extent the Board has explored this recommendation and acted upon it, considered other opportunities, put contingency arrangements in place or discounted this recommendation. This was also echoed in discussions about Neurodiversity and long waiting lists, which were said to have been raised at the board. Members were described being unsure what, if any, actions were agreed. Actions such as these provide an opportunity for members to proactively take forward responsive activity on behalf of the Board and ensure that it is not perceived as the YJS having to 'fill in the gaps' where others have more strategic leverage.

A reliance on the Youth Justice Senior manager was noted in several observations and discussions, and whilst this dedication was commendable, partners would mention going directly to him for a steer or advice rather than their own organisational leads or Board reps. Where a long-standing member of staff is seen as the knowledge 'gateway' to the service it is often advisable to put contingency and succession planning arrangements in place to ensure that partners have a broader understanding of the skills within and across the Youth Justice Partnership.

Consideration could be given to the interface between research, evidence-based practice and emerging empirically tested models. For example, interviews showed board members' knowledge about models including trauma recovery and trauma-informed practice, adverse childhood experiences and ECM, so it could add more rigour to ensure messages from research and particularly HWB DOETH activity in Wales is threaded throughout board activity.

*\*Hwb Doeth is the academic arm of the YJB in Wales.*

## **Golden Thread 1:**

### **Voice of the Child**

It was clear to the PRT that there was corporate ownership of 'our' children, regardless of the route by which children become known to services. There was clear evidence of a consistent awareness of trauma at all levels and a commitment to a trauma-informed workforce and practice. The PRT were privileged to observe exceptional child focus, trauma awareness and professional curiosity about child/parents' lived experience when they observed one of the scrutiny panels.

The PRT were advised about several local forums that hear the voices of children and seemed keen to develop similar processes for justice-involved children. Case studies are brought to the Board, and these are valued by members, who expressed how this made the purpose and values of the Board more real. This is a frequent and often salutary response from strategic members nationally, as the lived experiences of children and their families keeps the business of the board grounded and tends to strongly support the collective commitment to improve outcomes for justice-involved children.

The PRT also saw evidence of the child's voice being consistently considered by the police and youth justice practitioners in Out of Court Disposal considerations, and creative ways to engage with children.

The PRT found that the Executive Management Board is ambitious to 'hear' the voice of children and young people and committed to review participatory methods to achieve this. The Participation Action Plan provides a basis for developing mechanisms for co-production and to meaningfully inform and shape service delivery, including reflecting their experience within the Quality Assurance process.

There was a high value placed on the benefits of sitting with the Education & Youth Directorate which enables close links with education colleagues. However, concerns were raised with the PRT about adverse impact of less contact with children's social care, as while the relationships between education and the youth justice seem strong and proactive, the links between children's social care and youth justice are equally important.

The Peer Review process could have been enhanced by inviting children and their families to be involved, as it provides a unique insight to be able to understand their perspective and lived experience as 'Flintshire's children' but unfortunately this was not factored into the interview schedule.

## **Golden Thread 2:**

### **Anti-Discriminatory Practice, Diversity and Disproportionality**

The PRT were advised that the Executive Management Board has approved the Disproportionality Action Plan, however it was not known what the oversight arrangements were, including timeframes and how outcomes would be evidenced.

There was an understanding and focus on disproportionality locally; specifically, girls, care-experienced children, children with Eastern European heritage and those from Roma/Traveler groups. The PRT found an ambition and recognition of the need to better understand the local demographic and issues related to diversity and disproportionality, particularly in relation to race and ethnicity, but also gender and sexuality.

Interviews as part of the Peer Review highlighted that staff and managers wanted to better understand the lived experience for children and their families across diverse communities, however it was not immediately clear that Flintshire YJS held an overall picture of the specific cultural groups and communities in its area, or fully understood how this impacted on the children and young people that they supervised to inform the services they might require.

There is also an opportunity to consider a dedicated 'Addressing Disproportionality Subgroup' to the Executive Management Board to lead on the Disproportionality Action Plan in conjunction with the wider Council's Ethnicity, Diversity & Inclusion commitments. This sub-group could work alongside an 'Increasing Participation Subgroup' to ensure that the interventions are dovetailed.

Ongoing Diversity and Disproportionality training for Board members and practice staff, to include Unconscious Bias, Cultural Competence & Humility Training could help to address the development of interventions, which explore cultural heritage, identity and gender politics and the implications for supporting Flintshire children, whilst and also ensuring strategic commitment and oversight.

As this Peer Review is Welsh-based and given the national drive and legislative requirements in Wales, the Board may need to assure itself that the importance of the Welsh language is reflected in the Disproportionality Action Plan to ensure it is integral and in line with Council priorities, which includes all documents being produced and translated, and ascertaining a child's language preference.

## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Executive Management Board to compare their membership with other local and national models to reflect on the role, seniority, and remit/responsibilities of members at the Board, to ensure that all parties are able to represent both local needs and influence strategic and regional responses.
- The Executive Management Board would benefit from reviewing examples of sub-regional and devolved administrations that the Board may wish to consider in terms of influence for priority setting at a regional level, that takes account of youth justice emerging themes.
- The Executive Management Board to review other good practice models of participation nationally to ensure voices of children and young people are heard at the Board and disseminated at partner agency level. Review Participation Strategies that meaningfully increase the mechanisms of participation and co-production via multi-modal means, including feedback, focus groups, digital platforms and semi-structured questionnaires.
- Review the agenda-setting process to ensure that Executive Management Board agenda items actively involve contributions from all members and develop thematic deep dives led by board representatives, which align to the business of the Board and partnership priorities, including regional influence and escalation as required.
- The Executive Management Board to consider utilising a 5WH (who, what, where, when, why, and how) format for members, taking key and assigned actions from board meetings back to their own areas of work.
- Ensure that there is triangulation between the agenda, board papers, minutes, and agreed actions so that the evidence of the work being undertaken is clearly identified. Ensure timescales and owners are included in plans/minutes so that progress is tracked and monitored. Development of a Forward Work plan to enable Executive Management Board members to consider their contributions and consideration of critical developments and emerging business that the Board needs to be cited on.
- The Executive Management Board to assure itself that there is more oversight of the Delivery Group to ensure its work is informing the Board's strategic agenda with relevant data, smart plans and time limited targets that are both deliverable and achievable. The Board to refer to recent HMIP framework and reports regarding benchmarking and expectations for executive boards and sub-groups.
- The Executive Management Board to refer to research and recent academic evidence, particularly HWB DOETH (the academic arm of the YJB in Wales) but also HMIP academic research that is frequently updated on their website, and specific youth justice and participation research, such as that undertaken

independently through Edge Hill and Manchester Metropolitan University to ensure strategy utilises and is derived in research literature.

- To help strengthen the development of the Golden Threads, the Executive Management Board to develop operational subgroups for Participation (Voice of the Child) and Disproportionality & Diversity which report directly to the Board. There are good practice examples of this operating nationally within HMIP reports and guidance, as well as practice guidance in research and YJB basecamp.
- In addition to the named designated leads for National Standards for Children, the Executive Management Board to identify specific 'Owners' for each of the sub-groups, with responsibility for updating the Board on progress and where necessary, eliciting their support to help break down any barriers.

Flintshire Peer Review Team, 10/11/2023

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## EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> February, 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Council Plan 2023/24 Mid-Year Performance Monitoring Report
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council Plan 2023/28 was adopted by the Council in June 2023. This report presents a summary of performance of progress against the Council Plan priorities identified for 2023/24 at the mid-year position, relevant to the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

This report is an exception-based report and concentrates on those areas of performance which are not currently achieving their target.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1.	To support the levels of progress and confidence in the achievement of priorities as detailed within the Council Plan 2023/28 for delivery within 2023/24.
2.	To support overall performance against Council Plan 2023/24 performance indicators/measures.
3.	To be assured by explanations given for those areas of underperformance.

## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE PERFORMANCE AT YEAR-END 2021/2022</b>																																							
1.01	The Council Plan Mid-Year Performance Report provides an explanation of the progress made towards the delivery of the priorities set out in the 2023/28 Council Plan for delivery within 2023/24. The narrative is supported by information on performance indicators and/or milestones.																																							
1.02	This report is an exception-based report and concentrates on those areas of performance which are not currently achieving their target.																																							
1.03	<p><b>Monitoring Activities</b></p> <p>Each of the sub-priorities under each theme within the Plan have high level activities which are monitored over time. 'Progress' shows action against scheduled activity and is categorised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RED: Limited Progress – delay in scheduled activity and, not on track</li> <li>• AMBER: Satisfactory Progress – some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track</li> <li>• GREEN: Good Progress – activities completed on schedule and on track</li> </ul>																																							
1.04	<p><b>Progress against Council Plan activity (Actions)</b></p> <p>In summary, our overall progress against the activities identified in the Council Plan for 2023/24 is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good (green) progress was achieved in 67% (99) of activities.</li> <li>• Satisfactory (amber) progress was achieved in 30% (44) of activities.</li> <li>• Limited (red) progress was made in 3% (4) of activities.</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">PRIORITY</th> <th colspan="3">ACTIONS</th> </tr> <tr> <th>GREEN</th> <th>AMBER</th> <th>RED</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poverty</td> <td>14</td> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Affordable and Accessible Housing</td> <td>11</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green Society and Environment</td> <td>16</td> <td>11</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Economy</td> <td>17</td> <td>5</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Personal and Community Well-being</td> <td>18</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education and Skills</td> <td>14</td> <td>6</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A Well Managed Council</td> <td>9</td> <td>7</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Overall Progress</b></td> <td><b>99 (67%)</b></td> <td><b>44 (30%)</b></td> <td><b>4 (3%)</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PRIORITY	ACTIONS			GREEN	AMBER	RED	Poverty	14	3	0	Affordable and Accessible Housing	11	10	0	Green Society and Environment	16	11	2	Economy	17	5	1	Personal and Community Well-being	18	2	0	Education and Skills	14	6	0	A Well Managed Council	9	7	1	<b>Overall Progress</b>	<b>99 (67%)</b>	<b>44 (30%)</b>	<b>4 (3%)</b>
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1.05	There are no activities showing a <b>Red RAG</b> status relevant to the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee.																																							
1.06	<b>Performance against the Council Plan Performance Indicators (Measures)</b>																																							

	<p>Analysis of performance against the performance indicators is undertaken using the RAG status. This is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>RED</b> - Under-performance against target.</li> <li>• <b>AMBER</b> - Where improvement may have been made but performance has missed the target.</li> <li>• <b>GREEN</b> - Positive performance against target.</li> </ul>																																							
1.07	<p>Analysis of the mid-year performance against the targets set for 2023/24 shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 (46%) measures have a green RAG status</li> <li>• 14 (20%) measures have an amber RAG status</li> <li>• 24 (34%) measures have a red RAG status</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">PRIORITY</th> <th colspan="3">MEASURES</th> </tr> <tr> <th>GREEN</th> <th>AMBER</th> <th>RED</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poverty</td> <td>6</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Affordable and Accessible Housing</td> <td>8</td> <td>3</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green Society and Environment</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Economy</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Personal and Community Well-being</td> <td>11</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education and Skills</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A Well Managed Council</td> <td>0</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Overall Progress</b></td> <td><b>32 (46%)</b></td> <td><b>14 (20%)</b></td> <td><b>24 (34%)</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PRIORITY	MEASURES			GREEN	AMBER	RED	Poverty	6	1	3	Affordable and Accessible Housing	8	3	12	Green Society and Environment	4	2	5	Economy	3	1	1	Personal and Community Well-being	11	2	0	Education and Skills	0	0	0	A Well Managed Council	0	5	3	<b>Overall Progress</b>	<b>32 (46%)</b>	<b>14 (20%)</b>	<b>24 (34%)</b>
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<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	There are no specific resource implications for this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>						
3.01	<p><b>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td rowspan="5">Throughout the Mid-Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2023/24.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Throughout the Mid-Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2023/24.	Prevention	Integration	Collaboration	Involvement
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Prevention							
Integration							
Collaboration							
Involvement							

## Well-being Goals Impact

Prosperous Wales	Throughout the Mid-Year Monitoring Report there is evidence of alignment with the Well-being Goals. Specific strategic and policy reports include impact and risk assessments.
Resilient Wales	
Healthier Wales	
More equal Wales	
Cohesive Wales	
Vibrant Wales	
Globally responsible Wales	

## Council's Well-being Objectives

The Council undertook a review of its Well-being Objectives during the development of the Council Plan. The updated set of Well-being Objectives are a more focused set of seven. The Well-being Objectives identified have associated priorities for which they resonate. See the full list below.

Priority	Well-being Objective
Poverty	Protecting our communities and people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs and to be resilient
Affordable and Accessible Housing	Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities
Green Society and Environment	Limiting the impact of the Council's services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint
Economy	Connecting communities and enabling a sustainable economic recovery and growth
Personal and Community Well-being	Supporting people in need to live as well as they can
Education and Skills	Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities
A Well Managed Council	A responsible, resourceful, and trusted Council operating as efficiently as possible

<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
4.01	The actions/measures detailed within the Council Plan are monitored by the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees according to the priority area of interest.
4.02	Chief Officers and Senior Managers have contributed towards reporting of relevant information.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 - Council Plan 2023/24 Mid-Year Performance Monitoring Report.

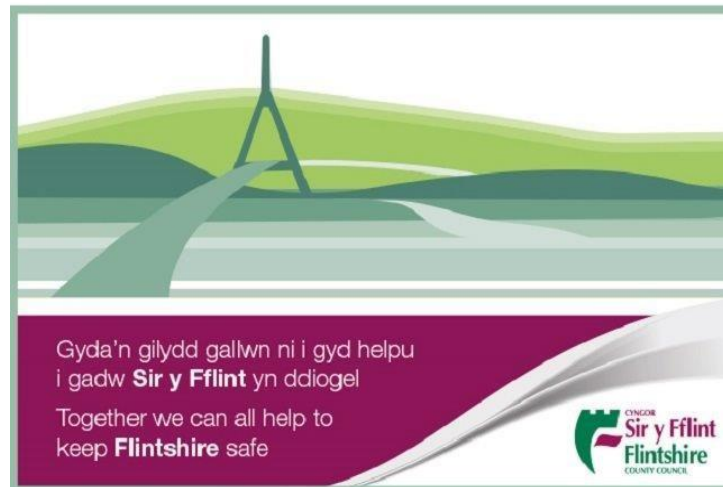
<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	Council Plan 2023/28

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Ceri Shotton, Overview &amp; Scrutiny Facilitator  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702305  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk">ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
8.01	<p><b>Council Plan:</b> the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for organisations to ‘set out any actions to increase the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements.’ Plans for organisations should be robust; be clear on where it wants to go; and how it will get there.</p> <p><b>An explanation of the report headings:</b></p> <p><b>Measures (Key Performance Indicators - KPIs)</b></p> <p><b>Actual (YTD)</b> – the year-to-date performance identified i.e., by numbers, percentages, etc</p> <p><b>Target (YTD)</b> – The target for the year to date which is set at the beginning of the year.</p> <p><b>Current RAG Rating</b> – This measures performance for the year against the target. It is automatically generated according to the data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Red</b> = a position of under performance against target</li> <li>• <b>Amber</b> = a mid-position where improvement may have been made but performance has missed the target; and</li> <li>• <b>Green</b> = a position of positive performance against the target.</li> </ul>

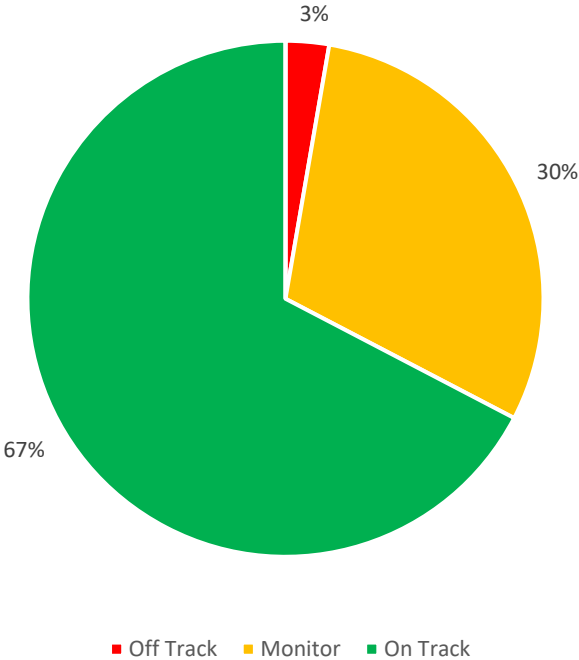
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# Council Plan Mid-Year Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24

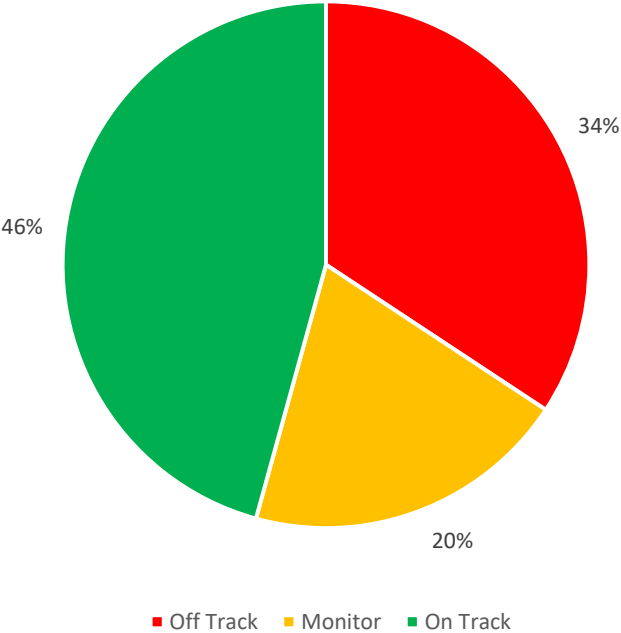


# Analysis

Council Plan - Action RAG Status



Council Plan - Measure RAG Status



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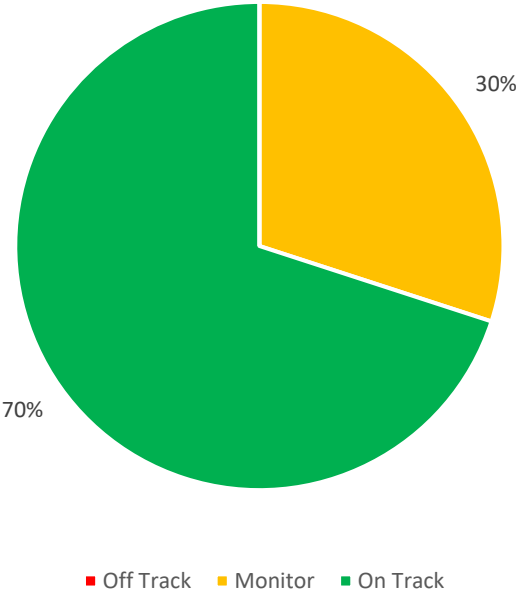
- Key**
- ▲ Red: Limited Progress – delay in scheduled activity and, not on track.
  - Amber: Satisfactory Progress – some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track.
  - ★ Green: Good Progress – activities completed on schedule and on track.



# Education and Skills

# Education and Skills Overall Performance

Education and Skills - Action RAG Status





There are no quarterly measures within the Education and Skills Priority.

# Educational Engagement and Achievement

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Embed the revised processes and procedures in relation to attendance and exclusion, using data to better inform and target interventions at both a pupil and school level	50%	★	Processes have been established and are being embedded as a core part of the operational approach of the Education welfare Service (EWS). Attendance and exclusion information is now shared on a regular basis across the Inclusion and Progression Management Team. Supporting the attendance of pupils transitioning from Year 6 into secondary schools has been a focus for targeted intervention from the EWS.
Explore and develop options for in house provision in response to the increasing number of pupils struggling to engage with education due to mental health difficulties	40%	★	Work is underway to pilot a range of inhouse provisions. Teaching and support staff have been appointed and external providers are being sourced to support a broad curriculum offer.
Provide bespoke support for schools through training and development to improve the level of speech language and communication skills for pupils	80%	★	All primary schools have been offered access to training on the Talkboost programme to support pupil speech and language development. This is joint initiative delivered by officers and health's speech & language therapists. Multi-agency meetings have taken place to identify other suitable programmes of intervention and training for schools. Work has continued on supporting access for schools to a reporting tool to target and monitor the impact of intervention.
Support the implementation of the revised curriculum for secondary pupils in years 7 and 8	100%	✔	All secondary schools in Flintshire have implemented the revised curriculum for secondary pupils in Years 7 and 8 from September 2023. Each school continues to work with their supporting improvement adviser to embed this work. Schools can access ongoing professional development through the consortium.
Through the roll out of the Wales Government delivery model for Community Focused schools establish a collaborative approach to reduce school exclusion and improve school attendance	40%	★	Staff have been recruited to the management and family engagement roles. The teams are established within the designated delivery areas and are developing links with the schools and communities.


# Digital Learning Opportunities

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
All schools to have a formally adopted Digital Strategy	30%		The pace of delivery for all schools to have a formally adopted Digital Strategy was impacted by the need to recruit to the post of a Digital Officer. September 2023, saw the successful recruitment of a Digital Officer.
Embed the delivery plan for Integrated Youth Services by maintaining focus on digital, school and community engagement	100%		This is embedded and the service continues to strive for increasing and improving the offer, including further utilising digital options to further the reach of the service.




# Learning Environments

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Commence construction of the Drury CP refurbishment and extension	0%	★	Construction not yet commenced as project is currently in the design development stage.
Commence design development options for a new Welsh medium primary school for Buckley / Mynydd Isa area	25%	●	Project is at early planning and scoping stage - Strategic discussions also underway with the Welsh Government Sustainable Learning Communities Capital Investment Team.
Complete construction of the Penyffordd CP extension	50%	★	Construction of the Penyffordd CP extensions have commenced and remain on programme, on time and within budget.
Continue construction of the 3-16 campus at Mynydd Isa	50%	★	Construction of new 3-16 campus commenced in November 2022 on the Argoed High School site. Progress continues in line with the construction programme and Phase 1 of the campus is on target to be delivered as expected and within the parameters of the contract for the project.
Determine a strategy for school modernisation within the Saltney area	10%	●	An early engagement process was completed in July to understand the schools' and community views.
Progress the development of a new premises plan for the North-East Wales Archive	30%	●	As joint partner, Denbighshire County Council have continued to review plans and options available pending their formal approval process.
Schedule Council approval to progress Wales Government's Band B Sustainable Communities projects within the Learning Investment Programme	50%	★	The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme is designed to be delivered over a number of waves, or 'bands' of investment, currently in Band B (2019-2024) the Council has agreed with Welsh Government a total investment of circa £85 million. Three projects identified within Band B have been delivered, four are currently progressing, one is at initial scoping phase, two at design development and one is currently in construction.

# Learning Community Networks

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Continue to consolidate the joint working between Flintshire County Council and Denbighshire County Council through the Northeast Wales Archive to provide a sustainable and resilient service	30%		The joint service between Flintshire and Denbighshire County Council is firmly established in accordance with its Memorandum of Understanding. Further development of the working arrangements has focused on the operational mergers of budgets, HR and IT services, some of which can only be fully operationalised once the new build is in place.

# Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Complete the strategic actions for Year 1 of the WESP 5-year action plan	100%		All actions were given a RAG rating and discussed at the summer term meeting of the Welsh in Education Forum. No actions were identified as red and the annual report was submitted to Welsh Government in July 2023. The Forum has now moved to implementing year two of the five year action plan.
Extend the range of youth services delivered bilingually to encourage young people to retain and use their Welsh language skills into early adulthood	50%		This continues with the URDD Gobaith Cymru taking the lead until there is recruitment for a Welsh language Youth Worker. The sessions have been taking place in schools during quarter one and quarter two.
Review Welsh medium resource provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs	75%		The Senior Learning Advisor, Additional Learning Needs, Inclusion and Progression teams have visited all Welsh medium schools to review the current Welsh Medium provision and support for children with additional learning needs.

# Well-being

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Embed a Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Well-being in all Flintshire	70%	★	This work is on track with 73% of all Flintshire schools actively engaged in this process.
Improve awareness of trauma informed practice with schools and Education and Youth employees	50%	★	The 'Belonging' group has been established with senior leaders in high schools and key officers to advance and improve awareness of a trauma informed practice. The initial meeting of the group being held in the Summer Term. The Trauma Informed Schools UK (TISUK), eleven day diploma training has commenced with 24 key school leads and officers taking part. TISUK have also delivered a whole setting awareness training to two schools.