

Public Document Pack

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Chief Officer (Governance)
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To: All Members of the Council

30 November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING
FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2023 at 1.00 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 FOR ABSENCE

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

3 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 22)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 26th September and 24th October 2023.

4 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Purpose: To receive the communications as circulated.

5 PETITIONS

Purpose: This is an opportunity for Members of Council to submit petitions on behalf of people in their ward. Once received, petitions are passed to the appropriate Chief Officer for action and response.

PRINCIPAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS

6 CAPITAL STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2024/25 – 2026/27 (Pages 23 - 42)

Report of Chief Executive -

Purpose: To present the Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27 for approval

7 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 – 2026/27 (Pages 43 - 74)

Report of Chief Executive, Corporate Finance Manager, Corporate Manager – Capital Programme & Assets -

Purpose: To present the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 for approval

8 NOTICE OF MOTION (Pages 75 - 76)

Purpose: This item is to receive any Notices of Motion. One has been received and is attached to the agenda.

ORDINARY ITEMS OF BUSINESS

9 GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 77 - 114)

Report of Chief Officer (Governance) -

Purpose: To approve the Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report.

10 APPOINTMENT OF A LAY PERSON TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE (Pages 115 - 118)

Report of Chief Officer (Governance) -

Purpose: To update Members on the re appointment of a lay person to the Governance and Audit Committee

11 CHANGE OF MEETING TIME – PLANNING COMMITTEE (Pages 119 - 138)

Report of Chief Officer (Governance) - Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources

Purpose: To consider the proposed change to the start time of Planning Committee Meetings from the December 2023 meeting.

FOR INFORMATION

12 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Purpose: This item is to receive any Public Questions. None were received by the deadline.

13 QUESTIONS (Pages 139 - 140)

Purpose: To note the answers to any questions submitted in accordance with County Council Standing Order No. 9.4(A). One was received by the deadline and is attached.

14 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS ON COMMITTEE MINUTES

Purpose: To consider any issues raised by Members arising from the Minutes of the Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees and other Committees, together with any questions raised under Section 4.20 of the Council's Constitution. Copies of the Minutes of the various meetings that have taken place since the last ordinary meeting of the Council which have been approved and published on the Authority's website, can be obtained, if required, via the Committee and Member Services.

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

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
26TH SEPTEMBER 2023

Minutes of the meeting of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Tuesday, 26th September 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor Gladys Healey (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Bernie Attridge, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, Mel Buckley, Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Geoff Collett, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Paul Cunningham, Rob Davies, Ron Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, Carol Ellis, David Evans, Chrissy Gee, David Healey, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Richard Jones, Simon Jones, Richard Lloyd, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Debbie Owen, Ted Palmer, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Ian Roberts, Dan Rose, Kevin Rush, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thew, Linda Thomas, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam, Antony Wren and Arnold Woolley.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy), Chief Officer (Housing and Assets), Chief Officer (Social Services), Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development, Highway Network Manager, Democratic Services Manager, Team Leader – Democratic Services and Democratic Services Officers.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors: Marion Bateman, Teresa Carberry, and Hilary McGuill.

26. PRESENTATIONS

FreePay Award – Oxygen Finance

The Chief Executive introduced the item and explained that unlike with usual Award recognitions, which had already been formally presented to recipients at an Awards event, this award had yet to be formally awarded to Flintshire and the County Council meeting was being used for that to happen. Attending the meeting were Sarah Harnin, Oxygen Finance, Lisa McQuaide, Project Manager and Debbie Griffiths, Payment and Receipts Manager.

He explained that on 1st April 2021 the Council, with its appointed partner, Oxygen Finance, launched an early payment programme, 'FastTrack', that not only would benefit the Council through improved payment processes and cost savings, but also its suppliers, by giving them the opportunity to be paid earlier than contracted terms.

In the 26 months since going live, the Council had paid over £21.5m early to small, local businesses as part of the FreePay Programme, with average payments being made in 8 days. Eligible suppliers, (those that were registered locally and small

in company size), were automatically enrolled into FreePay, which was delivered as part of the Council's Accelerated Payment Programme, FastTrack. FreePay enabled the Council to pay suppliers early, without charge, speeding up payments to businesses where cash was most urgently needed, supporting business growth and delivering social value.

Sarah Harnin from Oxygen Finance was welcomed to the meeting to present the award in recognition of the Councils pioneering work. She said that Oxygen was committed to social value and were delighted to see the work undertaken by councils. The work Flintshire County Council had carried out had been instrumental to Oxygen which had enabled them to create the FreePay programme which could then be rolled out elsewhere. She thanked Lisa McQuaide, Debbie Griffiths and teams for their dedication to the programme.

Councillor Johnson commented on the incredible numbers of small local businesses that had received early payments and the benefits to those businesses which enabled them to keep their cash flow moving.

"Local Government Chronicle Pensions & Investment – Rising Star" Award

The Chief Executive welcomed Ieuan Hughes, Phil Latham and Debbie Fielder to the meeting. He explained that The Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Pensions and Investment Rising Star Awards sought to recognise and identify talented future leaders within the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

The winner of the award was recognised as an exceptional young officer, making change happen, taking difficult decisions and asking important questions.

At the recent awards ceremony Ieuan Hughes fought off tough competition from across the UK and had been awarded overall winner in this category.

Over the last four years Ieuan had helped shape the Fund's portfolio and investment strategy. He was meticulous in his monitoring of the Funds performance and was keenly focussed on safeguarding the financial security of members whilst actively championing positive change through responsible and sustainable investment practices.

Councillor Palmer, as Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee, commented on the impact Ieuan had had on the fund and congratulated him on the award.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Following advice from the Chief Officer (Governance), all Members declared a personal interest in agenda item number 8 – Schedule of Remuneration 2023/24. The following Members declared a personal interest in agenda item number 10 – Notice of Motion (1) in relation to landlords: Councillors: Davies-Cooke, Gee, Hodge, Lloyd, McKeown, Owen and Preece. Councillor Lloyd said he would leave the room during the debate.

28. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th June were submitted.

Councillor Attridge moved them as a correct record which was seconded by Councillor Brown.

Councillor Banks said his comment on free school meals was that the take up was high in deprived areas in Flintshire compared to other counties.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the amendment the minutes be approved as a correct record.

29. CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

All Members had received details of the engagements that the Chair had undertaken since the last meeting. She thanked those Members who attended her Civic Service and Father Wheeler for conducting the Service.

She thanked the Vice Chair, Councillor Hutchinson, and his consort, for events they had attended on her behalf.

On behalf of the Council, she had attended the funeral of a former member of Flintshire County Council, Quentin Dodd. She was sad to report that Councillor Peter Prendergast, who was the Chairman of Denbighshire County Council, had passed away suddenly and a letter of condolence from the Council had been sent.

29. PETITIONS

None were received.

30. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

The Chief Executive introduced the report which gave an overview of the performance of the Council during 2022/23 against the priorities set within the Council Plan 2022/23 and progress against the Well-being Objectives.

The Report was produced in accordance with two key areas of legislation: (1) Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; and (2) Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

The report highlighted areas of high performance amongst all the Portfolio's and all that had been achieved during the last financial year. Full details of those areas of high performance were contained within the appendix to the report.

The Audit Wales published an Annual Audit Summary Report each year on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales. The Auditor General had not made any statutory recommendations with which the Council must comply.

Moving forward, the Council Plan measures would be incorporated into the Annual Performance Report.

Councillor Mullin moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Christine Jones.

Councillor Richard Jones welcomed the comments from the Chief Executive on how the information would be reported in the future, with all of the information contained within one report.

Councillor Peers suggested that the document would be easier to refer to if the bullet points within the appendix were numbers.

On the 20mph speed limit rollout, it referred to the service being successful for acquiring the funding for the project and Councillor Peers asked if Welsh Government (WG) had not provided the funding, would the Council have had to fund the project. The Highway Network Manager explained that the funding for the 20mph project was an application process and details of the costs to roll out the project had to be outlined.

On strong performance in Chief Executives, he asked what the insurance claims related to. The Chief Executive explained that all local authorities had claims for things such as trips, slips and falls and it was important to report on the claims that had been settled at nil cost to the Council and he referred to one such fraudulent claim reported in the press recently. If Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee wanted to receive details on insurance claims that could be placed on the Forward Work Programme.

In response to a further question on agency costs, it was agreed that the Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development would provide a written response.

Councillor Coggins Cogan commented that the figures were a snapshot in time which were meaningless as they were not comparable to anything else. He felt the Council needed to be clearer on how the lack of funds was affecting the local authority. The Chief Executive responded that within the Council Plan there was a lot of performance data which was a useful document and accepted the comment on the lack of funds where it affected performance.

Councillor Glyn Banks commented on the good work undertaken in relation to the Welsh language, including the Welsh language classes and the alterations undertaken at schools.

Councillor Attridge said he hoped the properties at Glan y Morfa were being used to support people with disabilities. The Chief Officer (Social Services) confirmed that the properties referred to were used to support people with disabilities.

On comments from Councillor Attridge on care packages and working with the Countess of Chester Hospital (COCH), the Chief Officer (Social Services) explained that the Council had Social Workers based at COCH and they had a good working

relationship with the hospital. He said the Council worked well collectively with COCH, Wrexham Maelor and Glan Clwyd, adding that the Welsh approaches to health and social care were different to those in England.

Councillor Roberts welcomed the comments from Councillor Glyn Banks on the Welsh language and said he hoped Welsh would be used more frequently in the Council Chamber.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the 2022/23 Annual Performance Report, noting the performance achieved, be approved.

31. SCHEDULE OF REMUNERATION 2023/24

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report and explained that it was an annual report.

The Schedule of Remuneration for 2023/24 was appended to the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Attridge, the Chief Officer (Governance) confirmed that the cost of the Deputy Leader role was split between the two appointed Deputy Leaders.

Councillor Rob Davies moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Copple.

RESOLVED:

That the completed Schedule of Remuneration for 2023/24 be approved for publication.

32. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report and explained the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 imposed an obligation on the Standards Committee to publish an annual report, and to have regard to statutory guidance as to the contents of such reports.

The first such report was attached for consideration by Council. It contained two recommendations which had either been actioned or which were in hand.

In moving the recommendation, Councillor Parkhurst thanked his colleagues on the Standards Committee, particularly the Chair, Julia Hughes. It was seconded by Councillor Wren.

RESOLVED:

That the Standards Committee be thanked for its first report and the recommendations be accepted.

33. NOTICES OF MOTION

The following Notices of Motion had been submitted:

'Report a Rogue' Landlord and Rogue Landlord Checker Tools for Flintshire
Proposed by Councillor Sam Swash – Seconded by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson

This Council notes:

1. that data from Shelter Cymru shows that up to one third of people in Wales are living in unsafe or unaffordable housing.
2. that one in ten people in Wales are living in properties that are not structurally sound or have issues such as faulty wiring or fire risks.
3. that tens of thousands of people say that they have experienced discrimination when trying to find a home.
4. that one in four people in Wales are living in homes with significant damp, mould or condensation problems.
5. that there are now more people in Wales living in the private rented sector than live in social housing.
6. that the number of rogue landlords being prosecuted by local authorities in England and Wales remains very low, despite large numbers of complaints.
7. that in 2017 Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, launched a 'Report a Rogue' online tool to report concerns with a rental property or landlord to the enforcement teams in the relevant borough.

This Council believes:

1. that the housing crisis represents one of the greatest challenges facing both Wales and the United Kingdom.
2. that tenants should be better protected from facing discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, disability or pet ownership.
3. that local authorities should take seriously their duty to take enforcement action against rogue landlords.
4. that tenants should be encouraged to report rogue landlords to their local authority and that the local authority should keep a public database of landlords who have been prosecuted or faced civil enforcement action for housing offences.

This Council resolves:

1. to create a 'Report a Rogue' tool for tenants to report rogue landlords to Flintshire County Council.

2. to create a Rogue Landlord Checker; a publicly available and searchable database of landlords in Flintshire who have been prosecuted or faced civil enforcement action for housing offences.

In speaking to the Notice of Motion, Councillor Swash commented on housing inequality and landlord and tenant relationships, with the aim of this Notice of Motion being to make them more equal and make it a safer place for tenants.

Councillor Parkhurst moved an amendment to the Notice of Motion for the words 'rogue property agents' be to be included in addition to rogue landlords. The mover and seconder of the Notice of Motion accepted the amendment.

In responding to the Notice of Motion, the Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection read out the following:

“At the outset, it is important to note that in Flintshire we already take our responsibility for the standards within the Private Rented Housing sector seriously. Our Housing Standards and Enforcement Officers already undertake important work in this area. Their aim is to work with landlords to help achieve compliance with legal requirements in the private rented sector. However, when necessary, enforcement action is taken.

During the last financial year (2022/23) a total of 327 inspections of privately rented properties were undertaken, which resulted in 13 Improvement Notice served; 5 Prohibition Orders; 1 Emergency Prohibition Order; 10 Hazard Awareness Notices; and 5 Prosecutions undertaken. This year we have seen a successful prosecution of a landlord who was fined just under £30,000 for putting residents at risk due to HMO licensing conditions not being met. I'd like to thank our officers for their hard work in this area.

The purpose of the Report a Rogue Landlord Scheme is a tool which would provide further help to those who are tenants or prospective tenants. Nevertheless, I think it is also important that we promote the other tool that already exists and is at the disposal of tenants, which is the Rent Smart Wales (RSW) Public Register. It is possible to search for a property address, landlord name, agent name and RSW reference number to check that a property is registered and that the person/company they are entering into an agreement with had the relevant licence for the property.

If adopted, this Notice of Motion would put Flintshire in a unique position as a Welsh authority in adopting such a Report a Rogue Landlord Scheme. We would be following in the footsteps of the London Boroughs in developing such a tool. It will take time to develop. As a Council we must now allow officers time to scope out the requirements on how it can be implemented. There will be resource and cost implications, not only to our Housing Enforcement Team, but also to colleagues in IT, Legal and Information Governance. Those impacts will need to be considered and quantified. I recommend that they are brought to Cabinet for oversight and development once we are in receipt of that information”.

Councillor Attridge said that Rent Smart Wales was already in place which he felt provided more protection than the arrangements in England. Councillor Peers concurred and felt the Notice of Motion was a duplication of Rent Smart Wales.

Councillor Banks welcomed the Notice of Motion and said he had been assisting somebody recently in a 'no fault' eviction.

Councillor Ellis queried how this would work if a property was not registered with Rent Smart Wales, commenting that properties were falling through the net.

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) said processes were already in place as outlined by the Cabinet Member. If the properties referred to by Councillor Ellis were private rental properties, they could be looked into, and he asked her to contact him outside of the meeting to provide details. If the properties were not registered, then the proposed scheme would not help in that scenario.

Councillor Owen felt processes were already in place with Rent Smart Wales and suggested that the Landlord Forum be re-established.

Councillor Crease commented on the budget issues facing the Council and felt that this was a duplication of Rent Smart Wales and would have a budget implication.

Councillor Ibbotson advised that Rent Smart Wales did not deal with anti-social behaviour. He felt the Notice of Motion would improve what was offered by the Council at no long-term cost.

Councillor Richard Jones sought advice on whether there was a cost to the proposal and if officers through it would be a useful tool. The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) said he did not think it would be a zero cost. He suggested that he develop a proposal and submit it to Cabinet, if supported today.

On being put to the vote, the Notice of Motion, as amended, was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion, as amended, be supported.

Councillor Johnson sought a brief adjournment, which was seconded, for the purposes of circulating an amendment to the following Notice of Motion. Councillor Coggins Cogan commented that the amendment should have been circulated prior to the start of the meeting.

On being put to the vote the adjournment was supported and a 15-minute adjournment took place.

Free School Meals – Councillor David Coggins Cogan

The ongoing Cost of Living crisis forces more and more families throughout Flintshire into food poverty. In June, Welsh Government (WG) announced it was ending the holiday provision of Free School Meals, removing a safety net from those

who needed it the most: vulnerable children trapped in poverty through no fault of their own.

Several councils across Wales urgently approved funding to continue the Free School Meals during the summer break. Those Cabinets decided alleviating food poverty for children was a priority. Flintshire's Cabinet decided differently and refused funding altogether. This was a political choice.

Torfaen Council, unable to afford the full cost, provided one-off payments to families eligible for Free School Meals. The Leader of Flintshire Council dismissed this option out of hand. The full burden of the halted Free School Meals policy fell on those least able to bear it: children living in poverty.

This policy decision not to fund holiday Free School Meals was not communicated to Members. This hampered Members' efforts in proactively informing their residents of this new pressure on family finances. Deliberately choosing not to inform Members about the discontinuation of holiday Free School Meals is unforgivable.

Therefore, this Council:

1. Notes with disappointment the Cabinet's decision:
 - a. not to fund Free School Meals during the holidays; and
 - b. not to provide any part-funding to eligible children.
2. Notes and objects to the Cabinet's total lack of communication in telling Members that Informal Cabinet decided against funding holiday provision of Free School Meals.
3. Calls upon the Cabinet to reconsider its decision and to reinstate holiday provision of Free School Meals for as long as the Cost of Living crisis continues.

Notes

- Informal Cabinet discussed holiday provision of Free School Meals on 27th July 2023.
- Despite the critical nature of food poverty for many families across Flintshire, the Cabinet did not inform Members of its decision.
- This lack of communication seriously undermined Members' abilities to proactively warn families and provide them with information about the (very limited) alternative options.

Councillor Coggins Cogan questioned why all Members had not been informed of the decision taken at Informal Cabinet on 27th July. He said if Members had been aware they would have been in a position to direct parents to alternative provisions available to them. Parents were embarrassed to ask for support which resulted in vulnerable families being left exposed. He sought support of the Notice of Motion which would protect children in the future.

In seconding the Notice of Motion, Councillor Parkhurst said it was a decision of WG to stop providing free school meals in the school holidays, not a decision of this authority. When he questioned the First Minister, he had been told there was no money in the budget to continue the provision.

Councillor Richard Jones proposed a further adjournment, which was seconded by Councillor Attridge, to allow a discussion to take place between the Members involved in the Notice of Motion and the amendment to it which was carried.

Following the adjournment, the Chief Officer (Governance) thanked everybody for their patience and said the adjournment had helped in finding a way forward.

The amendment to the Notice of Motion, as proposed by Councillor Roberts, had been accepted by the mover and seconder and therefore became the substantive Notice of Motion.

Councillor Roberts addressed the amended Notice of Motion and said the ongoing Cost of Living crisis forced more and more families throughout Flintshire into food poverty. In June WG announced it was ending the holiday provision of free school meals, removing a safety net from those who needed it, the most vulnerable children trapped in poverty through no fault of their own.

Several Councils across Wales urgently approved funding to continue free school meals during the summer break. Those Cabinets decided alleviating food poverty for children was a priority. The full burden of the halted free school meals policy fell on those least able to bear children living in poverty.

The policy decision not to fund free school meals was not communicated to Members. That hampered Members' efforts in proactively informing their residents of this new pressure on family finances. Choosing not to inform Members about the discontinuation of holiday free school meals was regrettable and he apologised to the Chamber for that. Councillor Roberts moved the following:

"This Council notes with disappointment WG's decision not to fund free school meals during the holidays and not to provide any part funding to eligible children.

This Council will work with WG in asking it to reinstate provision of resources for free school meals.

Cabinet will give a commitment to work to find resources during the Christmas holidays for families on free school meals and will bring a report to Cabinet in November with proposals for how this can be achieved.

Cabinet will set up a working group to report back to Cabinet. The working group will be chaired by a back-bench Member of the Council but will contain Councillor Paul Johnson and Councillor Mared Eastwood with representatives from across the Chamber.

The working group will look at the issue of free school meals and will report before the budget.

Cabinet notes with disappointment WG's decision not to fund free school meals during the holidays and not to provide any funding to eligible children".

Councillor Ellis commented on the provision offered from Buckley Town Council for local children which she was proud of. She questions why Members were not informed of the decision taken by the Cabinet and sought assurance that something like that would not happen in the future. By way of personal explanation, Councillor Roberts responded and said Members were aware the previous year when the budget was set that there was no budgetary provision available for free school meals over the summer holiday period and that no amendment had been received at that time. It was announced in WG's final budget in March that there were financial resources for Easter and half term in May to fund free school meals, but not for the summer. He had submitted a letter to the Minister in June requesting the reinstatement of that financial resource but that did not happen. He commented on the high level of media coverage about the removal of the provision of free school meals. He had not received emails from Members about free school meals in Flintshire. Moving forward with the agreed Notice of Motion he hoped the Council could work together to provide the children of Flintshire what they needed.

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that the amendment, which was now the substantive motion, had several elements to it. The key parts were around the funding commitment to provide funding over the Christmas holidays then a commitment to look at longer term funding which was the purpose of the working group.

In response to a question from Councillor Crease, the Chief Officer (Governance) confirmed that the Working Group would be looking at possibilities from 1st April 2024. Before then, funding would be found for the Christmas period only.

In his right of reply, Councillor Coggins Cogan thanked the Chair and supporting officers for their assistance. He also expressed his thanks to the Leader as he had offered a positive outcome. He appreciated that people were of different views but was grateful that Members had come together to reach a positive solution.

On being put to the vote, the Notice of Motion, as amended, was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion, as amended, be supported.

34. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

35. QUESTIONS

Three were received and had been included in the agenda for the meeting.

One was from Councillor Swash on launching a publicly owned municipal bus company in Flintshire once the Welsh Government (WG) passed its “One Bus, One Timetable, One Ticket” legislation. A full written response had been provided to all Members from Councillor David Hughes, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation.

Two were from Councillor Coggins Cogan on free school meals. At the meeting Councillor Coggins Cogan withdrew his questions.

An urgent question had been submitted by Councillor Brown, after the deadline, which had been accepted, on a call for the Leader and his Cabinet to join residents to call for the 20mph speed limit to be rescinded by Mark Drakeford. Copies of the question were circulated to all Members and a response was given by the Leader.

36. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS ON COMMITTEE MINUTES

None were received.

37. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 1.00 p. m. and ended at 5.25 p.m.)

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Chair

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
24th OCTOBER 2023

Minutes of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Tuesday,
24th October 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Gladys Healey (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Bernie Attridge, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, Mel Buckley, Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Geoff Collett, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Paul Cunningham, Rob Davies, Ron Davies, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, Carol Ellis, David Evans, Chrissy Gee, David Healey, Ian Hodge, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Richard Jones, Simon Jones, Richard Lloyd, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Allan Marshall, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Debbie Owen, Ted Palmer, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Dan Rose, Kevin Rush, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thomas, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam, Arnold Woolley and Antony Wren

APOLOGIES: Councillors Teresa Carberry, Adele Davies-Cooke, Andy Hughes, Roz Mansell, Hilary McGuill, Ian Roberts, Dale Selvester, and Linda Thew

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Morgan Independent Member - Standards Committee (as an observer)

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), Corporate Finance Manager, Strategic Finance Manager, Head of Democratic Services, Democratic Services Team and Fr. P. Wheeler for prayers

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chair introduced and welcomed Mark Morgan, Vice-Chair and Independent Member of the Standards Committee, to the meeting. Mr Morgan read out a statement to explain his role and purpose in joining the meeting as an observer.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

39. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair referred to her communication which had been circulated prior to the meeting and listed the events attended from 27th September 2023 to 24th October 2023. The Chair gave a brief overview of the events she and her consort had attended and commented on the success of the Scout Group event which had been held at County Hall on 17th October.

40. PETITIONS

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received.

41. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Corporate Finance Manager presented the Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23 for approval. He provided background information and reported on the key points as detailed in the covering report. He advised that as required by the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, the Annual Report had been reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 26 July 2023 and Cabinet on 19 September 2023. The Treasury Management Annual Report was appended to the report for consideration.

Councillor Mike Peers referred to section 3.01 in the Annual Report and asked for an explanation around the Public Works Loan Board (PLWB) Certainty Rate, and PWLB loans. He also commented on the information provided in the table in section 3.02 regarding borrowing activity. The Corporate Finance Manager and Strategic Finance Manager responded to the comments and questions raised.

Councillor Paul Johnson spoke in support of the report and thanked the Corporate Finance Manager and his team for their work.

Officers responded to the questions raised by Councillor Coggins-Cogan concerning other long-term liabilities shown in the table in section 3.02, loans to NEW Homes, information relating to Arlingclose Limited (the Council's treasury management advisors) in section 4.04 and Section 114 Notices, and the CIPFA Prudential Code update. The Corporate Finance Manager also responded to the further questions raised by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson on the loans to NEW Homes and explained the arrangements around repayment.

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor Glyn Banks and seconded by Councillor Johnson.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2022/23 be approved.

42. NEW CONSULTATION: SENEDD CYMRU (MEMBERS AND ELECTIONS) BILL

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report to update Members on a new consultation: Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill. He advised that if passed, the Bill, amongst other things, would increase the number of Members of the Senedd from 60 to 96; change the way in which Members were elected; make provision in relation to the Senedd's constituency boundaries; and decrease the length of time between Senedd elections from five to four years. The Chief Officer provided background information and referred to the main considerations as summarised in the report.

Councillor Richard Jones expressed some concerns regarding the proposals in the Bill and suggested that a workshop be held to enable Members further opportunity to consider the proposals in more detail and provide their views. The Chief Officer responded to the points raised and agreed to arrange a workshop to assist Members.

Members expressed concerns on the proposals and commented on the financial implications; the election method and importance of local representation; democracy and proportional representation; the need for clarification, evidence, reasoning, and scrutiny to support the proposed changes.

Councillor Dave Hughes suggested that following the all-Member workshop Members additional views should be sent to the Democratic Services Manager and that the Council grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive to formulate the Council's response to the consultation.

Councillor Richard Jones agreed to the amendment and moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Johnson. When put to the vote the recommendation was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the additional views expressed by Members following a workshop be collated and the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to formulate the Council's response to the consultation.

43. URGENT CABINET ITEM 19 SEPTEMBER 2023 (PROCUREMENT OF FLEET CONTRACT EXTENSION)

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report to update Council following the consideration of an urgent item (Procurement of Fleet Contract Extension) at Cabinet on 19th September 2023. He provided background information and asked the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) to present the main considerations as detailed in the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Richard Jones, the Chief Officer (Governance) provided explanation on why the matter had been submitted as an urgent item to Cabinet when the expiry date of the contract had been known for many years. In response to the further questions raised by Councillor Jones, the Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) explained that complex negotiations had been ongoing for some time with the Contractor around the terms to extend the initial contract, however, the issues were not yet fully resolved. She outlined the next steps with a view to the new agreement to the contract to start on 1st April 2024.

Councillor Coggins Cogan raised a procedural matter concerning consent for an urgent item to be submitted to Council which he proposed be referred to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee to be addressed.

Councillor Ibbotson also referred to the matter raised by Councillor Coggins Cogan and asked the Chief Officer (Governance) if he could provide a written

response with reference to Section 5 - Local Government & Housing Act 1989, to determine if action was required.

In response to the further comments and questions raised by Members the Chief Officer (Governance) clarified that a temporary extension had been granted to the contract as an interim measure pending a final decision on the awarding of the contract following consideration by Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Dave Hughes moved the recommendation which was seconded. When put to the vote the recommendation in the report was carried.

RESOLVED

That the reason for the Urgent item considered at Cabinet on 19th September 2023 be noted.

44. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

45. QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that a question had been received from Councillor Parkhurst which had been included on the agenda for the meeting. Councillor Johnson, Cabinet Member for Finance, provided a written response to the question which was read out and circulated to Members during the meeting.

Councillor Parkhurst spoke in response to the statement from Councillor Johnson and asked a supplementary question to request that a full business case be prepared urgently to seek a better funding deal for Flintshire and all 22 local authorities by the Welsh and UK Governments. In response Councillor Johnson reiterated the advice given in his statement that in the next few weeks the Leader of the Council would request a meeting of Group Leaders to consider and agree collectively how the Council would move forward on this issue.

RESOLVED:

That the questions and written and verbal responses be received and noted.

46. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS ON COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

47. NOTICE OF MOTION

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that none had been received by the deadline.

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

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 1.00 pm and ended at 3.15 pm)

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Chair

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 6 th December 2023
Report Subject	Capital Strategy Including Prudential Indicators 2024/25 to 2026/27
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the Council's Capital Strategy and seeks County Council's approval.

The report explains the need for the Strategy, its key aims, and the content of each of its sections.

Under the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code), authorities are required to set a range of Prudential Indicators (PI's). The Capital Strategy includes details of the Council's Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 – 2026/27.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Council approves the Capital Strategy.
2	<p>Council approves: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 - 2026/27 as detailed within Tables 1, and 4 – 8 of the Capital Strategy. Delegated authority for the Corporate Finance Manager to effect movements between the separately agreed limits within the authorised limit for external debt and the operational boundary for external debt (Table 6 of the Capital Strategy).

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024 – 2027
1.01	The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the Code), requires that the Council has in place a Capital Strategy (the Strategy). The guidance to the Code defines the specific requirements of the Strategy. This report updates the Strategy for Council's consideration.
1.02	The key aims of the Strategy are to explain the ways in which the capital programme is developed and funded, the potential impact it has on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the way in which it relates to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. The Strategy is an overarching document and refers to other documents such as the Capital Programme, the Treasury Management Strategy, and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy. The Strategy is split into a number of sections as described below. The Strategy is enclosed as Appendix 1.
1.03	Capital Expenditure This section defines capital expenditure. There is some limited local discretion in the definition as reflected in the Council's accounting policies.
1.04	Resources This section explains the way in which the Capital Programme is funded. The Council has a number of funding sources, but these sources are limited and in some cases, particularly capital receipts, diminishing. Some of those sources, particularly prudential borrowing, add pressure to the Council's MTFS.
1.05	Prioritisation of Capital Expenditure This section explains the way in which the Capital Programme is divided into three sections and how decisions are made as to which schemes to include in each section in each year.
1.06	Governance This section explains the governance arrangements in place in the development and monitoring of the capital programme.
1.07	Capital Expenditure Plans This section refers to the Council's capital expenditure plans as agreed in its Capital Programme. It covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital expenditure plans• The way in which those plans are expected to be financed• Minimum Revenue Provision• Estimates of the Capital Financing Requirement, a measure of unfinanced expenditure

1.08	<p>Treasury Management</p> <p>This section covers the way in which the Strategy relates to the Council's treasury management activity. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Borrowing Strategy • The relationship between the Council's debt portfolio and its Capital Financing Requirement • The Authorised Limit and Operational Debt Limits for borrowing, ensuring the limits on the Council's exposure to debt are set • The Council's Investment Strategy • Treasury management governance
1.09	<p>Commercial activities</p> <p>This section reports that the Council has limited commercial activity, having a limited portfolio of investment properties (agricultural properties and industrial units). The Council does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return.</p>
1.10	<p>Liabilities</p> <p>This section explains the liabilities which the Council has, in particular the deficit on its pension fund, and links with the Council's Statement of Accounts.</p>
1.11	<p>Revenue budget implications</p> <p>This section shows the impact of the capital financing costs on the revenue stream of the Council's budget.</p>
1.12	<p>Knowledge and skills</p> <p>This section details the skills of officers involved in developing and managing the capital programme and treasury management activity, and explains that the Council makes use of external advisers to assist with this activity.</p>
1.13	<p>Prudential Indicators</p> <p>The Council is required by the Code to develop and monitor Prudential Indicators. These are contained within the various sections of the Strategy, and are indicated as such.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Financial consequences for capital resources are as set out within the report and in Appendix 1.
2.02	Financial consequences for revenue resources are as set out within the report and in Appendix 1.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The Capital Strategy and the proposed Capital Programme was considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16 th November 2023 with their comments being fed back to the Cabinet at its meeting on 21 st November 2023.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Decisions made which involve the Council's assets and its Capital Programme often have very large and long-term financial implications. The purpose of the Capital Strategy includes setting a clear framework within which such decisions can be made mitigating the risks involved.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Chris Taylor, Strategic Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 703309 E-mail: christopher.taylor@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Capital Expenditure - Expenditure on the acquisition of Non-current Assets or expenditure that extends the life or value of an existing asset</p> <p>Capital Programme - The Council's financial plan covering capital schemes and expenditure proposals for the current year and a number of future years. It also includes estimates of the capital resources available to finance the programme</p> <p>Capital Receipt - Receipts (in excess of £10,000) from the disposal of an asset</p> <p>Capital Scheme - An individual capital project which is monitored and managed in isolation. The aggregate of all schemes comprises the Capital Programme</p> <p>Capital Strategy - A corporate document providing clear strategic guidance about an authority's objectives, priorities and spending plans, demonstrating the link to key corporate and service objectives.</p>

<p>Council Fund - The fund to which all the Council's revenue and capital expenditure is charged</p> <p>Disposal - The decommissioning or transfer of an asset to another party</p> <p>Non-current Asset - A resource controlled (but not necessarily owned) by the Council, from which economic benefits or service potential are expected to flow to the Council for more than 12 months.</p> <p>Prudential Code - The Code of Practice drawn up by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to underpin the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003 in respect of an authority's duty to determine the affordability, prudence and sustainability of its capital investment needs</p> <p>Prudential Indicators - Required by the Prudential Code, these take the form of limits, estimates or actual figures used to support the local decision making process for capital investment</p> <p>Unsupported Prudential Borrowing - Borrowing administered under the Prudential Code, whereby authorities can set their own policies on acceptable levels and types of borrowing. The Prudential Framework allows authorities to take out loans in response to overall cash flow forecasts and other factors provided they can show that the borrowing is to meet planned capital expenditure in the current year or the next three years.</p>
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CAPITAL STRATEGY

2024/25 TO 2026/27

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION
2	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE
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8	LIABILITIES
9	REVENUE BUDGET IMPLICATIONS
10	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT 2024/25

1. INTRODUCTION

The creation and approval of a capital strategy is now a requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the CIPFA Code).

The Code requires the Council to set Prudential Indicators in relation to its Capital Programme. This document includes those Prudential Indicators in tables 1 and, 4 - 8.

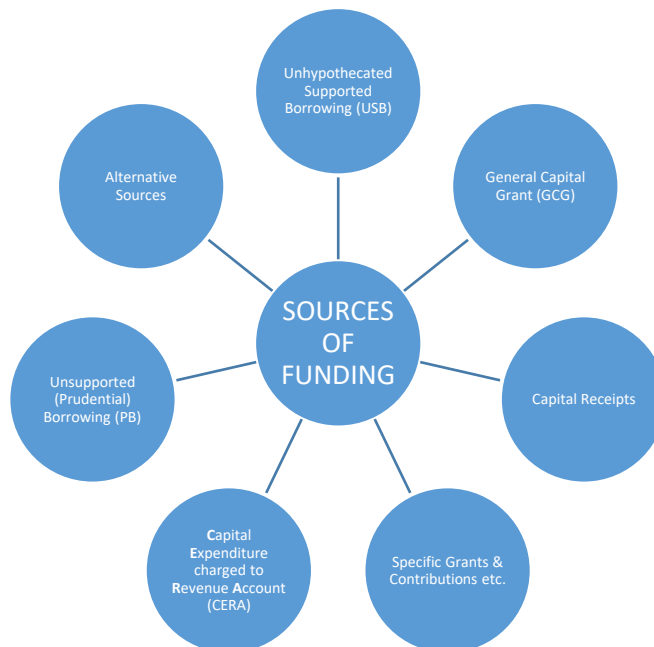
This document updates the capital strategy approved by Council in January 2023. It gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

2. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Capital expenditure occurs when the Council spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles, which will be used for more than one year. In local government this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets.

3. RESOURCES

The sources of funding available to the Council are described below:



Unhypothesized Supported Borrowing (USB), commonly referred to as Supported Borrowing

Each year Welsh Government provides councils with a Supported Borrowing capital allocation. Councils can then borrow to fund capital expenditure up to that annual allocation, and Welsh Government will include funding to cover the revenue costs associated with that level of borrowing in future years within the Revenue Support Grant. The Council decides how this funding is spent.

General Capital Grant (GCG)

This is the annual capital grant from Welsh Government. The Council decides how this funding is spent.

Supported borrowing and general capital grant will be used to fund capital schemes which:

- invest in, or maintain the life of, existing assets which will be retained for future service delivery
- are statutory / regulatory in nature

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) equivalent is known as the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA).

Capital Receipts

These are funds raised from the sale of council assets, usually, but not restricted to, land and buildings. Other examples include repayments of loans for capital purposes and release of restrictive covenants.

Capital finance regulations dictate that capital receipts can only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt. In the past, regulations required a proportion of all receipts be set aside to repay debt, but this requirement was removed some time ago for the Council Fund and was removed for the HRA with the introduction of self-financing. The Council's policy is to use capital receipts to fund capital expenditure rather than voluntarily set aside to repay debt. The Council sets a Minimum Revenue Provision policy each year which sets out our prudent methods for repayment of debt.

The current policy of pooling all capital receipts to allocate to capital schemes in accordance with the Council's strategic aims and priorities will continue. Capital receipts will not be 'ring-fenced' to fund schemes in the same service or geographical areas (with the exception of the HRA). Capital receipts represent a finite funding source based on a planned approach to asset disposals in support of the Council's priorities. They will be used to fund new capital investment schemes.

Generation of capital receipts depends on our ability to identify assets that are surplus to requirements, and to sell them at an appropriate time which will be subject to local economic factors. In recent years this has been challenging, and will continue to be so. Careful and prudent planning around the timing of capital receipts is needed to ensure schemes funded by capital receipts don't begin until we have received the receipt.

Capital receipts will be generated by continuing with our agricultural disposal policy, our policy to reduce the number of assets that we have and the review of the commercial estate.

Our assets are also supporting the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP) in innovative ways. We have identified surplus Council owned sites which will be used to develop new housing. This input will need to continue throughout the life of the programme. The impact of this on the generation of capital receipts will need to be carefully mapped and reflected within the wider Capital Programme.

Specific Grants and Contributions etc.

Specific Grants

These are grant allocations received from a range of sponsoring bodies including Welsh Government, Lottery, etc. for associated specific programmes and projects, with limited local discretion on how the funding is spent. Often the terms and conditions of such funding will require unused funding to be returned, and can require the Council to match fund. In times where capital resources are declining the Council will seek to maximise such funding streams, subject to the initiative/scheme reflecting both the third party's agenda and the Council's priorities.

Specific Contributions

These are contributions from developers towards the provision of public assets or facilities. Sometimes these are to mitigate the impact of their development on communities and are often referred to as Section 106 contributions. Contributions are earmarked for specific purposes in planning agreements and often relate to infrastructure projects including play areas, open spaces, and schools, but also including affordable housing. Developers also contribute to highways infrastructure developments through Section 38 and 278 agreements.

Specific Capital Loans

Increasingly, as Welsh Government's funding comes under pressure, capital funding that was previously issued as a specific capital grant is converted into a repayable loan, examples include the Home Improvement Loans fund, and Town Centre Loans funding. Grant funding will always be preferable to loan funding as it does not require repayment, however, loan funding does have benefits. Its use to date has been to provide recyclable loan funding for regeneration purposes. The benefit is that rather than being used to fund a single project, the funding can be recycled and used to fund a number of projects over the term of the loan.

Capital Loans are also available, and have been used, from other sources such as Salix in relation to energy saving projects.

As with grants, the Council will seek to maximise such developments that are in line with its priorities, whilst carefully considering the additional administrative burden in issuing and collecting loans, and the risk it carries from loan defaults.

Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI)

In recent years, as Welsh Government funding has been under pressure, schemes that would have been funded by capital grant have been funded by LGBI. Welsh Government provides the revenue support for borrowing costs incurred by the Council in borrowing to fund capital schemes (the difference with supported borrowing being that it's for a specific purpose aligned to Welsh Government priorities). LGBI has been used for highways maintenance and used to part fund the Welsh Government element of the Sustainable Communities for Learning – 'Band A'.

Capital Expenditure charged to Revenue Account (CERA)

Capital expenditure can be funded via a direct contribution from revenue funding (note: capital financing regulations mean it is not possible to use capital funding to fund revenue expenditure). This method of funding is extensively used by the HRA and will continue to be in the future. Its use for Council Fund activity is generally quite limited as this would add pressure to the revenue budget as forecast in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Unsupported Prudential Borrowing (commonly referred to as Prudential Borrowing)

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities supports local authorities in determining their programmes for capital investment in assets (we are required by regulation to follow its requirements). The Prudential Code gives councils discretion to undertake borrowing to fund capital projects with the full cost of borrowing funded from future council revenue resources subject to the Council demonstrating, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. A range of prudential indicators must be produced and approved demonstrating the impact of the programme. This option for funding additional capital developments is one which is funded from within existing revenue budgets or from generating additional and ongoing income streams, there is no support from any external funding which is a major constraint on its use as any scheme funded by prudential borrowing will add to the forecast budget deficit in the MTFS.

To date, limited use has been made of the option following cautious and prudent consideration of long term impacts. This approach will continue to be used with schemes that have a clear financial benefit such as 'invest to save', 'spend to earn', and those that generate returns over and above the costs of debt. The focus will be to fund schemes that are the Council's priorities, attract third party funding and generate revenue benefits in future financial years in the form of revenue savings, income generation or increasing Council Tax yield. In addition, prudential borrowing will be used to fund the Council element of Sustainable Communities for Learning – 'Band B', Croes Atti Residential Care Home and the HRA SHARP schemes.

Alternative Sources

There are a number of other alternative sources of capital funding which the Council could make use of, depending on circumstances and cost:-

- Finance Leases - Leases that transfers (to the lessee) substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of an asset, even though ownership may not be transferred. This method was used for the equipment at Deeside Leisure Centre and the Jade Jones Pavilion, Flint.
- Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) - This is a broad term for various arrangements in which the Council has a longer and more intensive relationship with a private sector supplier than it does under a traditional contract. It includes:-
 - PFI contracts;
 - Local Asset Backed Vehicles (LABVs);
 - Strategic partnering;
 - Sale and Lease back;
 - Joint Ventures;
 - Deferred Purchase, and
 - Mutual Investment Model (MIM)

To date, the Council has made very limited use of alternative funding options listed above. In future all options, along with any new initiatives, will be explored and used carefully. Capital schemes funded from alternative sources are likely to increase the Council's debt liability, therefore use will be restricted and considered in the same way as prudential borrowing.

4. PRIORITISATION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The purpose of the Capital Programme is to optimise the Council’s use of capital resources by allocation to those areas identified as representing the strategic priorities of the Council. The Programme is split into 3 sections;

- Statutory / Regulatory Programme consisting of an annual allocation to fund schemes of a statutory / regulatory nature. Examples include providing financial support to repair, improve and adapt private sector homes, and adapting schools for disabled children. Service areas will be required to submit plans for approval before the start of each financial year.
- Retained Asset Programme consisting of an annual allocation to fund schemes that maintain, improve or lengthen the economic life of the assets that we retain to use in delivering services where there is already a significant amount of capital work needed, identified by service plans / condition surveys etc. Service areas identified are: schools, highways, and corporate office accommodation. Service areas are required to submit plans for approval before the start of each financial year.
- Investment Programme consisting of allocations to fund new schemes arising from Portfolio Business Plans. Such schemes will be necessary to achieve revenue efficiencies included within Portfolio Business Plans, the MTFS and our strategic priorities as included in the Council Plan. Approval of such schemes will be through the submission of a full business case identifying the source of capital funding and the asset’s lifetime costs going forward.

Funding of schemes will be allocated as shown below:

Statutory / Regulatory Programme	Retained Asset Programme	Investment Programme	
General Capital Grant	Supported Borrowing	Capital Receipts	Debt and Alternative Sources of Funding

Capital Programmes will be set every year covering a timeframe of the next 3 financial years on a rolling basis, reflecting that capital schemes don’t match financial years and span more than 1 financial year. Schemes starting in that first financial year will be approved along with any costs and funding required in the subsequent 2 financial years. Schemes starting later than the first financial year will be given indicative support to enable services to plan, but will ultimately require formal approval through the process of approving the subsequent years’ Capital Programme.

Sufficient ‘headroom’ will be built into the Capital Programme to facilitate more flexibility, thus allowing smaller schemes to be presented, considered and approved by Cabinet in year. Such schemes arise in year due to, for example, grants that require an element of match funding or unforeseen events such as regulatory works etc.

The development of the Capital Programme will be considered in the context of its impact on the Council’s MTFS and in particular the added pressure the Capital Programme may bring to the revenue budget.

5. GOVERNANCE

Planning for the Capital Programme is determined in parallel with service and revenue budget planning process within the framework of the MTFS.

New investment capital schemes will be rigorously appraised through submission of full business cases which will include schemes funded by grants or contributions from 3rd parties. Large schemes which are programmes in their own right will be subject to gateway reviews at stages during the programme, for example Sustainable Communities for Learning and SHARP. This ensures that the evidence and the case for change when the scheme was initially approved is still valid, and that lessons learned from early stages can be applied to future stages.

Those portfolios with core allocations will submit annual plans for assessment and challenge by the Capital and Assets Programme Board to ensure compliance with the Capital Strategy and the Asset Management Plan.

The Capital Programme, where possible, will be set for each coming financial year before the annual budget, and will include indicative figures spanning the same time frame as the MTFS.

Monitoring of the annual Capital Programme will be undertaken at a Portfolio level by the Capital and Technical Accounting Team, with progress updates given to the Capital and Assets Programme Board. Reporting to Members will take place quarterly to Cabinet and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee including:

- New schemes or additions to existing schemes
- Removal of or reductions to schemes
- Slippage on schemes, and impact on future years capital programme
- Funding virements between schemes
- Other necessary revisions to the scheme

The Capital and Assets Programme Board will develop processes for monitoring the outcomes of capital schemes and measures to monitor the performance of assets.

Capital expenditure plans

The Council's planned capital expenditure for the period 2024/25 to 2026/27 is summarised below:

Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate *	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	28.626	29.737	26.079
Housing Revenue Account	29.846	28.509	29.683
Total	58.472	58.246	55.762

*£3.3m of capital expenditure in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases and does not represent cash expenditure.

The Council's Capital Programme is due to be approved by Council in December 2023, and details can be found on the Council's website.

The Council is planning a number of significant investments during the period of this strategy. In particular, it is investing substantially in its schools in conjunction with Welsh Government through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme; build of a new Croes Atti Residential Care Home, to develop care homes that value older people and provide good quality support; has plans, and in conjunction with its partners, to create a new archive building to deliver a single archive service for North East Wales. More detail is available in the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 report.

The HRA is a ‘ring-fenced’ account which ensures that council housing does not subsidise, or is itself subsidised by, other local services. HRA capital expenditure is therefore recorded separately. The Council has plans to invest significantly in housing assets over the period of the strategy, including the building of new homes as part of the SHARP, as well as maintaining its stock in line with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).

In addition, part of SHARP is to build new homes for rent at intermediate rent levels (between social housing rents and market rents). This is achieved by making capital loans to the Council’s wholly owned subsidiary, North East Wales Homes Ltd (NEW Homes) to build affordable homes.

All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council’s own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing etc.). The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows, broken down into the sources detailed above:

Table 2: Capital Financing in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate *	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund			
<u>External Sources</u>			
USB	4.025	4.025	4.025
GCG	4.134	4.134	4.134
Specific Grants/Contrib's/Loans	9.464	15.280	12.946
<u>Own Resources</u>			
Capital Receipts	2.927	0.000	0.000
<u>Debt</u>			
Prudential Borrowing	8.076	6.298	4.974
Sub Total - Council Fund	28.626	29.737	26.079

Housing Revenue Account			
<u>External Sources</u>			
MRA	4.978	4.978	4.978
Specific Grants/Contrib's/Loans	1.900	0.300	0.300
<u>Own Resources</u>			
CERA	14.815	15.078	16.252
<u>Debt</u>			
Prudential Borrowing	8.153	8.153	8.153
Sub Total - HRA	29.846	28.509	29.683
TOTAL	58.472	58.246	55.762

*£3.3m of capital expenditure in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases and does not represent cash expenditure.

Debt is only a temporary source of finance, as any loans or leases must be repaid. Local authorities are required each year under regulations, to set aside some of their revenue resources as provision for the repayment of debt. The annual charge to the revenue account for repaying debt is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Planned MRP is as follows:

Table 3: Replacement of prior years' debt finance in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	3.563	3.982	4.341
Housing Revenue Account	1.762	1.893	2.028

Local authorities are required to set a policy for MRP each financial year. The Council sets its annual MRP policy in February each year and this is available on its website.

Alternatively, capital receipts may be used to repay debt by applying capital receipts to the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).

The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of capital expenditure financed by debt is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and any capital receipts used to repay debt. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Council's estimated CFR is as follows:

Table 4: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate *	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	322.415	330.272	340.555
Housing Revenue Account	142.334	148.594	154.719
Total	464.749	478.866	495.274

*£75m of the CFR increase in 2024/25 arises from a change in the accounting for leases.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Treasury Management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Council's spending needs as they fall due, while managing the risks involved. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash will be met by borrowing, to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current account. The Council is typically cash rich in the short-term as revenue income is received before it is spent, but cash poor in the long-term as capital expenditure is incurred before being financed. The revenue cash surpluses are offset against capital cash shortfalls to reduce overall borrowing.

Due mainly to decisions taken in the past, the Council currently (30th September 2023) has £293m long term borrowing at an average interest rate of 4.5%, and no short term borrowing. It also has £33m treasury investments at an average interest rate of 5.08%.

Borrowing strategy: The Council's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheaper short-term loans (currently available at around 5.5%) and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher (currently 5.6% to 5.8%).

The Council does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return and therefore retains full access to the Public Works Loans Board.

Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing and leases) are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above).

Table 5: Prudential Indicator: Gross Debt & the Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Debt (Incl Leases)	419.803	432.232	445.785
Capital Financing Requirement	464.749	478.866	495.274

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the Capital Financing Requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from Table 5, the Council expects to comply with this in the medium term.

Affordable borrowing limit: The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year and to keep it under review. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

Table 6: Prudential Indicators: Authorised Limit & Operational Boundary for external debt in £m

	2024/25 Limit	2025/26 Limit	2026/27 Limit
Authorised Limit - Borrowing	485	499	515
Authorised Limit - Other long term liabilities	35	35	35
Authorised Limit - Total External Debt	520	534	550
Operational Boundary - Borrowing	410	425	443
Operational Boundary - Other long term liabilities	75	74	72
Operational Boundary - Total External Debt	485	499	515

Treasury Investment strategy: Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.

The Council’s policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield that is to focus on minimising risk rather than maximising returns. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, for example with the government, other local authorities or selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss. Money that will be held for longer terms is invested more widely, including in bonds, shares and property, to balance the risk of loss against the risk of receiving returns below inflation. Both near-term and longer-term investments may be held in pooled funds, where an external fund manager makes decisions on which particular investments to buy and the Council may request its money back at short notice.

Governance: Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to the Corporate Finance Manager and the Treasury Management team, who must act in line with the Treasury Management Strategy approved annually by the Council in February. Quarterly reports on treasury management activity are presented to the Governance and Audit Committee. The Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for scrutinising treasury management decisions.

The Council sets a Treasury Management Policy Statement, an annual Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Management Schedules and Practices which contain further details on the Council’s borrowing strategy, investment strategy and treasury management governance which are available on its website.

7. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

The Council has a portfolio of investment properties, in the form of agricultural property and industrial units. Although these are classified as investment properties, they are legacy assets and the Council is managing down its agricultural portfolio and is reviewing its position in regard to industrial units. The Council does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return.

Table 7: Prudential Indicator: Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments to Net Revenue Stream

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Total net income from service and commercial investment	1.652	1.652	1.652
Proportion of net revenue stream	0.46%	0.46%	0.46%

8. LIABILITIES

In addition to debt of £293m detailed above, the Council is committed to making future payments to cover any required pension fund deficit (valued at £78m, March 2023). It has also set aside £1m to cover the risks associated with the aftercare of former landfill sites, and £3.3m as a provision against bad debts.

The Council is also at risk of having to pay for any additional works necessary at landfill sites, payments in respect of historic insurance, abuse and housing disrepair claims, costs involved in some employment tribunal cases, and has given pension guarantees on behalf of various alternative service delivery models. The Council has not set aside any funds because of a lack of certainty in estimating the size and timing of these liabilities.

Governance: Decisions on incurring new discretionary liabilities are taken by Chief Officers in consultation with the Corporate Finance Manager. The risk of liabilities crystallising and requiring payment is monitored by corporate finance and reported as required to Cabinet.

Further details on liabilities and guarantees are in the contingent liability section in Note 34 of the Council's 2022/23 Statement of Accounts available on its website.

9. REVENUE BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Revenue Support Grant, Council Tax and business rates (NNDR) for the Council Fund, and the HRA equivalent is the amount to be met from Welsh Government grants and rent payers.

Table 8: Prudential Indicator: Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Council Fund	4.17%	4.43%	4.56%
HRA	16.11%	16.82%	17.13%

Sustainability: Due to the very long-term nature of capital expenditure and financing, the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 50 years into the future. The Corporate Finance Manager is satisfied that the proposed Capital Programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable because the impact of the existing Capital Programme on the MTFS has been considered, and the revenue implications of future capital schemes are included when considering the approval of the capital budget.

Other revenue implications of capital expenditure are included in business cases and are factored into the MTFS.

10. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The Council employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions. For example, the Corporate Finance Manager is a qualified accountant with significant experience. The Council pays for junior staff to study towards relevant professional qualifications, including CIPFA and AAT.

Where Council staff do not have the knowledge and skills required, use is made of external advisers and consultants that are specialists in their field. The Council currently employs Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisors. This approach is more cost effective than employing such staff directly and ensures that the Council has access to knowledge and skills commensurate with its risk appetite.



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 6 th December 2023
Report Subject	Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27
Report Author	Chief Executive Corporate Manager – Capital Programme and Assets Corporate Finance Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the proposed Capital Programme for the period 2024/25 – 2026/27 for approval by County Council.

The Council's Capital Programme covers investment in assets for the long term to enable the delivery of high quality and value for money public services. Assets include buildings (such as schools and care homes), infrastructure (such as highways and ICT networks) and assets not owned by the Council (such as works to improve and adapt private sector homes). The proposed capital investments outlined within this report are closely aligned to portfolio service business plans and the Council Plan.

The Council has limited capital resources from Welsh Government to support Council priorities, needs and liabilities. However, it has the powers to fund capital schemes by borrowing - this is temporary and ultimately, the cost and repayment of any borrowing is charged to the Council's revenue budget. Schemes funded by borrowing are carefully considered due to the long-term impacts on the Council's revenue budget.

The report divides the Council Fund Capital Programme into three sections: -

1. Statutory / Regulatory - allocations to cover regulatory and statutory works.
2. Retained Assets - allocations to fund infrastructure works necessary to ensure service and business continuity.
3. Investment - allocations to fund works necessary to remodel services to deliver efficiencies outlined in portfolio business plans and invest in services as outlined in the Council Plan.

Historically, much of the Council’s programme has been funded from capital receipts and grants. The Council’s ability to generate significant capital receipts is challenging as the assets the Council has available for disposal diminish. Wherever possible every opportunity to identify assets for sale and other sources of funding such as specific grants and revenue contributions will be explored. However, the Council will need to use prudential borrowing to finance more of the programme going forward. In particular, the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme, and other schemes included within the investment programme will need to be funded through prudential borrowing.

The Capital Strategy has been updated and is presented separately on the agenda.

The information in this report refers to the Council Fund (CF) programme only, not the housing programme which is funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and which is reported separately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To approve the allocations and schemes in Table 3 (paragraph 1.09) for the Statutory/Regulatory and Retained Assets sections of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27.
2	To approve the schemes included in Table 4 (paragraph 1.32) for the Investment section of the Council Fund Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27.
3	To note that the shortfall in funding of schemes in 2024/25 and 2025/26 in Table 5 (paragraph 1.37) at this point in the approval process allows flexibility. Options including a combination of future capital receipts, alternative grants (if available), prudential borrowing or the re-phasing of schemes will be considered during 2024/25 and included in future Capital Programme reports.
4	To consider and approve the schemes included in Table 6 (paragraph 1.41) for the specifically funded section of the Council Fund Capital Programme which will be funded in part through borrowing.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 – 2026/27
1.01	<p>The Council’s Capital Programme encompasses investing significant resources in assets for the long term to enable the delivery of high quality, value for money public services. Assets include buildings (such as schools and care homes), infrastructure (such as highways and ICT networks), and assets not owned by the Council (such as works to improve and adapt private sector homes). The proposed capital investments outlined within this report are closely aligned to portfolio service business plans and the Council Plan.</p> <p>The Council has limited capital resources from Welsh Government (WG) to support Council priorities, needs and liabilities; however, it has the powers to fund capital schemes by borrowing, but this is temporary and ultimately the cost and repayment of any borrowing is charged to the Council’s revenue budget. Schemes funded by borrowing are carefully considered due to the long-term impacts on the Council’s revenue budget.</p> <p>The first half of this report covers parts of the Capital Programme where the Council invests in local infrastructure, facilities, and assets, which will be funded from general capital resources (General Capital Grant, Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing and Capital Receipts). Regional programmes such as the Growth Deal for North Wales which will draw on national funds, and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme, which is separate and includes the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) work programme and Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP), supplement the Council funded Capital Programme.</p> <p>The second half of the report covers parts of the Capital Programme which includes specific grants as far as information is available at the time of writing and borrowing. This includes the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, delivered in partnership between the Council and WG.</p>
1.02	<p>General Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2025/26 Update</p> <p>The Council’s Capital Strategy divides the Capital Programme into three parts as follows.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Statutory / Regulatory section – to cover regulatory and statutory works. Examples include providing support to improve and adapt private sector homes (Disabled Facilities Grants), adaptations to schools for children with disabilities and any works required to keep buildings open by meeting Health and Safety requirements.2. Retained Assets section – to ensure service and business continuity. This includes schemes that enhance and improve retained assets and infrastructure to deliver services and meets significant need identified by service plans or through condition surveys etc.

3. **Investment section** – to fund costs incurred when remodelling and investing in services. This includes new schemes arising from portfolio business plans, the Council Plan, other relevant and emerging plans, and other strategies or emerging Council priorities approved through a selection process based on the provision of a business case.

1.03 Table 1 below summarises the updated Council funded Capital Programme for 2023/24 – 2025/26 as reported at Month 6 2023/24:

Table 1

ESTIMATED FUNDING 2023/24 - 2025/26				
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funding				
Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) ¹	4.025	4.025	4.025	12.075
General Capital Grant (GCG) ¹	4.134	4.134	4.134	12.402
Capital Receipts Available	0.694	0.000	0.000	0.694
Surplus B/Fwd from 2022/23	4.139	0.000	0.000	4.139
Total Funding	12.992	8.159	8.159	29.310
Expenditure				
Total Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2025/26	10.065	8.951	8.298	27.314
	10.065	8.951	8.298	27.314
Surplus / (Shortfall)	2.927	(0.792)	(0.139)	1.996
¹ As per 2023/24 Final Settlement				

1.04 Table 1 shows the current position of the Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2025/26 as reported at Month 6 to Cabinet and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, an overall surplus in funding of £1.996m, with a surplus in 2023/24 of £2.927m.

When the budget was set in January 2023, there was a shortfall in funding of schemes in 2024/25 and 2025/26 and surplus in 2023/24. At that point in the approval process the position was kept flexible and this was explained in the report to Council at that time. Options included a combination of future capital receipts, alternative grants, prudential borrowing, or scheme phasing over several years which would be considered during 2023/24.

1.05 Given the current position in setting the Capital Programme for the next three years 2024/25 – 2026/27, careful consideration has been given to new schemes proposed for inclusion.

1.06

Projected General Funding Available 2024/25 - 2026/27

Table 2 below shows the general capital funding currently projected to be available to fund the Capital Programme over the next three years (2024/25 - 2026/27).

Table 2

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDING 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funding (Excluding Specific Funding)				
Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) ¹	4.025	4.025	4.025	12.075
General Capital Grant (GCG) ¹	4.134	4.134	4.134	12.402
Surplus B/Fwd from 2023/24	2.927	0.000	0.000	2.927
Total	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404
¹ As per 2023/24 Settlement				

1.07

Table 2 assumes that the Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing allocation and the General Capital Grant received from WG in the years 2024/25 to 2026/27 remains as indicated in the 2023/24 final Financial Settlement for Welsh local government. The 2024/25 Provisional Settlement for Welsh local government announcement has been provisionally set for the 20th December 2023.

1.08

The figures in Table 2 relate to the Council Fund (CF) only, with the HRA Capital Programme being reported separately.

General Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27

1.09

Statutory / Regulatory and Retained Asset Allocations – 2024/25 – 2026/27

Table 3 shows the proposed allocations for the period 2024/25 - 2026/27 for the Statutory / Regulatory and Retained Asset sections of the Capital Programme.

Table 3

PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Statutory / Regulatory Section				
Equalities Act - Individual pupils	0.500	0.500	0.500	1.500
Disabled Facilities Grants	1.500	1.500	1.500	4.500
Private Sector Housing Renewal	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.120
School building works	0.500	0.500	0.500	1.500
Corporate property works	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.900
School safeguarding works	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300
Target Hardening	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.090
Total Statutory / Regulatory	2.970	2.970	2.970	8.910
Retained Assets Section				
School building works	1.000	1.000	1.000	3.000
Corporate property works	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.900
Highways Asset Management Plan	1.980	1.500	1.500	4.980
Play areas	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
Datacentre Relocation	1.892	0.000	0.000	1.892
ICT - Equipment at Datacentres	0.046	0.000	0.079	0.125
ICT - Server Technology Replacements	0.323	0.264	0.124	0.711
ICT - Laptop / PC Replacements	0.092	0.268	0.134	0.494
ICT - Storage Technology Replacement	0.000	0.850	0.031	0.881
ICT - Cyber Security	0.000	0.066	0.133	0.199
Schools WiFi and Networking Infrastructure	0.000	1.020	0.000	1.020
Base Provision for Leisure and Libraries Estate	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
Hawarden Cemetery Extension and Development	0.300	0.000	0.000	0.300
Buckley Cemetery Extension	0.190	0.000	0.000	0.190
Demolition of redundant units Greenfield Business Park 'Headroom'	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200
	0.350	0.350	0.350	1.050
Total Retained Assets Section	7.073	6.018	4.051	17.142

1.10 The information in Table 3 in relation to the new and previously approved schemes is explained in more detail in paragraphs 1.11 to 1.31 below.

1.11 Equalities Act – Individual pupils

An annual allocation to adapt and modify schools for children who have disabilities to support and create increasingly inclusive school environments. These works help the Council to meet its obligations under disability legislation, and reduce the potential costs and disruption associated with transporting pupils to alternative sites.

No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.

1.12	<p><u>Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to improve and adapt private sector homes comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Facilities Grants – adaptations enabling residents to continue to live independently in their own homes. • Partnership working with Care and Repair to support vulnerable residents. <p>Reduction of £0.160m per annum are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.13	<p><u>Private Sector Housing Renewal</u></p> <p>An annual allocation for private sector housing renewal and improvement loan management and administration. This had previously been reported under the DFG section before the services were disaggregated across portfolios.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.14	<p><u>School building works</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to fund the most urgent property works required at schools split across the regulatory / statutory and retained assets sections of the Capital Programme.</p> <p>A programme of toilet upgrades in both primary and secondary schools to ensure compliance with Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 and Department for Education and Skills document "Toilets in Schools". There is currently a backlog of such works estimated to be in the region of £1.5m which is often reflected as a Health and Safety issue in Estyn inspections of schools, £0.100m per annum. When building new schools or extending current ones, the Council takes the approach to upgrade to current standards at that time.</p> <p>Works to upgrade ventilation systems at school kitchens which are failing building regulations and gas safety legislation and are at risk of closure, £0.200m per annum.</p> <p>Fire Inspection Works at schools which are the responsibility of the Local Authority and have been identified during statutory fire risk assessments, £0.200m per annum.</p> <p>An £1m per annum allocation has been included within the retained assets section of the programme to cover all other urgent works required.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.15	<p><u>Corporate property works</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to fund the most urgent property works required at non-school premises split across the regulatory / statutory and retained</p>

	<p>assets sections of the Capital Programme, including managing risks from legionella, fire safety, asbestos, accessibility and health and safety.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.16	<p><u>School safeguarding works</u></p> <p>There is a requirement to carry out works/adaptations at schools, to address safeguarding concerns raised about access at main entrances and site. These works are required to ensure both children and adults can attend schools in a safe and secure environment.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.17	<p><u>Target Hardening</u></p> <p>The target hardening budget requires replenishment over the next three-year period to prevent unauthorised use of land or buildings within the County.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.18	<p><u>Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP)</u></p> <p>An annual allocation of £1.5m to fund the HAMP which includes resurfacing of the classified Highway Network, replacement programme for street lighting columns and structural maintenance, with £0.100m to be top sliced for 'streetscape' improvements.</p> <p>Whilst the Council has a statutory duty to maintain the Highways Network in a safe condition for travel, how the Council does this is not defined. WG set targets for road condition indices and invested a significant amount of grant funding in the network, however this funding ceased after the 2021/22 financial year. The condition of the highway network will naturally continue to deteriorate each year and without sufficient annual investment the overall condition of the network will decline.</p> <p>See paragraph 1.53 for more detail regarding the position on the potential development of the HAMP.</p> <p>One off increase proposed in 2024/25 and no changes for 2025/26 to 2026/27.</p>
1.19	<p><u>Play areas</u></p> <p>An annual allocation of £0.200m to fund the most urgent requirements to replace play equipment that has reached the end of its useful life at play areas, as well as upgrades to play areas. This will be delivered by Aura as the Council's management partner.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>

1.20	<p><u>Datacentre Relocation</u></p> <p>Previously, £0.510m had been approved in the 2020/21 (£0.120m) and 2022/23 (£0.390m) programme for 2024/25, relating to the replacement networking technologies solutions and uninterruptable power supplies within the current datacentre at County Hall. This was to replace outdated systems with the technologies required to deliver effective datacentres and improve connection to end users' devices.</p> <p>Following this allocation, higher than expected increases in inflation and changes by the manufacturer have led to an additional request of £0.413m, resulting in a total requirement of £0.923m.</p> <p>Equipment at the current datacentre will be at the end of support in February 2025. If these works are completed at the current site, the equipment cannot then be moved once installed. Alternatively, the datacentre can be relocated to Ty Dewi Sant in 2024/25, with the funding discussed above being used to mitigate some of the relocation costs.</p> <p>The current equipment in County Hall will be used whilst the new datacentre is completed. Once operational, the old datacentre will be decommissioned. This would release a significant site constraint in any future redevelopment of the County Hall Campus.</p>
1.21	<p><u>ICT - Equipment at Datacentres</u></p> <p>Previously approved was the upgrade to the Council's telephone solution in 2024/25 costing £0.046m.</p> <p>New bids include the replacement of networking technologies to provide segregation of online systems from internal systems, £0.045m and networking technologies at remote sites replacements, £0.034m. Both are required in 2026/27.</p>
1.22	<p><u>ICT - Server Technologies (Business Systems and SQL Servers)</u></p> <p>In 2024/25 and 2025/26 the server infrastructures currently used to deliver business systems through Citrix, will come to the end of their useable life and could lead to a degradation of service if not replaced, at a cost of £0.253m and £0.264m. This has previously been approved along with £0.070m in 2024/25, for the replacement of servers used to support business systems that utilise SQL as a database technology.</p> <p>A further bid has been received for replacement server infrastructure that will come to the end of its useful life in 2026/27, at a cost of £0.124m.</p>
1.23	<p><u>ICT - Laptop / PC Replacements</u></p> <p>The project will deliver a programme of device replacement based on the "just in time" principle of replacement to ensure the Council maximises the useable life of its laptop assets. It will ensure that the devices used by members of staff are fit for purpose and can deliver the required level of service and can support the latest operating systems and security software.</p>

	<p>The absence of a replacement budget for replacement devices will result in devices that perform poorly and will not be able to accommodate the operating system and security software require to ensure the required level of performance. The inability to operate up to date security software poses a significant cyber security risk.</p> <p>Capital funding is required over a three-year programme, with an additional £0.134m required in 2026/27.</p>
1.24	<p><u>ICT - Storage Technology Replacement</u></p> <p>The Council uses storage technologies that allow the allocation of storage to systems as and when they need it. It prevents unused storage sitting against systems and is the most efficient and cost-effective way of allocating storage against all systems used by the Council, from business applications to the general file share.</p> <p>The Councils corporate storage technology requires replacing in 2025/26 at a cost of £0.850m. The storage system specifically allocated to the Council's Graphic Designers will cost £0.031m and would require replacement in 2026/27.</p>
1.25	<p><u>ICT – Cyber Security</u></p> <p>£0.066m has previously been approved in the programme in 2025/26 for the replacement of firewall and email scanning technologies.</p> <p>A new bid included is for the Council's main firewalls which are the main and first line of defence from cyber-attack. This ensures the Council's technology is up to date and current, to provide the required level of protection. This is needed in 2026/27 at a cost £0.133m.</p>
1.26	<p><u>Schools WiFi and Networking Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Flintshire, along with all other authorities in Wales were awarded a significant amount of money to replace old and outdated networking infrastructures within all school by Welsh Government. This has provided the schools with a sound digital platform to deliver the curriculum for a number of years. The school infrastructures formed part of the Hwb programme (WG programme) and subsequent funding has been directed towards end users devices.</p> <p>A condition of the grant was that Local Authorities put in place sustainability plans to fund replacement infrastructures when they need replacement.</p> <p>The current networking and wireless equipment is two years old, and the wireless equipment will have reached the end of its usable life in 2025/26.</p> <p>The networking equipment replacement is expected in 2027/28, which is anticipated to cost £1.4m.</p> <p>No change is proposed for 2025/26.</p>

1.27	<p><u>Base Provision for Leisure and Libraries Estate</u></p> <p>An annual allocation to fund the most urgent property works required across the Leisure and Libraries estate. The Council recognises its landlord responsibilities for the assets that remain in its ownership, having retained ownership of all buildings from which Aura, its strategic Leisure and Libraries partner, delivers its business plan and operates these facilities in accordance with the agreement for services.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.28	<p><u>Hawarden Cemetery Extension and Development</u></p> <p>Following the initial allocation of funding in a previous programme to purchase a newly identified site, funding is required to implement the necessary interment infrastructure which will include Burial plots, Cremation plots, Columbaria, Natural burial area, garden of remembrance and garden for the scattering of ashes.</p> <p>The development will provide in excess of 100 years burial capacity in Hawarden as well as enabling the Council to develop alternative burial and cremation provision in the future such as Resomation and Cremation. This will require the relevant permissions to be granted by UK Government and the construction of the required infrastructure will be subject to a further funding request outside of this application.</p> <p>Development of such alternatives will have the potential to bring the burial trend in Flintshire, in line with the rest of the UK.</p> <p>New scheme included in 2024/25.</p>
1.29	<p><u>Buckley Cemetery Extension</u></p> <p>The existing cemetery will reach capacity within four years, or sooner depending upon burial rates. Unfortunately, there is no option for extension.</p> <p>There is an area of low-lying land within the existing cemetery that has yet to be utilised for burials, however, ground investigations have determined that a shallow water table exists in this area making it both unsuitable and dangerous for grave excavation due to the levels of saturation.</p> <p>Following engagement with specialists in burial solutions, the proposal is to install burial chambers and develop infrastructure to support the installation. The proposed utilisation of unsuitable land at Buckley Cemetery for further burials will ensure that burial provision for local residents in those areas continues for at least the next 15 to 20 years.</p> <p>Use of burial chambers at the site would be a first for Flintshire. All other graves are earth graves apart from those faiths who require or request a bricked vault for burial. The use of chambers would be a significant change from the normal practice, however, there are no faith implications associated with their use.</p>

	New scheme included in 2024/25.
1.30	<p><u>Demolition of redundant business units Greenfield Business Park</u></p> <p>There are three units on this site which have fallen into disrepair and are no longer lettable or economic to repair. They are creating a nuisance for neighbouring businesses on the Business Park and cost the Council upwards of £0.040m each year in business rates and to maintain and keep secure from vandalism. It is proposed to demolish all three units to leave clear platforms for future development, through land sale or Council development. This is the first phase of planned regeneration on the Business Park.</p> <p>This proposal would pay back in five years and would make the land available for future developments discussed in paragraph 1.58, providing an additional revenue stream to the Council.</p>
1.31	<p><u>Funding 'Headroom'</u></p> <p>'Headroom' has been built into the Capital Programme to enable the programme to be more flexible so that funding can be allocated to small schemes as they present in year either as a result of opportunities or unforeseen circumstances (£0.350m per annum). An example would be the need to complete further highways works because of an exceptionally severe winter over and above any planned works funded from the annual allocation.</p> <p>No changes are proposed for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p>
1.32	<p>Investment Section of the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27</p> <p>Table 4 below shows the proposed schemes for the period 2024/25 - 2026/27 for the Investment section of the Capital Programme. Details are provided in paragraphs 1.33 to 1.36.</p>

Table 4

PROPOSED INVESTMENT SCHEMES 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Investment Section				
<u>Previously Approved</u>				
Joint Archive Facility, FCC and DCC	0.000	0.019	2.618	2.637
Croes Atti Residential Care Home	4.800	0.000	0.000	4.800
	4.800	0.019	2.618	7.437
<u>New Schemes for Approval</u>				
Re:Fit Framework	1.000	0.500	0.000	1.500
Development of Children's Residential Care	0.000	0.600	0.400	1.000
	1.000	1.100	0.400	2.500
Total Investment Section	5.800	1.119	3.018	9.937

1.33

Joint Archive Facility, Flintshire and Denbighshire Councils

This scheme recognises and responds to the need and demand of the two Councils' archive services. Both services occupy old buildings, unfit for purpose. They lack suitable public spaces and appropriate storage, are too full to accept new collections and are listed buildings lacking scope for adaptation, requiring expensive maintenance. The proposal is to construct a new building adjacent to Theatr Clwyd, Mold, to house both the physical archives and the new service operations.

The funding application for Heritage Horizon Award was unsuccessful, and the project board had sought alternative grant funding from the National Lottery Fund Wales, however this was at a significantly reduced funding level.

Further work was undertaken to develop a scaled back scheme, which still delivers against the business case for both authorities, and a funding application was submitted to National Lottery Fund Wales in November 2021. The application was regrettably withdrawn in March 2022, when it became clear that the temporary facility for the theatre, would not have vacated the proposed archive site in sufficient time to manage the project timescales.

After this setback, both Councils reviewed the project in January 2023, and whilst Cabinet endorsed the project, Denbighshire County Council's (DCC) Cabinet requested that feasibility work be carried out on vacant land and underutilised buildings that it owns in Denbighshire, as an alternative to Ruthin Gaol for a DCC archive, prior to considering any out of County investment proposal for a joint archive facility.

Given the delays, the site adjacent to Theatr Clwyd will now be available in sufficient time, and the programme and costs were reviewed in June 2023, with a view to a further National Lottery Fund Wales funding application in November 2023. The delays have caused the overall project cost to increase due to construction inflation, but this year National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) raised the maximum value of the grant funding available for individual projects. Further to discussion with NLHF and the Project Board, the grant application to be made for this scheme will now be £7.3m, as opposed to the £5m of the last grant application.

The need for the project remains. DCC's Cabinet considered and supported the preferred option for a joint archive proposal on the site adjacent to Theatr Clwyd in October 2023. Following this, the grant application was submitted to the NLHF.

Direct Costs:

- Estimated funding available for the project is £12.8m, with £7.7m from grant funding, £3.079m from FCC and £2.052m from DCC. £0.442m included in a previous programme, which included core funding of £0.197m.
- It has been assumed that borrowing will be required to fund this project. The estimated revenue costs associated with borrowing £2.882m over 50 years totals £9.797m. In year 1 revenue debt costs are estimated to be £0.172m, rising to £0.228m in year 50, with an average of £0.196m over 50 years.

Direct Benefits:

- Sustainable and improved archive service for Denbighshire and Flintshire via the creation of a single shared service.
- The construction of a new purpose built environmentally friendly building adjacent to Theatr Clwyd, Mold, to house both the physical archives and the new service operations. Provide a sustainable archive repository for the region for the foreseeable future from the perspective of storage space and building maintenance and management.
- The overall revenue impact is an estimated saving of £11,647 per annum once the new building is open, with a potential further revenue saving once the joint service is running.

Indirect Benefits:

- Share knowledge and skills between the workforce of both Councils
- Sphere of health, education, and wellbeing (connectivity, involvement, identity) can be achieved.
- The transferrable skills of our volunteers will develop will contribute to increasing their employability.
- Deliver the long-term development of a resilient, relevant service: inspiring communities in Northeast Wales and enacting the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; securing historic collections, diversifying audiences, volunteers and depositors.
- Cost avoidance of £10,000 per annum additional revenue storage costs, and in excess of £0.718m to address the need for environmental management equipment, compliant storage areas and upgrading public facilities and access.

1.34

Croes Atti Residential Care Home

The care sector in Flintshire is working within an increasingly challenging environment as a result of a range of factors, including the complexity of need, an ageing population, rising costs, increasing expectations and regulation and difficulties with recruitment and retention of high-quality staff. As a result of these pressures there is limited resilience and Flintshire is particularly challenged, with only a small number of independent providers who are part of a reducing and fragile market. As a Council, we are taking a positive approach to rebalancing the care home provision, taking a lead as a local authority to develop care homes that value older people and provide good quality support that would place the Council in a good position for the future.

Croes Atti is a single storey 31 bed care home purpose built for older people, which was refurbished in 2005. The 31 bedrooms are small and less than 12 square metres which makes it increasingly difficult to support people with complex physical care needs and there are only three bedrooms with an en-suite facility. The living and daytime spaces are well used and whilst we have a number of assisted bathing / shower rooms, they are not all DDA compliant. The existing accommodation does not meet new RISCA regulations in relation to bedrooms and living space and any capital investing into refurbishment or new build must consider new regulatory requirements. The care home is popular locally, is always at capacity and often with a waiting list for support. The home is regulated by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and achieves good inspection reports.

The Council was awarded ICF grant, to fund feasibility works for a potential new build which will increase capacity for a further 25 placements. The design and development work has now concluded, and the Council have been provided with a final cost from the scheme contractor to consider prior to entering into a contract to move ahead with construction of the facility; this is subject to WG funding approval being released into the scheme.

Current construction costs for the scheme are £17.3m. Construction is set to begin in December 2023 with a view to complete in May 2025.

The service submitted grant bids applications to WG for the construction stage of the project totalling £11.3m. The Council recently received confirmation of the grants being awarded, resulting in an intervention rate of 35% for the Council.

Direct Costs:

- Capital investment required is £6.050m. £1.250m included in the previous year's programme. It has been assumed that £3.5m of borrowing will be required to fund part of the Council's contribution. The estimated revenue costs associated with borrowing this over 50 years totals £11.9m. In year 1 revenue debt costs are estimated to be £0.209m, rising to £0.277m in year 50, with an average of £0.238m over 50 years.
- Social Services colleagues, in close partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), are developing the model of care that will be delivered on site upon completion. The

	<p>expected annual revenue cost for this is £1.521m, with BCUHB providing a revenue contribution of at minimum £0.200m per annum. This will support the operation of the building and ensure that appropriate health capacity is available to the building to manage the pull-on resources, facilitating residents' wellbeing and recovery. This will result in a net annual revenue cost of £1.321m which is already built into the MTFS. However, this is expected to mitigate the cost of increasing out of county provision and reduce the reliance on external providers.</p> <p>Direct Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional provision of residential care placements and through release of placements in other locations across Flintshire currently using step-up/step-down beds • Additional provision of short-term beds in a community setting to allow for more appropriate assessment of need for individual and as a viable alternative to a hospital admission/delayed discharge • Purpose built accommodation and bespoke service provision to maximise independence and support reablement • Increase in placements for citizens living in the west of Flintshire to link to acute service provision, supporting greater choice and ability to be in a location of their choosing <p>Indirect Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated provision of multi-professional support needed to reduce organisational boundaries and improve outcomes for individuals • Discharge to Reable and Assess ethos and environment to support improved longer-term planning within an enabling environment • Free up bed space within independent sector care homes, where existing fragilities and lack of capacity are a significant factor and ongoing risk • At a population level, the equivalent number of beds are available within the care sector to promote choice when long term care is the most appropriate option • Reduction in risks associated with long term hospital stay • Potential avoidance of people entering into long term care where this may be unnecessary • The building will be built to achieve Net Zero Carbon in operation
1.35	<p><u>Re-Fit Framework</u></p> <p>The Re-fit framework is part of Local Partnerships - a joint venture between the Local Government Association, HM Treasury and WG. The partnership works solely for the benefit of the public sector and bring public and private sector experience that provides confidence, capacity, and capability, helping councils achieve and maintain financial resilience.</p> <p>The framework provides a guaranteed 100% of the energy saving or generation (kWh) via a contractual agreement for the payback period of the project. This key feature is helping to remove risk of failure with new developments, plus protecting the client and their investment.</p>

	<p>Re-fit uses a competitively tendered and OJEU-compliant framework which can be utilised by any public sector organisation in England and Wales and covers the retrofit of buildings and assets to save energy and carbon. This includes a large range of technologies and measures such as: heat networks, lighting, and controls, BMS controls, heat recovery, solar thermal, heat pumps, solar PV, insulation, draught proofing, street lighting, etc.</p> <p>Re-fit would also aid in addressing capacity issues, as officers can only procure and implement a given number of projects per year. Through Re-fit, an energy services company (ESCo) is appointed in order to review the built estate, identify energy and carbon saving opportunities and implement on a wider scale than would likely be possible 'in-house'.</p> <p>Direct Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital investment required is £1.5m. Based on preliminary data potential savings have been calculated at £0.230m per annum, with an estimated payback period of 7 years. Following this, savings generated will benefit the Council's revenue budgets. <p>Direct Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the Council to accelerate the push towards achieving Net Zero Carbon (NZC) by 2030 • Provide external support and expertise, supplementing and expanding the works that the Council are currently undertaking • Achieve potential annual CO2 savings of 892 tonnes • Meeting the priorities and objectives set within the Council Plan under 'Green Society and Environment' theme • Contributing towards the achievement of WG targets and obligations under the Climate Change Act, Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Environment Act • Implementing this project will provide mitigation against future utility price increases
1.36	<p><u>Development of Children's Residential Care</u></p> <p>There is a need to expand our in-house residential care for children. There is a statutory duty to ensure that we have sufficient registered placements to meet the placement needs of looked after children. Traditionally we have commissioned 'out of county' placements for looked after children requiring residential care. However, WG's strategy to 'eliminate profit' from the children's residential care market is likely to lead to a reduction in placement availability and requires local authorities to proactively expand in-house provision at pace to avoid us having to set up services that operate without registration and risk prosecution against the local authority.</p> <p>WG's strategy is to rebalance the market so that the duties on local authorities in relation to looked after children are not contracted out to for-profit companies and remain with public sector or not-for-profit providers. Under the strategy new legislation will require:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent providers to demonstrate a not-for-profit status, based on a new pre-defined definition of non-profit, by 1 April 2026 • any current “for profit” providers will need to transition to, and register with Care Inspectorate Wales, as not-for-profit by 1 April 2027 <p>If we do not have sufficient placements, we will breach our duty to secure sufficient accommodation for looked after children (Section 75) and increase the risk of needing to set up bespoke unregistered services to support looked after children.</p> <p>The out of county placement revenue budgets continue to have significant pressures, with ongoing high demand for placements where children and young people cannot be supported within in-house provision. Market supply limitation factors and inflationary pressures are leading to higher costs, with current in year projected overspends of £1.293m. Services continue to do everything to manage these risks, with this development of in-house provision helping to mitigate against these pressures.</p> <p>Direct Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital funding required is £1m, split over two financial years. It has been assumed that borrowing will be required to fund this project. The estimated revenue costs associated with borrowing £1m over 50 years totals £3.4m. In year 1 revenue debt costs are estimated to be £0.060m, rising to £0.079m in year 50, with an average of £0.068m over 50 years. • WG have allocated £0.561m for 2024/25 to support their strategic intent. This money can contribute to the initial phase in the design, consultancy, and support of developments in the financial year. <p>Direct Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of residential care is escalating and likely to continue as market demand outstrips placement sufficiency. In-house services enable the authority to better control the cost of provision • The expansion of residential care will help ensure sufficiency of safe, high quality, supportive placements that support looked after children to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives • Placing our looked after children locally will provide increased opportunity for children to maintain local links with appropriate friends, family and support networks as well as the opportunity to maintain local education provision • Aligns to WG’s not for profit agenda • Demonstrate that we have met our duty to ensure market sufficiency enable us to meet the current placement needs of our looked after children <p>Indirect Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced travel costs and time with children placed locally
1.37	<p>Summary (Generally funded) Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27</p> <p>Table 5 below summarises the generally funded Capital Programme and available funding.</p>

Table 5

SUMMARY (GENERALLY FUNDED) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Statutory / Regulatory Section	2.970	2.970	2.970	8.910
Retained Assets Section	7.073	6.018	4.051	17.142
Investment Section	5.800	1.119	3.018	9.937
Total (All Sections)	15.843	10.107	10.039	35.989
Estimated available general funding ¹	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404
Total	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404
Surplus / (Shortfall) - no borrowing	(4.757)	(1.948)	(1.880)	(8.585)
Schemes requiring funding by borrowing:				
Joint Archive Facility, FCC and DCC	0.000	0.019	2.618	2.637
Croes Atti Residential Care Home	3.500	0.000	0.000	3.500
Re:Fit Framework	1.000	0.500	0.000	1.500
Development of Children's Residential Care	0.000	0.600	0.400	1.000
Total	4.500	1.119	3.018	8.637
Surplus / (Shortfall) - with borrowing	(0.257)	(0.829)	1.138	0.052
<small>1 As per 2023/24 Settlement</small>				

1.38

Table 5 shows that before any prudential borrowing is considered there is an overall shortfall in projected funding of £8.585m over the three-year period, with an estimated shortfall of £4.757m in 2024/25.

It has previously been approved that the schemes for the Joint Archive Facility and Croes Atti Residential Care Home be funded from borrowing with the associated costs of borrowing included as revenue pressures within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

1.39

Table 5 shows that after prudential borrowing is considered, there is an overall surplus in projected funding of £0.052m over the three year period, with an estimated shortfall of £0.257m in 2024/25.

The Council has developed a prudent policy of allocating its own capital receipts to fund capital projects only when receipts are received rather than when it is anticipated the receipt will be received, and this position continues to be the case.

In recent years, much of the Council's programme has been funded from capital receipts. However, the Council's ability to generate significant capital receipts is getting harder and is almost exhausted. Although the

	<p>Council will, wherever possible, seek to identify assets for sale (as appropriate) to fund the Capital Programme.</p> <p>Options to fund shortfalls include a combination of future capital receipts, alternative grants, and scheme phasing as the expenditure profile of large complex projects such as those included in the investment section of the programme could change. Every effort will be made to ensure that other sources of funding are utilised to fund the programme.</p> <p>Ultimately, should other sources of funding not materialise the Council will need to use prudential borrowing to finance any shortfalls. This could be short term during the three years, or if necessary, long term to fund any overall shortfalls.</p>
1.40	<p>Specific Grants and Borrowing</p> <p>Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme</p> <p>WG has approved the Council's in principle submission for Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B, with a funding envelope of £85m. The programme is to be funded from specific grant from WG at an agreed intervention rate, with the Council's contribution to be funded by prudential borrowing. The WG intervention rate for funding the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme has increased from 50% to 65% for schools, 75% for Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision, and 81% for Mutual Investment Models (MIM).</p> <p>Each of the remaining schemes are subject to individual approval to ensure that each meets the Council's continuing priorities and is affordable in the context of the Council's MTFS.</p> <p>Currently, the following Band B schemes are yet to be fully costed or brought forward within the Councils capital programme are: Elfed High School, Buckley and Saltney / Broughton Area.</p> <p>Schemes currently in progress are Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint and Drury Primary School.</p> <p>Various global issues have been impacting prices in the construction market. The key causes are Brexit, COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. These causes have conflated with the impact on projects being an increase in demand for construction (post covid); Supply chain disruption, long lead in time and an ongoing energy crisis. The consequences of this are: the lack of construction materials; high inflation and price volatility; high raw material prices; high energy prices and increased uncertainty.</p> <p>In the present market Contractors are now more risk averse when pricing packages. Previously accepted market practice of Design and Build Contractors fixing a construction price for a significant period is no longer viable. The cost increases are being seen across all sectors. Analysis of the market is suggesting that nothing is likely to improve in terms of prices dropping or even levelling out in the foreseeable future. Consequently, this</p>

will have a significant impact on the current securing price certainty on schemes.

Given the current volatility of the construction markets, flexibility and consideration will need to be given around timescales and expected costs of each scheme to ensure the Council stays within the Band B funding envelope. Any increase in the cost of any of the existing schemes, may result in pushing schemes back or making the difficult decision to terminate schemes and then include at a later point in time to form part of the next iteration of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

Other projects included in this category are Hawarden High School, Flint High School and Mold Alun High School. Early intelligence suggests that the WG are moving away from prescriptive timing on its onward investment programme as LA's and FEI's in Wales have made differing progress in their schools and college investment programmes. Instead, LA's and FEI's in Wales will be asked to bring forward their investment programmes based on local timing and funding. The intervention rates for the WG onward investment programme are currently unknown.

There is also a growing pressure on the ALN section of the programme relating to increased capacity across the special school's network which will need to be monitored and considered within the programme moving forward.

The estimated costs of these schemes are outlined in the table below:

Band B	Total Cost	WG funded	Council funded
	£m	£m	£m
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	13.348	8.676	4.672
Drury CP	4.800	3.120	1.680
Total	18.148	11.796	6.352

The benefits and costs of the school improvement programme scheme are:

Direct Benefits:

- Enabling 65%-81% external investment in schools
- Continuing to raise educational standards
- Reduction in backlog maintenance costs
- Reduction in fixed costs associated with buildings and leadership focuses investment on learners
- At Drury CP, the removal of mobile classrooms and increase in permanent capacity to meet local demand
- Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint, will be Flintshire's first new build Welsh Medium primary school and is strategically linked to the Council's Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
- Energy efficiency improvements

Direct Costs:

- Part of bigger development programme in Band B, £85.4m.
- Estimated revenue borrowing costs associated (interest and minimum revenue provision) with each scheme are as follows:

Band B	Year 1	Year 50	Average over 50 years
	£m	£m	£m
Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint	0.279	0.370	0.317
Drury CP	0.100	0.133	0.114
Total	0.379	0.503	0.431

Indirect Benefits:

- Improving learner outcomes by ensuring that school buildings are effective in creating the conditions for learners to succeed
- Alignment with the Council’s School Modernisation Strategy to ensure schools are fit for purpose
- A more secure school estate
- A school estate with reduced vandalism
- Upgrading ICT provision and enabling new methods of curriculum delivery
- Provision of appropriate capacity of school network
- Economic benefits of local contractor and sub-contractor spend
- Supports with the Councils net zero carbon aims

1.41

Details of schemes funded by specific grant and borrowing is shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6

SPECIFICALLY FUNDED SCHEMES 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Specifically Funded Schemes				
Sustainable Communities for Learning - Band B	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753
Total Schemes	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753
Funding				
Specific Capital Grants	6.164	8.080	5.746	19.990
Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing	3.319	4.350	3.094	10.763
Total Schemes	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753

1.42

At the time of setting the budget, the details of many capital grants have not been released by WG, and so are not included in Table 6 above. As details become available, they will be reported to Members via the quarterly 2024/25 Capital Programme monitoring reports.

1.43

All schemes proposed for inclusion within the Capital Programme invest in assets and / or reconfigure models of service provision. They are pivotal to support the delivery of the Council’s strategic priorities outlined in portfolio business plans and the Council Plan.

1.44

Summary Total Council Fund Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27

Table 7 summarises the total proposals for the 2024/25 - 2026/27 Capital Programme.

Table 7

SUMMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2026/27				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Expenditure				
Statutory / Regulatory Section	2.970	2.970	2.970	8.910
Retained Assets Section	7.073	6.018	4.051	17.142
Investment Section	5.800	1.119	3.018	9.937
Specific Section	9.483	12.430	8.840	30.753
Total Programme (All Sections)	25.326	22.537	18.879	66.742
Funding				
General Funding ¹	11.086	8.159	8.159	27.404
Grant Funding	6.164	8.080	5.746	19.990
Unsupported (Prudential) Borrowing	7.819	5.469	6.112	19.400
Total Projected Funding	25.069	21.708	20.017	66.794
Surplus / (Shortfall)	(0.257)	(0.829)	1.138	0.052
<small>1 As per 2023/24 Provisional Settlement</small>				

Potential future schemes

1.45

All capital schemes need to be considered in the context of the position of the Council's MTFs. All schemes which require prudential borrowing to fund them add revenue pressures in the form of interest charges and charges to the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

1.46

Sustainable Communities for Learning

The WG schools' investment programme is expected to continue into a more fluid rolling 'Band C' programme, with the expectation is that this will run from 2025 to 2030.

Unknowns at this stage are the WG intervention rates and also whether WG will be using MIM funding in Band C. Early indications from WG officials are that this will remain at the current rates.

WG have introduced additional criteria for Net Zero Carbon (NZC) requirements for schools. Buildings will be required to be NZC in operation, which means producing zero or negative carbon emissions as part of their operational energy. The first generation of schools and colleges under the new rules will also be required to demonstrate a 20%

	<p>reduction in the amount of embodied carbon, which is the carbon emitted through construction materials and the construction process, with further reductions required in future, in line with the WG's broader NZC plans. Industry indications have confirmed this will increase construction costs by up to 20%.</p> <p>Whilst there are a lot of unknowns currently, early modelling work is already being undertaken to form the Councils potential Band C programme. This work will be presented at a later date when this work has been sufficiently developed.</p>
1.47	<p>Llys Gwenffrwd, Holywell – Residential Care Home Review</p> <p>Llys Gwenffrwd is a 31 bed, three storey care home built in the 1970s which was refurbished in early 2000. There are challenges associated with the current building as it is built on a sloping site, as a result there are a number of levels requiring the need for ramps to access many areas both inside and outside. It also has a single undersized lift to reach the three storeys which does not meet access requirements and there are a number of living and day spaces which are some distance from the bedroom areas. Outside space is difficult to access because of the site levels and parking can be difficult. The Holywell locality has the fewest number of care home placements available and would benefit from a new build facility on a different more accessible site which requires further consideration. A relocated new build will meet the needs of an ageing population in alignment with the strategic service priorities.</p>
1.48	<p>Residential Care Home Provision – Northeast Flintshire</p> <p>Consideration has been given as to whether the Council can introduce in-house residential care to the Northeast region of Flintshire, to support with capacity and future proofing the care market in the area. Currently, a site mapping exercise is being undertaken to understand if there is a site with sufficient space to house a sufficiently sized facility.</p>
1.49	<p>Additional Learning Needs Reform</p> <p>In previous Cabinet reports, the need for specialist Autism and Moderate Learning Difficulties facilities had been highlight as short/medium term ambition. In reviewing the impact of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) transformation, extending existing ALN provision would also be a requirement along with consideration for a Secondary Phase Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) Resourced Unit, the County only has primary provision currently. A technical feasibility is currently being undertaken to provide a range of options with high level cost estimates around effective building solutions. As an alternative option to a Council funded solution, it would be prudent to consider whether ALN transformation could be included as a project (or series of projects) from 2024. For larger value cost options, it would be prudent to consider the next phase of the WG Sustainable Communities for Learning (Band C) investment programme, given that the current intervention rate in this programme for ALN provision is 75% WG funded, with the Councils contribution being 25%.</p>

1.50	<p>County Hall Campus</p> <p>The requirement to take forward the redevelopment of the site to address the future needs of the Council and other public sector partners; to provide a range of options and an integrated approach around the Courts, Theatr Clwyd and joint Archive service together with a wider site development.</p>
1.51	<p>Register Office, Llwynegrin Hall</p> <p>This proposal is to develop Llwynegrin Hall as a complete venue for civil marriages/partnerships in Flintshire. The intention is to upgrade internal accommodation, to include more choice to couples for their wedding. The building has potential to be available and be booked as part of a wedding package, which has the potential to generate additional income.</p>
1.52	<p>Review of Industrial Estates</p> <p>The Council's industrial estates are widely dispersed throughout the County and provide much needed commercial accommodation to many local businesses, preventing them from leaving the County and maintaining local sources of employment. They also bring into the Council significant revenue through rental income but are of an age where they are now likely to require investment. The most pressing issue is that of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) which will become increasingly stringent over the next eight years and which the Council must adhere to if they are able to continue to let the units.</p> <p>A study is currently being undertaken which will assist with understanding the likely level of investment required. This will be an integral part of an estate-by-estate review which follows the work already undertaken on two of our estates as part of the feasibility work in relation to the potential to access the Levelling Up Fund. We will consider additional factors such as regeneration, employment opportunities, sustainability, and economic viability. Some of this work may determine that existing vacant buildings are demolished which will require funding.</p>
1.53	<p>Highways Asset Management Plan</p> <p>The core Capital Programme includes £1.5m per annum for the HAMP. It has been estimated that the investment required to maintain current network performance is £3.2m per annum, an increase of £1.7m per annum.</p>
1.54	<p>Digital Strategy</p> <p>A planned programme of projects required to increase the number and range of services available digitally are under consideration. The projects have an impact across a range of services, rather than in a single specific service e.g., web payment portal that will be used for all payments to the Council. These will be used to enhance the ability of customers to interact with the Council online.</p> <p>The capital costs of purchasing new software will be calculated on a project-by-project basis at the time each project is ready to proceed in order to</p>

	<p>accurately capture not only the technical requirements for the software but also the costs prevailing at the time.</p> <p>The range of cross cutting projects under consideration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A generic web booking system to allow customers to make appointments for services online • Integration of webchat and email into the Customer Relationship Manager application • A generic facility for customers to upload and store commonly needed documents e.g., proof of entitlement to benefits • Software to link information held in separate databases so that we can update them all at once in a single contact with the customer
1.55	<p>Deeside Leisure Centre</p> <p>Deeside Leisure Centre (DLC) is 50+ years old and reaching the end of its economic useful life. It is the largest sports facility in the County at 15,000m2 and is of strategic importance in terms of sports participation and health and wellbeing. It is an ageing building occupying too large a footprint with inefficient energy systems. The building is not sustainable beyond the medium term.</p> <p>DLC was partially occupied by the Health Board until April 2022 with the ice rink arena being used as a COVID-19 vaccination centre. Following reinstatement works during 2022, Aura reopened the ice arena to the public in December 2022 meaning the leisure centre has now been returned to full use.</p> <p>The Council, and its strategic partner Aura, has undertaken a feasibility study and business case of options for the leisure centre going forward, and will review the impact this may have on the Capital Programme and any future potential revenue savings.</p>
1.56	<p>Homelessness – Young Persons Hub</p> <p>Responding to the needs of young people and particularly those who may be at a risk of homelessness is a key focus for the Council. Consideration needs to be given to not only accommodation needs but also support to assist young people with the key life skills needed to live independently and reduce risks of homelessness. When looking at best practice in this area of work, there are several examples of positive practice which seek to not only provide accommodation, but also co-ordinate support and service delivery.</p> <p>The Housing & Communities Portfolio is considering opportunities for the development of a Young Persons Hub which will seek to provide a number of units of self-contained accommodation with support onsite. This could potentially extend to provision of housing and homelessness advice and support and facilities for co-location of young person focussed services within a “housing hub”. A feasibility study will be considered to inform this approach once a site is identified, which may consider the provision of office and community space to ensure a joined-up approach within a multi-disciplinary team model.</p>

	<p>Subject to the outcome of feasibility works, capital funding may be required to deliver on this agenda. External funding streams will also be considered to maximise opportunities to develop the Young Persons Hub. This activity is referenced within the Councils Housing Prospectus.</p> <p>The service is currently revisiting and refining the details of the brief and developing a revised specification with youth justice, homelessness, youth services and social services colleague for a “Hub” and arranging visits to existing hubs in other authorities to understand the best designs and service configurations.</p>
1.57	<p>Homelessness – Emergency Bed Provision</p> <p>In late 2019, the Council undertook work to develop an Emergency Bed provision for people who are homeless and may otherwise face the prospect of sleeping rough. Significant works were completed within the Glanrafon Resource Centre in Queensferry to transform the building into a Night Shelter offering up to 12 Emergency Beds. The Council, as the owner of the building, completed refurbishment works and then partnered with The Wallich, to deliver the support required to safely operate the Night Shelter.</p> <p>At present there are 23 individual accommodation units on site offering self-contained accommodation, but this is not of a standard we wish to sustain and need to develop a purpose built provision offering high quality self-contained accommodation. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, further guidance has been issued by WG regarding the future direction of homelessness service. In the guidance there is a clear steer towards offering high quality self-contained accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>The Glanrafon Homeless Hub was always considered a short to medium term solution for rough sleeping in Flintshire but the pandemic prolonged the need for the provision and the model has developed significantly. The next iteration of the Homeless Hub is identified as a priority activity within the Councils Housing Prospectus and Social Housing Grant can be prioritised to deliver on this activity. Sites are presently being considered and feasibility work for supported homeless provision underway.</p>
1.58	<p>Greenfield Business Park</p> <p>In addition to the three units referenced in 1.30, the remaining units in the Council ownership at Greenfield Business Park are mostly at the end of their serviceable life and can’t, in most cases, be upgraded further. Their size and condition would make them very unlikely to be lettable in the future as they no longer meet modern business needs. There will be a need to consider the future of the site with options including a) demolition with no further units being constructed, b) demolition for future Council development or private sale, c) wholesale redevelopment and construction of new business units. Capital funds may be required to cover some of these costs including acting as match funding should external capital funding become available.</p>

1.59	<p>Connah's Quay Docks</p> <p>There are two potential pressures that may require capital investment in the future. Firstly, the Connah's Quay Docks area suffers from anti-social behaviour and criminal activity which is exacerbated by poor street lighting and no CCTV coverage. A scheme for improvements to this is being designed with North Wales Police and a future investment programme may be brought for consideration especially if external capital investment can be found which requires match funding. Secondly, the two Council-owned docks in Connah's Quay are expected to require medium-term investment to prevent further deterioration in their condition.</p>
1.60	<p>Town Centre Regeneration</p> <p>The strategic approach to town centre regeneration approved by Cabinet includes the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify potential future development sites and develop options for their future assembly and redevelopment; • diversify land uses to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres including the acquisition of properties; • develop potential projects for future capital funding opportunities; • start, subject to the availability of capital resources and detailed investigation into commercial viability, to acquire key sites for redevelopment; <p>Limited capital funds are available from WG to support these priorities but they require either repayment loans or a minimum of 30% match funding to be available from grants. Both would represent a future call on the capital programme if projects are to be proposed to WG for funding.</p> <p>The Council is developing Place Plans to steer investment in each town and capital projects are expected to arise from this process.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Financial consequences for capital resources are as set out within the report.
2.02	<p>As previously stated, there are revenue consequences of borrowing in interest costs and revenue provision for debt repayment which will bear on the MTFS as new pressures.</p> <p>The pressures for previously approved school building works, the Joint Archive Facility and Croes Atti Residential Care Home have been built into the current MTFS. Pressures for borrowing for new schemes, will be built into future MTFS calculations as necessary.</p>

	Pressure in Year 1	Pressure in Year 50	Average Annual Pressure
	£m	£m	£m
Development of Children's Residential Care	0.060	0.079	0.068
Total	0.060	0.079	0.068

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The proposed Capital Programme was reviewed by Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment at its meeting on 16 th November 2023, with their comments being fed back to Cabinet at its meeting on 21 st November 2023.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Any decisions made which involve the Council's assets and its Capital Programme often have very large and long-term financial implications. As it seeks approval for its Capital Programme, the Council is required to produce indicators assessing the affordability, prudence, and sustainability of the capital plans. These are called the Prudential Indicators and are included in the Capital Strategy report also included on this agenda.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Business Case forms completed by Portfolios. Contact Officer: Chris Taylor, Strategic Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 703309 E-mail: christopher.taylor@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Asset Management Plan - A plan maintained by an authority of the condition and suitability of its assets, updated regularly and utilised to assess future capital needs

Capital Expenditure - Expenditure on the acquisition of **Non-current Assets** or expenditure that extends the life or value of an existing asset

Capital Programme - The Council's financial plan covering capital schemes and expenditure proposals for the current year and a number of future years. It also includes estimates of the capital resources available to finance the programme

Capital Receipt - Receipts (in excess of £10,000) from the disposal of an asset

Capital Scheme - An individual capital project which is monitored and managed in isolation. The aggregate of all schemes comprises the **Capital Programme**

Capital Strategy - A corporate document providing clear strategic guidance about an authority's objectives, priorities and spending plans, demonstrating the link to key corporate and service objectives. May be combined with the **Asset Management Plan (AMP)** to form a single document

Council Fund - The fund to which all the Council's revenue and capital expenditure is charged

Disposal - The decommissioning or transfer of an asset to another party

Non-current Asset - A resource controlled (but not necessarily owned) by the Council, from which economic benefits or service potential are expected to flow to the Council for more than 12 months.

Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) - The act builds on the success of regulation in Wales and reflects the changing world of social care. It places service quality and improvement at the heart of the regulatory regime and strengthens protection for those who need it. Regulation will move beyond compliance with minimum standards, and focus more on the quality of services and the impact which they have on people receiving them

Prudential Code - The Code of Practice drawn up by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to underpin the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003 in respect of an authority's duty to determine the affordability, prudence and sustainability of its capital investment needs

Prudential Indicators - Required by the **Prudential Code**, these take the form of limits, estimates or actual figures used to support the local decision making process for capital investment

Unsupported Prudential Borrowing - Borrowing administered under the **Prudential Code**, whereby authorities can set their own policies on acceptable levels and types of borrowing. The Prudential Framework allows authorities to take out loans in response to overall cash flow forecasts and other factors provided they can show that the borrowing is to

	meet planned capital expenditure in the current year or the next three years.
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Notice of Motion – Councillor Andrew Parkhurst - Israel-Gaza

Council condemns the awful terrorist attacks carried out by Hamas in Israel on 7th October.

Council is horrified by the scenes of violence in the weeks and days since, in particular the devastating humanitarian situation in Gaza where over 10,000 Palestinians have already been killed and hostages are still being held by Hamas.

Council supports Israel's right to protect its citizens, in line with international law, which means targeting terrorists, not civilians, and ensuring that innocent Palestinians do not pay the price for Hamas' actions.

Council expresses its concern at the UK Government's failure to attempt to ensure that the Israeli government and its military adhere to the requirements of international law.

This Council believes:

A military solution alone will not achieve peace for Israelis or Palestinians.

The values of equality, democracy, human rights and the international rule of law are of fundamental importance.

All combatants must act in accordance with the rules of war and international humanitarian law.

The remaining hostages held by Hamas must be released.

Essential supplies of water, food, medicine and electricity must be restored to Gaza, and the passage of aid into Gaza must be facilitated.

That it is wrong to blame Jews for the actions of the Israeli Government or Palestinians for the actions of Hamas.

Council accordingly resolves to ask the UK Government to call for an immediate ceasefire in order to:

- a. Facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid into Gaza
- b. Provide an opportunity to realise the release of the remaining hostages
- c. Allow for an intensive period of diplomacy to realise a political solution, aimed at achieving a lasting peace.

Council notes with deep concern the severe reverberations of this crisis in the UK, with Jewish, Muslim and Palestinian communities all fearing and grieving, and condemns the rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia since 7 October.

Council calls upon the residents of Flintshire, community leaders and public figures to act responsibly and work to bring communities together at this sensitive time.

Council calls upon Welsh Government to set up a Homes for Palestinians scheme in anticipation of and to facilitate the temporary housing of refugees from the conflict.



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 6 th December 2023
Report Subject	Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report
Cabinet Member	Not Applicable
Report Author	Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee
Type of Report	Assurance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with CIPFA's best practice 'Audit Committees – a Practical Guidance for Local Authorities 2018', there is a requirement for the Governance and Audit Committee to be held to account by the Council for the work they undertake. To support this the Governance and Audit Committee's terms of reference were amended in 2018 to include a requirement for the Committee to prepare a yearly report to the Council on its achievements and demonstrate its accountability.

The Governance and Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2022/23 (Appendix A) provides the Council with the necessary information to meet this requirement.

RECOMMENDATION

1	Council is requested to consider and approve the Governance and Audit Committee's Annual Report.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
1.01	<p>In accordance with CIPFA's best practice 'Audit Committees – a Practical Guidance for Local Authorities 2018', the Governance and Audit Committee has an important role within the Council's governance structure and in promoting the principles of good governance.</p> <p>An equally significant part of this role is for the Governance and Audit Committee to demonstrate its accountability. Accountability should be considered under three aspects:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Supporting the Council’s accountability to the public and stakeholders; 2) Supporting accountability within the Council; and 3) Holding the Governance and Audit Committee to account.
1.02	<p>The Governance and Audit Committee’s Annual Report (Appendix A) is designed to provide assurance to the Council in holding the Committee to account. In particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Supporting the Council’s accountability to the public and stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For the last twelve months each Governance and Audit Committee meeting has been held remotely and webcast with all Committee papers available on the Council’s website. 2) Supporting accountability within the Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Through the review of those reports received by Governance and Audit Committee, the Committee holds to account those responsible for the implementation of recommendations and action plans. In addition to this, the Committee oversees the process for evaluating and improving governance, risk, financial management and control. 3) Holding the Governance and Audit Committee to account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Committee has fulfilled its agreed Terms of Reference and adopted the recommended best practice; – Members of the Governance and Audit Committee have assessed their own development needs and taken the opportunity to attend briefing and training sessions; – The Committee has assessed its own effectiveness in November 2022, developed an action plan and monitors progress; and – The Committee demonstrates they have a positive impact on the improvement of governance, risk, financial management and control within the Council.
1.03	<p>The annual report provides the Council with an overview of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work undertaken by the Committee and its effectiveness against the main areas of the Committees’ Terms of Reference; • Internal Audit opinion for 2022/23; • Committees membership and attendance; • Training and Development; and • Future Priorities.
1.04	<p>On 22nd November 2023, the Governance and Audit Committee’s received and reviewed the Annual Report. The report was agreed following the inclusion of the following statement.</p> <p>“The Committee has been active this year in ensuring that recommendations from Internal Audit are followed up and have been questioning relevant Officers where progress in taking action has been slow. As the Council is in a very challenging financial and operational environment it is more important than ever that risk management and internal control arrangements are effective. The Committee will continue</p>

	<p>with this approach in 2023/24 so as to provide the required assurance to the Council.</p> <p>Apart from the above, there are no other major areas of concern to bring to the attention of Council.”</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The draft annual report for the Governance and Audit Committee has been shared with the Chief Executive, Chief Officer Governance, Democratic Services Manager and Chair of the Audit Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The Governance and Audit Committee is integral to promoting an effective risk management framework within the Council.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A – Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Lisa Brownbill - Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 702231</p> <p>E-mail: Lisa.brownbill@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Corporate Governance: the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities. It is founded on the basic principles of openness and inclusivity, integrity and accountability together with the overarching concept of leadership. It is an inter-related system that brings together the underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes.

Risk Management: the process of identifying risks, evaluating their potential consequences and managing them. The aim is to reduce the frequency of risk events occurring (wherever this is possible) and minimise the severity of their consequences if they occur. Threats are managed by a process of controlling, transferring or retaining the risk. Opportunities are managed by identifying strategies to maximise the opportunity or reward for the organisation.

Internal Control: Appropriate procedures and processes are in place to mitigate any risk which may prevent the organisation from achieving its objectives and service delivery.

Financial Management: the planning, organising, directing and control of the financial activities of the Council to ensure sufficient resources are available to delivery its intended outcomes.

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Date	Approved By	Version
22/11/2023	Governance and Audit Committee	Draft
06/12/2023	Flintshire County Council	Final

1 Foreword by Mr Allan Rainford, Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Governance and Audit Committee which outlines the Committees' work and activities for the year ending 31st March 2023. Whilst I was not Chair of the Committee during 2022/23, I was the Vice Chair.

The Governance and Audit Committee is a key part in the Council's governance framework to provide independent oversight on the effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk, financial management, and internal control arrangements. This has continued throughout this financial year.

The Committee has continued to receive valued professional reports, support and advice from Accountancy, Treasury Management, Risk Management, Corporate Business and Communications, Internal Audit and External Audit (Audit Wales). Additionally, we have invited Chief Officers and Service Managers to attend Governance and Audit Committee to respond to concerns raised by members or through various reports, such as those presented by Internal and External Audit.

The Committee has been active this year in ensuring that recommendations from Internal Audit are followed up and have been questioning relevant Officers where progress in taking action has been slow. As the Council is in a very challenging financial and operational environment it is more important than ever that risk management and internal control arrangements are effective. The Committee will continue with this approach in 2023/24 so as to provide the required assurance to the Council.

Apart from the above, there are no other major areas of concern to bring to the attention of Council.

Finally, I would like to thank members and officers who have supported the work of this Committee by presenting, discussing, challenging, and debating solutions to the governance, risk, financial, and control environment of the Council. The Committee has been well attended throughout the year and where apologies have been given a trained substitute member has attended on the members' behalf.



Mr Allan Rainford
Chair of Governance and Audit Committee

2 Introduction

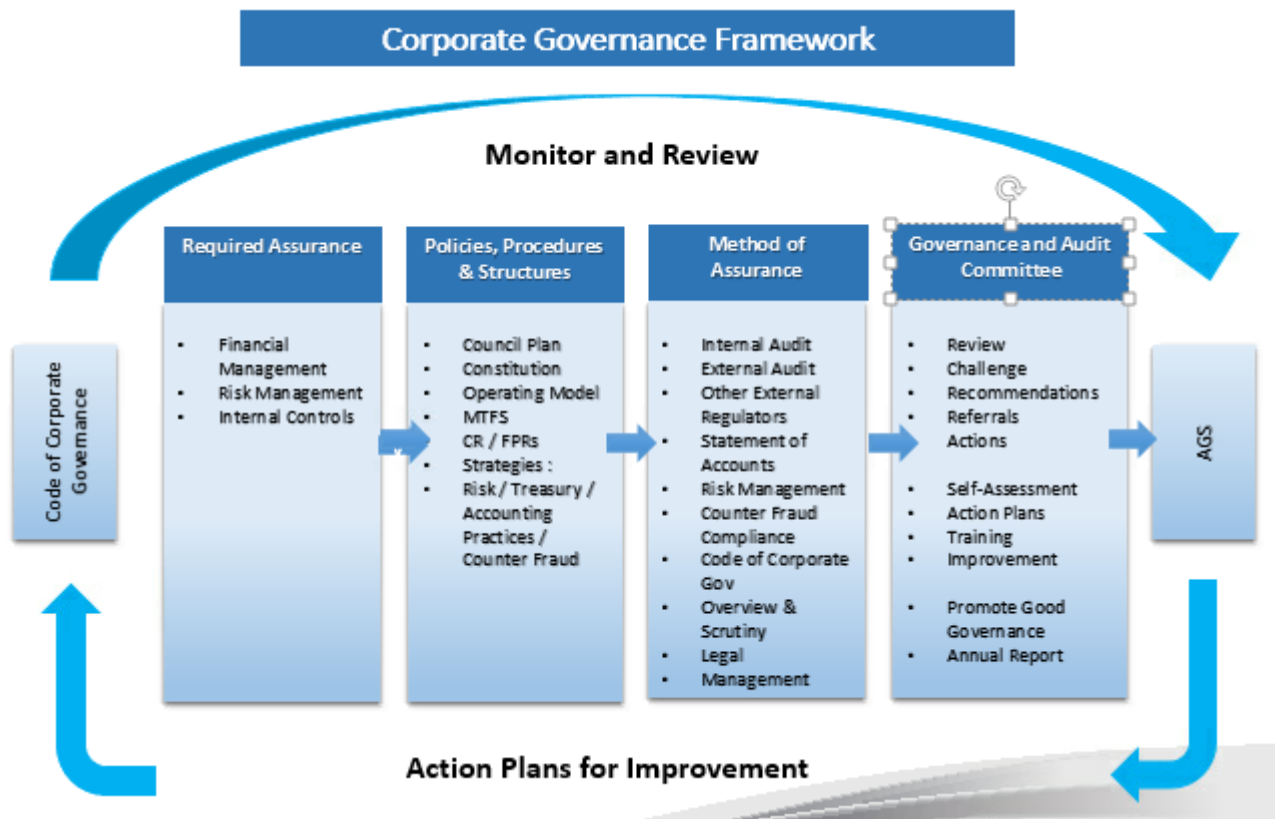
- 2.1 The Governance and Audit Committee is a key part in the Council's Governance Framework. It provides independent governance assurance over the adequacy of the Council's governance and risk management frameworks, the internal control environment, and the integrity of the financial reporting. By overseeing internal and external audit and other regulators, the Committee makes an important contribution by ensuring effective assurance arrangements are in place.
- 2.2 How the Governance and Audit Committee fulfils this role is detailed within the Committee Terms of Reference (March 2021). It states that the Governance and Audit Committee's role and functions will be to:
- A** Review the effectiveness of the Authority's systems of corporate governance, internal control, complaints, performance (self-assessment and peer review) and risk management, and to make reports and recommendations to the County Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.
 - B** Oversee the reporting of the statutory financial statements to ensure the balance, transparency and integrity of published financial information, as well as the review of the financial statements prepared by the authority and recommended to County Council; and

Review and scrutinise the County Council's financial affairs, and to make reports and recommendations on them. The role of the Committee is to assure the budgetary control systems of the Council rather than the scrutiny of the use and value for money of expenditure which is the role of the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
 - C** Monitor the performance and effectiveness of the internal and external audit functions within the wider regulatory context.
 - D** Report to the Council annually, summarising the Committee's activities and recommendations.
- 2.3 The full Terms of Reference for Governance and Audit Committee are detailed at Appendix A.
- 2.4 In supporting the Governance and Audit Committee deliver its terms of reference, there is a strong contribution from the independent members, the external advisors and regulators and the Internal Audit Team.

3 Work of the Governance and Audit Committee and its Effectiveness

- 3.1 The Committee has worked within its Terms of Reference, which includes the requirement to monitor and review governance, risk management, financial management and internal controls within the Council to ensure there is an appropriate and effective framework in place. This process is demonstrated in Graphic 1 below.
- 3.2 The Governance and Audit Committee provides the Council with an independent opinion of the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements within the Council including those of the internal and external audit function.

Graphic 1 – Corporate Governance Framework



- 3.3 As referred to at 2.2, the Governance and Audit Committee’s Terms of Reference is split into four main areas referenced A-D. Within tables 1-4 below the Governance and Audit Committee demonstrates how it has met and fulfilled its Terms of Reference by receiving, reviewing, challenging, noting and accepting the following reports.

Table 1 – Terms of Reference A

TOR A:		
To review the effectiveness of the Authority’s systems of corporate governance, internal control, complaints, performance (self-assessment and peer review) and risk management		
Committee Date	Report Received	Committees Resolution
08/06/2022	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) – Assurance Check report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the positive feedback received from CIW be noted, following the Assurance Check in April 2021; and That the Committee’s thanks be extended to Social Services’ teams for their work relating to the inspection and during the pandemic.
08/06/2022	Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 be attached to the Statement of Accounts and recommended to Council for adoption; and That views from all Committee Chairs will be sought for the next Annual Governance Statement.
08/06/2022	Audit Wales Annual Plan 2022/23	That the Audit Wales Annual Plan be noted.
08/06/2022	Drury Primary School – Financial Management Arrangements	That the report be accepted and a follow-up report scheduled for January 2023.
08/06/2022	Internal Audit Annual Report	That the report and Internal Audit annual opinion be noted.
08/06/2022	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report is accepted.
28/09/2022	Audit Wales Review of Commissioning Older People’s Care Home Placements by North Wales Council’s and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Committee notes the recommendations in the Audit Wales report on Commissioning of Older People’s Care Home Placements by North Wales Councils and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board; and That the Committee notes the agreed actions in the Management Response to address these recommendations and receives regular updates on the implementation of the actions going forward.
28/09/2022	School Reserve Balances Year Ending 31 March 2022	That the level of school reserves as at 31 March 2022 be noted.
28/09/2022	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report is accepted.
14/11/2022	Asset Disposal and Capital Receipts Generated 2021/22	That the report is noted.
14/11/2022	Financial Procedural Rules	That the updated Financial Procedure Rules be endorsed and recommended for submission to Council on 24 January 2023 for approval following consideration by the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee on 12 January.
14/11/2022	Risk Management Framework	That with the inclusion of the two changes, the Risk Management Framework V3 2022 be approved.
14/11/2022	Maes Gwern Contractual Arrangements	That the report and the updated timetable for the remaining actions be noted; and That a cross-authority post-project review meeting be held to ensure that all learning is drawn out and captured.
25/01/2023	Climate Change Strategy	That the Committee notes the contents of the report; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Committee supports the improvement of internal communications to raise awareness of the Council’s positive progress in moving to

		<p>achieve its climate change ambitions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Committee supports the introduction of embedding carbon measures into procurement processes within a pilot portfolio of the Council; • That the Committee supports the case for an Invest to Save post and resources to introduce Building Management Systems within more of our building assets to improve the management of energy use; and • That the Committee supports the embedding of climate change principles throughout the Council, through delivery of Carbon Literacy training to Elected Members, Senior Managers and other key decision makers.
25/01/2023	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2021/22 and Complaints made against Flintshire County Council during the First Half of 2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Committee notes the annual performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during 2021-22; • That the Committee notes the 2022-23 half year performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to services in line with its complaints procedure; • That the Committee supports the actions outlined in paragraph 1.15 to improve complaints handling across the Council; and • That the Committee requests additional information for the next report to demonstrate how community feedback helps to identify changes to improve service delivery.
25/01/2023	Code of Corporate Governance	That the updated Code of Corporate Governance be endorsed for adoption as part of the Council's Constitution.
25/01/2023	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report be accepted.
25/01/2023	Drury Primary School – Financial Management Follow-Up	That the progress made in implementing the actions from the original report be noted.
22/03/2023	External Regulation Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Committee is assured by the Council's response to external regulatory reports; • That a reminder is sent to services that progress reports on action plans should be apolitical; and • To review the external reporting protocol to clarify responsibilities for monitoring progress against action plans after submission to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny.
25/03/2023	Corporate Self-Assessment 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the findings of the Corporate Self-Assessment 2021/22 be noted; • That the opportunities for improvement identified in Corporate Self-Assessment 2021/22 be noted; and • That the Committee notes the need to make the process more robust and resilient, including wider consultation, in order to drive improvement.
25/03/2023	Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 Mid-Year Progress Report	That the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 Mid-Year Progress update be accepted.
22/03/2023	Internal Audit Strategic Plan 2023-26	That having considered the areas covered, including those prioritised for the first year, and the level of audit resources, the Committee approves the Flintshire Internal Audit Strategic Plan for 2023-26.
22/03/2023	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report be accepted.

Table 2 – Terms of Reference B

TOR B: To Oversee the reporting of the statutory financial statement's process and review and scrutinise the County Council's financial affairs		
Committee Date	Report Received	Committees Resolution
08/06/2022	Certification of Grants and Returns 2020/21	That the content of the Grant Claim Certification report for 2020/21 be noted.
27/07/2022	Draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22 (which includes the Annual Governance Statement) be noted; and • That Members note the opportunity to discuss any aspect of the Statement of Accounts with officers or Audit Wales from July to August, prior to the final audited version being brought back to the Committee for final approval in November 2022.
27/07/2022	Supplementary Financial Information to Draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22	Report is noted.
27/07/2022	Treasury Management Annual Report 2021/22 and Treasury Management Quarter 1 Update 2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the draft Treasury Management Annual Report 2021/22 be noted, with no matters to be drawn to the attention of Cabinet in September; and • That the Treasury Management 2022/23 first quarter update be noted.
28/09/2022	School Reserves Balances Year End 31 March 2022	That the school reserve level as at 31 March 2022 be noted.
14/11/2022	Update on the Statement of Accounts 2022	That the Committee notes the report and the reasons for deferring the approval of the Statement of Accounts 2021/22.
14/11/2022	Treasury Management Mid-Year Review and Quarter 2 Update 2023/23	<p>That the Committee notes the draft Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2022/23 and confirms the following matters to be drawn to the attention of Cabinet at its meeting in December 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note compliance with the Council's approved prudential indicators; • Key considerations informing borrowing decisions; and • Stability of PWLB rates which had been subject to fluctuations.
14/11/2022	Asset Disposal and Capital Receipts Generated 2021/22	That the report is noted.
25/01/2022	Statement of Accounts 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the final version of the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 be approved, incorporating the updated position on emergency grant funding; • That the Audit Wales presentation 'Audit of the Group Financial Statements 2021/22– Flintshire County Council' be noted; • That the Letter of Representation be approved. • That the report and the updated timetable for the remaining actions be noted; and • That a cross-authority post-project review meeting be held to ensure that all learning is drawn out and captured.
25/01/2023	Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 and Quarter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That having reviewed the draft Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24, the Committee has

	Update 2022/23	no specific issues to be reported to Cabinet on 23 February 2023; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Treasury Management 2022/23 quarterly update be noted.
22/03/2023	Quarter 4 Treasury Management Update 2022/23	That the Treasury Management 2022/23 quarterly update be endorsed.

Table 3 – Terms of Reference C

TOR C: To monitor the performance and effectiveness of the internal and external audit functions		
Committee Date	Report Received	Committees Resolution
08/06/2022	Audit Wales 2022 Audit Plan	That the draft Audit Wales Plan 2022 be noted.
08/06/2022	Internal Audit Annual Report	That the report and Internal Audit annual opinion be noted.
08/06/2022	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report is accepted.
28/09/2022	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report is accepted.
28/09/2022	External Assessment - Public Sector Internal Audit Standards 2022	That the report be noted.
25/01/2023	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2021/22 and Complaints made against Flintshire County Council during the First Half of 2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Committee notes the annual performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during 2021-22; • That the Committee notes the 2022-23 half year performance of the Council in respect of complaints made to services in line with its complaints procedure; • That the Committee supports the actions outlined in paragraph 1.15 to improve complaints handling across the Council; and • That the Committee requests additional information for the next report to demonstrate how community feedback helps to identify changes to improve service delivery.
25/01/2022	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report is accepted.
25/03/2023	Corporate Self-Assessment 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the findings of the Corporate Self-Assessment 2021/22 be noted; • That the opportunities for improvement identified in Corporate Self-Assessment 2021/22 be noted; and • That the Committee notes the need to make the process more robust and resilient, including wider consultation, in order to drive improvement.
22/03/2023	Internal Audit Strategic Plan 2023-26	That having considered the areas covered, including those prioritised for the first year, and the level of audit resources, the Committee approves the Flintshire Internal Audit Strategic Plan for 2023-26.
22/03/2023	Internal Audit Progress Report	That the report be accepted.
22/03/2023	Private meeting between members, Internal Audit Manager and Audit Wales	N/A

Table 4 – Terms of Reference D

TOR D: To report to the Council annually, summarising the Committee's activities and Recommendations (<i>demonstrating the Committees' effectiveness</i>)		
Date of Committee	Report Received	Committees Resolution
14/11/2022	Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report	That the annual report for 2021/22 be endorsed prior to its submission to Council for approval in 13 December 2022.
22/03/2023	Governance and Audit Committee Self-Assessment	That having considered the findings of the report and on the basis of the discussion, the Chair and Vice-Chair develop a compact action plan to progress actions to inform future development of the Committee.

- 3.4 Any actions raised by Governance and Audit Committee after reviewing and considering these reports are detailed at Appendix B. The level of review and requests for additional information has increased significantly since the last year (38 actions compared to 15 for the previous year) demonstrates the increased level of discussion taking place. Where actions remain open (2 out of 38), these are either ongoing or not due at the point of this report.
- 3.5 In many cases following review by the Committee, the Committee accepted the recommendations made in supporting reports. However, this frequently followed extensive exploration of an issue, detailed questioning and agreed actions. As Appendix B shows the increase in actions from the previous year (38 compared to 15); examples of this included ensuring clear arrangements for follow through after Red/Amber Internal Audit reports, ensuring significant new areas of Council responsibility/risk. Requesting follow updates on red reports and external regulatory reports (e.g. Maes Gwern, Drury Primary School and Commissioning Older People's Care Home Placements by North Wales Councils and BCUHB
- 3.6 The Committee's Forward Work programme for 2023/24 is detailed at Appendix C.

4 Internal Audit Opinion

- 4.1 The Internal Audit Service to Flintshire County Council is required to provide the Council (through the Governance and Audit Committee) with an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control. In giving that opinion it should be noted that assurance can never be absolute. The most that the Internal Audit Service can provide to the Council is a reasonable assurance that there are no major weaknesses in risk management, governance, and control processes.
- 4.2 The matters reported in the Internal Audit Annual Report are those which came to our attention during our Internal Audit work and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement..
- 4.3 There have been no limitations made on the scope of Internal Audit coverage during the year.

For the year ending 31 March 2023, based on the work the Internal Audit Service has undertaken my opinion is that Flintshire County Council has an adequate and effective framework of governance, risk management and internal control.

- 4.4 During 2022/23 there were no 'Red / Limited assurance' opinions issued (compared to previous years 2021/22 three audits, 2020/21 zero audits, 2019/20 one audit, 2018/19 two audits, 2017/18 three audits, 2016/17 four audits and 2015/16 six audits), where an urgent system revision was required.
- 4.5 Overall 82% of assurance opinions issued were either Green or Amber Green providing the Committee assurance that of the audits undertaken this year in the main there are effective arrangements in place for governance, risk management and internal control.
- 4.6 In order for the Internal Audit team to be in position to undertake such work and deliver this audit opinion, it has an unfettered high profile role within the Council, and has developed and holds an excellent trusted working relationship with portfolios. The breadth of the work has grown in recent years seeing a significant increase in requests for advisory, consultancy and commissioned work.

5 Governance and Audit Committee Membership and Attendance

- 5.1 For the period of this report, and to comply with Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 the Council had determined that the membership of its Governance and Audit Committee will consist, from May 2022, of six elected Members and three Independent Lay Members. The Independent Lay Members are usually appointed for a period of five years and Council Members are reappointed annually. The first lay member was appointed in 2017, the second in September 2019 and third in May 2022. To provide some continuity and compliance with the act it was agreed by Council in May 2023 to further extend the lay members term from May 2023 to 31 May 2026.
- 5.2 The Committee is serviced by Council Officers, principally the Chief Executive, the Chief Officer, Governance (Council’s Monitoring Officer), the Corporate Finance Manager (Section 151 Officer) and the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager. Representatives from Corporate Finance, Performance and Risk, and Audit Wales also attend Audit Committee.
- 5.3 The Governance and Audit Committee met on six separate occasions during 2022/23. For each meeting, the Committee were quorate and there were sufficient Elected Members to generate an informed discussion on the matters raised. The attendance by members demonstrates their continued commitment to the Governance and Audit Committee by their high attendance rate of 97.9%.

Table 5 – Governance and Audit Committee Meeting 2022/23

Members Attendance / Committee Date	08/06/22	27/07/22	28/09/22	14/11/22	25/01/23	22/03/23	Meetings Attended
S Ellis (Lay Member and Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
A Rainford (Lay Member and Vice Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
B Harvey (Lay Member)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Cllr B Attridge	Apologies	✓	Apologies	Apologies	✓	✓	3
Cllr G Banks	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Cllr A Marshall	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Cllr A Parkhurst	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Cllr L Thomas	Observer	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	5
Cllr R Hughes	✓						1
Cllr R McKeown	N/A	✓	✓			✓	3
Cllr R Davies (Sub)	N/A	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Cllr T Palmer (Sub)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	1
Total for Committee	6	8	9	7	8	9	
Other Members Present as Observers	1	1	3	2	2	3	
Attendance Ratio for 2022/23				97.9%			
Attendance Ratio for 2021/22				98.1%			
Attendance Ratio for 2020/21				100%			
Attendance Ratio for 2019/20				97.5%			
Attendance Ratio for 2018/19				95.8%			

Attendance Ratio for 2017/18	87.5%
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5.4 All members of the Committee, including any substitutes have received the required Governance and Audit Committee training prior to attending their first Governance and Audit Committee meeting. All meetings were held remotely, meetings were recorded, and papers are available on the Council’s website. Officers from the Council’s External Auditors, Audit Wales (AW) were present at most of the meetings.

6 Self-Assessment, Training and Development

Governance and Audit Committee Self-Assessment

- 6.1 The last self-assessment was undertaken in December 2022 and considered the new CIPFA guidance for Governance and Audit Committees as part of this assessment. The online self-assessment session was interactive with a positive discussion taking place regarding the delivery of the Committee’s core role and function. Following the self-assessment an action plan was developed and approved and presented to Governance and Audit Committee in June 2023. This will be used to monitor performance.
- 6.2 In October 2019, an All-Wales Chair and Vice Chairs of Governance and Audit Committee Network was established and held in Llandrindod Wells. Since 2020 this has operated remotely. During 2022/23, one session has been held and attended by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee and the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager.

Governance and Audit Committee Training and Development

- 6.3 Table 6 provides details of the training courses attended.

Topic	Date	Type of Training	Coverage
Governance and Audit Committee Members Training	25/05/2022 08/07/2022	Role of Governance and Audit Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal and External Audit Governance - Internal Control, Performance, Risk and Financial Management Local Governance and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 Requirements and effectiveness of Governance and Audit Committee
Statement of Accounts	08/06/2022	Accounts	Presentation and explanation of the Statement of Accounts.
Corporate Complaints Training	02/12/2022	Corporate Complaints	Training to enable the Governance and Audit Committee member to fulfil their duties under the new Governance and Audit Committee from the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 in relation to Corporate Complaints
Treasury Management	07/12/2022	Financial	Half day external training session provided on the Council’s approach to Treasury Management.
Chair and Vice Chairs of Audit Committee Network Seminar	03/10/2022	Governance; Risk Management and Effectiveness of the Governance and Audit Committee	Half-Day Session covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIPFA’s Position Statement and guidance; Assessing your Committee’s Effectiveness Tricky Areas New requirements for the Governance and Audit Committee from the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
Member specific	22/02/2023	Role of Governance and Audit Committee	Specific training / advice
Annual Governance Statement	22/02/2023	Governance	Presentation and explanation of the Annual Governance Statement

- 6.4 Areas were identified for strengthening the role of the Governance and Audit Committee during the 2022/23 Governance and Audit Committee's self-assessment review. As a means of gathering evidence as to the effectiveness of the Committee and to increase its effectiveness, the Committee approved on 14 June 2023 an action plan which addressed the findings of the previous self-assessment. This will be considered as part of the next self-assessment.

7 Future Priorities

- 7.1 The Committee's Forward Work Programme (Appendix C) will continue to be reviewed to ensure the contribution to governance, risk management, financial management and internal control is maximised.

Appendix A

Governance and Audit Committee's Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Governance and Audit Committee was updated to reflect the name change and the new responsibilities because of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

7.00 Statement of Purpose:

The terms of reference sets out the Governance and Audit Committee's position in the governance structure of the Council.

The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Flintshire County Council's (the Council's) corporate governance. It provides an independent and high level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

7.01 Role:

The Governance and Audit Committee's role and functions will be to:

- A.** Review the effectiveness of the Authority's systems of corporate governance, internal control, complaints, performance (self-assessment and peer review) and risk management, and to make reports and recommendations to the County Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements;
- B.** Oversee the reporting of the statutory financial statement's process to ensure the balance, transparency and integrity of published financial information, and to review the financial statements prepared by the authority and recommend them to County Council; and

Review and scrutinise the County Council's financial affairs, and to make reports and recommendations on them. The role of the Committee is to assure the budgetary control systems of the Council rather than the scrutiny of the use and value for money of expenditure which is the role of the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

- C.** Monitor the performance and effectiveness of the internal and external audit functions within the wider regulatory context.
- D.** Report to the Council annually, summarising the Committee's activities and recommendations.

A. Corporate Governance, Internal Control, Complaints, Performance and Risk Management

1. Evaluate whether Senior Accountable Officers and service teams are setting the appropriate “control culture” by communicating the importance of internal control and risk management.
2. Consider and assure the annual update of the Code of Corporate Governance against the ‘Delivering Good Governance Framework (Wales)’.
3. Consider and assure the draft Annual Governance Statement and make appropriate recommendations/observations prior to its submission to the Council’s Regulators.
4. Evaluate the overall effective development and operation of the internal control and risk management frameworks and consider whether actions raised by the internal and external auditors have been implemented by Senior Accountable Officers.
5. Review and assure the Risk Management Strategy through regular reports on risk management and business continuity plans, processes and outcomes.
6. Monitor progress in addressing risk related issues reported to the Committee.
7. Consider the Council’s framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the Council.
8. To review and assess the Council’ ability to effectively handle complaints.
9. To make reports and recommendations in relation to the Council’s ability to handle complaints effectively.
10. To consider the Council’s draft Annual Performance Self-Assessment report and if necessary make any recommendations for changes to the Council.
11. To receive the Council’s finalised Annual Self-Assessment report for the respective financial year as soon as reasonably possible after the end of the financial year.
12. At least once during the period between two consecutive ordinary elections of councillors to the Council, consider the independent Panel Performance Assessment report on whether the Council is meeting its performance requirements.
13. To receive and review the Council’s draft response to the report of the independent Panel Performance Assessment and if necessary, make

recommendations for changes to the statements made in the draft response to the Council.

14. Keep under review the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Fraud Response Plan and Whistleblowing Policy and the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from Fraud and Corruption.
15. Consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessment on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
16. Receive reports on all fraud identified and any other special investigations, and action taken.
17. Consider how Senior Accountable Officers are held to account for the security of computer systems and applications to protect against computer fraud or misuse.
18. Ensure the rigorous application of the agreed protocol for the reporting and decision making over business cases for collaborative projects, the management of the transition for approved collaborations, and the subsequent performance management arrangements for the new collaborative services.
19. Obtain regular updates from Senior Accountable Officers and legal advice regarding compliance matters, and be satisfied that all compliance matters have been considered in preparing the financial statements.
20. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee together with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the six Overview and Scrutiny Committees will attend the Chair and Vice Chair Liaison Group with the primary aim to reduce duplication of work, ensure there is a shared coverage of the Council's risk profile and escalate poor performance between respective Committees.

Appendix A of the Audit Charter provides a diagram of the co-ordination of work between the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Governance and Audit Committee.

B. Financial:

Statutory Financial Statements

1. Receive the draft annual Statement of Accounts, together with the underlying accounting policies for information. Consider and comment on the final statement of accounts following the receipt of the proposed audit opinion from the Wales Audit Office prior to recommending their approval to the Council.
2. Understand the controls and processes implemented by Senior Accountable Officers to ensure the financial statements derive from the underlying financial

systems, comply with relevant standards and requirements, and are subject to appropriate review.

3. Meet with management and external auditors to review the financial statements, the key accounting policies and judgements, significant accounting and reporting issues and their impact on financial reports, and the results of the audit.
4. Ensure that significant adjustments, unadjusted differences, disagreements with Senior Accountable Officers and critical accounting policies and practice are discussed with the external auditor.

Financial Affairs

5. Understand the internal control systems implemented by Senior Accountable Officers and service teams for the approval of transactions and the recording and processing of financial data.
6. Gain an understanding of the current areas of greatest risk around financial controls and advise and assure on risk management.
7. Keep under review the Council's financial procedure rules and contract procedure rules and all other corporate directions concerning financial control.
8. Review and assure the Treasury Management Strategy and Policy and consider quarterly updates on Treasury Management and make appropriate recommendations / observations to the Cabinet.

C. Internal and External Audit

1. Keep under review the joint working arrangements of the Council's Internal and External Auditors.

Internal Audit

2. Promote the role of internal audit within the Council, as a key element of its control environment.
3. Review and approve the Internal Audit Charter, outlining the role, scope, independence, authority, responsibility and reporting of the department.
4. Keep under review the organisational structure and resource requirements of the Internal Audit Section and consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.

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5. Make appropriate enquiries of both Senior Accountable Officers and the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resources limitations.
 6. Review, approve (but not direct) and monitor the delivery of the risk-based internal audit plan, the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources and ensure the plan considers changes arising from Government, Assembly or Council initiatives.
 7. Approve significant interim changes to the risk based internal audit plan and resources requirements.
 8. Receive summaries of all internal audit reports issued, highlighting key actions with corporate control implications.
 9. Consider reports from the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager on internal audit's performance during the year, including the performance of external providers of internal audit services. These will include:
 - Updates on the work of internal audit including key findings, issues of concern including monitoring the implementation of agreed actions contained within internal audit reports, receive report on actions not implemented within good timescales and seek explanations from officers where required.
 - Regular reports on the results of the Quality Assurance Improvement Programme (QAIP).
 - Reports on instances where the Internal Audit Service does not conform to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and Local Governance Advice Note (LGAN), considering whether the non-conformance is significant enough that it must be included in the AGS.
 10. Receive and consider the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Managers annual report:
 - The statement of the level of conformance with the PSIAS and LGAN and the results of the QAIP that support the statement – these will indicate the reliability of the conclusions of internal audit.
 - The opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control together with the summary of the work supporting the opinion – these will assist the Committee in reviewing the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

- Keep performance indicators under review and evaluate, on an annual basis, the performance and effectiveness of internal audit and its compliance with best practice.
11. Consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
 12. Receive reports outlining the action taken where the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager has concluded that Senior Accountable Officers and service teams have accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the Council or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
 13. Contribute to the Quality Assurance Improvement Programme (QAIP) and in particular, to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
 14. Meet separately with the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager to discuss any matters that the Committee or internal auditors believe should be discussed privately.
 15. Should the needs arise, arbitrate in the event of any failure to agree between a Senior Accountable Officers and internal audit.
 16. Discuss with the external auditor the standard of work of internal audit.

External Audit and External Regulatory Bodies

External Audit

17. Support the independence of external audit through consideration of the external auditor's annual assessment of its independence.
18. Review the external auditors' proposed audit scope and approach for the current year in the light of the Authority's present circumstances and changes in regulatory and other requirements arising from Government, Assembly or Council initiatives.
19. Ensure that the annual audit is undertaken in compliance with statutory requirements.
20. Receive all audit reports, and the annual audit letter, issued by the external auditor, and ensure that all agreed recommendations are implemented.
21. Consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
22. Discuss with the external auditor any audit problems encountered in the normal course of audit work, including any restriction on audit scope or access to information.

23. Meet separately with the external auditors to discuss any matters that the Committee or auditors believe should be discussed privately. Ensure the auditors have access to the chair of the Governance and Audit Committee when required.
24. Review, annually, the performance of external audit and co-ordinate any feedback requested from Audit Wales.

External Regulation: Performance

25. External arrangements for regulation and assurance are provided by a number of statutorily appointed bodies such as the Audit Wales (AW), Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), plus a number of other external regulatory bodies. To examine how the organisation manages and spends public money including achieving value in delivery. This work is co-ordinated by the Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Management team and a shared protocol for these working arrangements is in place.
26. To gain assurance and confidence of the Council's response to the external regulatory findings the Governance and Audit Committee will:
 - a) Receive periodic reports from external regulators which will include the Council's response to the reports and ensure that effective processes are in place for setting and monitoring against proportionate and effective action plans.
 - b) Receive an annual report collating external regulatory activity on improvement assessment work which is supplemented by local risk based audit work; and
 - c) Receive the Annual Improvement Report from the Auditor General

D. Accountability Arrangements

1. Require the attendance at the Committee of any officer or member, or the submission of a report from any officer, to provide further explanation in connection with any of the above terms of reference.
2. Evaluate the Committee's own performance, both of individual members and collectively, on a regular basis.
3. The Committee must meet at least once a year and must also do so if the Council decides or if at least a third of the Committee's members require a meeting. Beyond those requirements the Committee can meet whenever it likes.
4. The Governance and Audit Committee will keep the above terms of reference under annual review and propose any amendment to the County Council.

5. Report to full council and publish an annual report on the Committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the Committee in meeting its purpose.

9.2.3 Composition (As per the Council's Constitution)

1. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee will be chosen by the Committee itself at its first meeting following each annual general meeting. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee will be chosen from amongst the opposition group(s), non-aligned Councillors or lay member on the Council (that is to say from amongst the group(s) none of whose members are included in the Cabinet). From May 2022 the appointment of the Chair must be from one of the Lay Members appointed to sit on the Committee.
2. The County Council shall appoint two (three from May 2022) people who are neither a serving Councillor nor an officer of the County Council or any other Council to serve as a lay members of the Committee with full voting rights. The lay member's term of office shall be from the first County Council meeting following the annual general meeting following the County Council elections until the first County Council meeting after the annual general meeting following the next County Council elections. No more than one member of the Committee shall be on the Council's Cabinet. The Council Leader cannot be a member of the Committee.
3. It is the express wish of the Council that there should be continuity of membership of the Governance and Audit Committee so as to build up a body of expertise and maintain a consistency of approach.
4. In recognising the express wish of the Council but observing the requirements of the legislation for political balance, the Governance and Audit Committee will comprise seven (six from May 2022) Members with the seats allocated in accordance with the legislation to the appropriate political groups and one lay member. Any proposed substitution shall comply with Council Procedure Rule 22.4 and the proposed substitute shall have attended relevant training. Substitutes will only be permitted where the Governance and Audit Committee, at the commencement of its meeting, agrees that good reasons exist for substitution.
5. Members will receive induction training on appointment to the Committee. Ongoing training will be provided as necessary to meet the requirements of the Committee, based on the skills and experience of the members.
6. The business of the Committee shall be conducted apolitically.

Governance and Audit Committee Actions Raised during 2022/23

Appendix B

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
June 2022				
5.	CIW - Assurance Check	That the Committee's thanks be extended to Social Services' teams for their work relating to the inspection and during the pandemic.	All staff within Social Services Adults and Children were emailed to express thanks following GAC on the 8 th June 2022.	Closed
6.	AGS 2021/22	To share information on the latest review of the Corporate Anti-Fraud Strategy with the Committee (Cllr Parkhurst's question).	The Corporate Anti-Fraud Strategy together with the Anti Money Laundering Statement, Whistleblowing Policy, Fraud Response Plan and the Financial Procedural Rules was emailed to Cllr Parkhurst on 8 th June 2023	Closed
7.	Certification of Grants 2020/21	To share information on housing benefit subsidy caseload with the Committee.	Information on housing benefit subsidy caseloads was shared with committee members on 9 th June 2022	Closed
11.	Drury PS – Financial Management Arrangements	A follow up report to be scheduled for January 2023	Follow up report presented to Governance and Audit Committee in January 2023	Closed
July 2022				
19.	Draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22	To clarify within the final accounts the separate legal arrangements of Theatr Clwyd as opposed to NEW Homes (Cllr Banks suggested in the chat that a brief explanation and link be included under 'Associated Companies' on p.48).	Following a review of the Code, it would not be categorised as a relationship that gives rise to related parties. The Code states "transactions do not themselves create a related party relationship: there has to be some element of control or influence by one party over another" We do not have this with the Theatr.	Closed

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
19.	Draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22	To share information on financial support to local businesses and communities during the pandemic.	Information emailed to Committee 01/08/22	Closed
19.	Draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22	To bring forward the November meeting to accommodate the approval of the accounts.	Meeting has been moved to 14/11/22	Closed
20.	Supplementary financial info to SoA	That information on the significant increase in interim/temporary contracts (Table 2) and how this compares to other councils be emailed to the Committee.	Information emailed to Committee 04/08/22	Closed
September 2022				
26.	AW Review of Commissioning Older People's Care Home Placements by NW Councils and BCUHB	That the Committee notes the agreed actions in the Management Response to address these recommendations and receives regular updates on the implementation of the actions going forward. That the updates include any actions by Welsh Government, with timescales, as part of the national report by Audit Wales.	The service will attend June 2023 committee to provide an update on the progress made against the findings within the report.	Closed
27	School Reserve Balances y/e 31/03/22	To share with the Committee the protocol for schools in financial difficulty.	The protocol for schools in financial difficulty was shared with the Committee on 18 October 2022	Closed
28	IA Progress Report	That the responsible officer for Maes Gwern contractual arrangements be invited to attend Committee to provide reasons for overdue actions.	Officer from Housing will attend Committee in November 2022 to provide an update	Closed
28	IA Progress Report	To liaise with the auditor of the Amber/Red report	An explanation was provided to members on 24	Closed

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
		(Appendix D) on the reconciliation of manual records with information from Finance, to assure the Committee of no associated risks.	October 2022	
November 2022				
36.	Treasury Mgt mid-year review 2022/23 and Q2 update	That the Committee notes the draft Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2022/23 and confirms the following matters to be drawn to the attention of Cabinet at its meeting in December 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note compliance with the Council's approved prudential indicators; Key considerations informing borrowing decisions; and Stability of PWLB rates which had been subject to fluctuation.	Cabinet considered and approved the report on 20 December 2022	Closed
36.	Treasury Mgt mid-year review 2022/23 and Q2 update	To share details of credit agency ratings for each of the Council's investment counterparties with the Committee.	Members were provided with this information on 8 December 2022	Closed
37.	Asset Disposal and Capital Receipts generated 2021/22	To share further details of disposals in Appendix 1 with the Committee, on a confidential basis.	Members were provided with this information on 8 December 2022	Closed
38.	Financial Procedure Rules	To respond to the Committee on Cllr Banks' questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify 'true copy' on p.41(h) of the FPRs Clarify the change to (d) under Key Controls on p.38	Members were provided with a response to this enquiry on 22 November 2022	Closed
39.	Risk Management Framework	To update the framework document to include (a) the Committee referring red risk actions to OSCs, and (b) the inclusion of partnership risks being fed	The Risk Management framework has been updated, the audit action closed down and made	Closed

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
		into InPhase.	available of the Council's Infonet.	
39.	Risk Management Framework	To share dashboard information with the Committee at the January meeting.	Due to a lack of technical resources within the a 'new' team this has been moved to November 2023 committee.	Open
January 2023				
47.	Minutes	To clarify the difference between figures in the appendix, compared with the confidential breakdown shared after the meeting.	The majority of the difference between figures in the appendix, relate to the Maes Gwern development which was omitted due to commercial sensitivity. There was also amounts for receipts received through non disposals, such as release of covenants / easements and repayment of loans. Democratic Services have been asked to record this difference in a note on the minutes.	Closed
47.	Minutes	To advise the Committee how the above annual report will be presented in future.	Previous reports presented only reviewed disposals of council fund assets over the past year. To include a total of all receipts received in year within the report in the future.	Closed
48.	Statement of Accounts 2021/22	That a detailed assurance report be shared with the Committee about arrangements in place to manage potential conflicts of interests of senior officers; and	A review of Declarations of Interests has been included within the Strategic Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24.	Closed
48.	Statement of Accounts 2021/22	That a request is made to senior officers who have made such declarations to establish whether they are willing to share that information with the Committee.	This will be addressed following the Internal Audit review on Declarations of Interests.	Closed

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
48.	Statement of Accounts 2021/22	To share the Asset Register with the Committee on a confidential basis.	This has been shared with members on 7 th March 2023	Closed
49.	Climate Change Strategy	To define milestones in the action plan to support the aims of the strategy.	Future progress reports would be more transparent in including milestone targets and progress against these.	Closed
50.	PSOW Annual Letter 2021-22 and Complaints against FCC for first half 2022-23	That the Committee requests additional information for the next report to demonstrate how community feedback helps to identify changes to improve service delivery.	This will be included within future reports to Committee.	Closed
51.	Treasury Management 2023/24 Strategy and Q3 Update 2022/23	To consider whether reference to the Climate Change Strategy could be included in section 1.03 of the Policy Statement.	Paragraph amended to reference responsible investment, where possible.	Closed
51.	Treasury Management 2023/24 Strategy and Q3 Update 2022/23	To respond to the Committee on Cllr Attridge's query on clause 3 of the TM Code within the CIPFA Practical Guide for Local Authorities' Audit Committees.	<p>Clause 3 of the Code confirms that responsibility of the treasury management polices and practices are with the Cabinet and the execution and administration of treasury management decisions with the Section 151 Officer.</p> <p>Clause 4 discusses the nominated committee (G&AC for FCC) responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and polices.</p>	Closed
53.	IA Progress Report	To share with the Committee an update on progress with high priority actions from the Homelessness review when available.	This has been circulated to members on 14 th March 2023	Closed

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
57.	Drury Primary School - Finance Management follow-up	To advise the Committee when the final outstanding action has been completed.	The action currently remains open. Committee will be notified once this has been closed.	Open
March 2023				
62.	External Assurance Regulation	That a reminder is sent to services that progress reports on action plans should be apolitical; and	The protocol has been updated to reflect this and shared with key officers.	Closed
62.	External Assurance Regulation	That the external reporting protocol be reviewed to clarify responsibilities for monitoring progress against action plans after submission to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny.	This has been included within the Performance Leads agenda.	Closed
62.	External Assurance Regulation	To liaise with the service on the 'Welsh Labor Government' wording on p.2 of the summary document.	This has been included within the performance leads agenda.	Closed
62.	External Regulation Assurance	To respond to the Committee on Cllr Banks' query on why actions P1 and P2 on the Rental Income report should go through the political governance process.	A response to this query was circulated to members 18 April 2023	Closed
65.	GAC Self-Assessment	That having considered the findings of the report and on the basis of the discussion, the Chair and Vice-Chair develop a compact action plan to progress actions to inform future development of the Committee.	An action plan has been established and will be presented to Committee in June 2023	Closed
66.	AGS 2021/22 mid-year	To request a response to concerns about the risk on	Members received an update to these action on	Closed

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
	progress report	Housing Benefit overpayments.	07 June 2023	
67.	IA Strategic Plan	To show reviews of Cyber and Data Security over the 3 yr period.	This has been actioned and reflected in the 3 year plan	Closed
67.	IA Strategic Plan	To consider whether any of the requests made by Cllrs Parkhurst and Attridge could be accommodated in the Plan - including a review of external wall insulation contracts once the legal process had concluded. To include a future item on the implementation of the customer engagement strategy as requested by the Chair.	<p>Consideration has been given to the suggested audits made by members for inclusion in the Annual plan. These are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Consultants – to keep as the status quo for now. Past report to be shared with members which includes the detailed process and an additional ¼ report to be introduced for the Chief Executive. • Bad debts – this was performed in 2022/23 • Corporate Grants – this is an annual review • Asset Disposal – this will be discussed with the relevant portfolio during the ¼ review • Anti fraud and corruption – a review of these policies will be undertaken in 2024/25 • Document retention – based on risk, this will not be included in the plan but will be kept for consideration • Planning decisions interests – interests declared (if any) will be covered in the current review • Void Management – will this will be discussed with the relevant portfolio during the ¼ review to establish if this can be brought forward • External wall installation – this is too early to review. It will be included in the 2024/25 plan <p>Customer Engagement – this has been included</p>	Closed

Item No.	Report	Action Required	Action Taken	Status
			within the 2024/25 annual plan	
67.	IA Strategic Plan	On Cllr Parkhurst's comments, to share information on the process to control the use of consultants.	An email has been circulated to members on 05.06.2023	Closed

Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Programme –2023/24

Appendix C

Date / Area of Assurance	27/09/2023	22/11/2023	24/01/2024	10/04/2024	June 2024	July 2024
Pre-Committee Training				Annual Governance Statement	Draft Statement of Accounts	
Audit Wales (AW)	Audit Plan AW 2022		Assurance and Risk Assessment Review Report (ARR 2021-22)	Audit Plan (AW) 2023	Annual Audit Summary (AW) (2022/23)	
Internal Audit				Public Sector Internal Audit Standards Self- Assessment	Internal Audit Charter	
				Internal Audit Strategic Plan 2024/27	Internal Audit Annual Report 2023/24	
	Internal Audit Progress Report	Fraud Investigation Update (Part 2 Paper) Audit Action Tracking Update	Internal Audit Progress Report	Internal Audit Progress Report	Internal Audit Progress Report	
Governance and Risk Management		Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report		GAC Self-Assessment	GAC Self-Assessment Action Plan Review	
		Annual Governance Statement Mid-Year review	Code of Corporate Governance		Draft Annual Governance Statement	
	GAC Action Tracking Forward Work Programme	GAC Action Tracking Forward Work Programme	Risk Management Update and Framework	Annual Report on External Inspections	Risk Management Update	
		GAC Action Tracking Forward Work Programme	GAC Action Tracking Forward Work Programme	GAC Action Tracking Forward Work Programme	GAC Action Tracking Forward Work Programme	
Performance	Draft Corporate Self-Assessment Report	Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report				
Finance	School Reserves – Annual Report on School Balances			Statement of Accounts		Draft Statement of Accounts
		Asset Disposals and Capital Receipts				Supplementary Financial Information to Draft Statement of Accounts Certification of Grants and Returns Report
Treasury Management		Treasury Management Q2 – Mid Year Report	Treasury Management Q3 Update and Strategy	Treasury Management Q4 Update		Treasury Management Q1 Update and Annual Report
Meeting Following GAC				Private Meeting with Committee, Internal and External Audit		

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Matters to be address outside of formal Committee meetings during 2023/24

<p>Governance and Audit Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Workshops for members • Annual Self-Assessment Workshop • Treasury Management Training • AGS Workshop • Corporate Self-Assessment Workshop • Private Meeting (AW and Internal Audit) • Training and Development sessions • All Wales Chairs and Vice Chairs Network Group • Chair and Vice Chairs Training • Chair and Vice Chair Meeting with the Leader of the Council 	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence, updates to actions and reports for information purposes • Time sensitive consultation • In person / video meetings as and when necessary
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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Thursday 6 th December 2023
Report Subject	Appointment of a Lay Person to the Governance and Audit Committee
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires the Council to ensure that 1/3 of members on the Governance and Audit Committee are Lay Members.

The term of office for one of the existing Lay Members expires in December 2023, having already served four years. The Lay Member is willing to serve for a further term if the Council is willing to re-appoint him.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Council reappoints the Lay Member for another four years until 31 December 2027.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE APPOINTMENT OF LAY MEMBERS
1.01	The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires the Council to ensure that, with effect from May 2022, 1/3 of the members of the Governance and Audit Committee are Lay Members. The Committee contains three Lay Members at present.
1.02	One of the existing Lay Members, Allan Rainford, was appointed by the Council in September 2019 for a period of four years. His term of office therefore expires in December 2023. He has been a diligent and active member of the Committee and is its current chair. He is willing to serve again if the Council is willing to reappoint him.

1.03	If he is re-appointed, it is suggested that it should be for a further period of four years so that we recruit for a replacement in 2027 after the next elections. That will give a retirement pattern as follows:		
	Lay Member	Retirement Date	Number of terms to date
	Allan Rainford	31 December 2023	1
	Sally Ellis	31 May 2026	2
	Brian Harvey	31 December 2027	1

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Each recruitment exercise costs around (£3,500 – £4,000) and requires support from both Councillors (typically a panel of five) and officers. However, it is the optimum manner to openly and transparently fill vacancies.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The key risks are that the Council does not recruit to the third position and that it loses the existing experienced Lay Member. Should the Committee not have sufficient Lay Members then its acts/decisions will be invalid (section 82(6) Local Government Measure 2011) until the position is filled.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None Contact Officer: Gareth Owens, Chief Officer Governance Telephone: 01352 702344 E-mail: gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Lay Member – is defined by the Local Government Measure 2011 as a person who is not a member of the Council i.e. not already an elected Councillor.</p> <p>WLGA – the representative body for all County and County Borough Councils in Wales. As well as representative role it also co-ordinates activity especially where all councils need to undertake a common task (e.g. recruiting Lay Members).</p>

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COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 6 th December 2023 Wednesday, 6 December 2023
Report Subject	Change of meeting time – Planning Committee
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A [Schedule of Meetings](#) is produced on an annual basis and presented for approval to Members at the Councils Annual Meeting.

The current schedule (attached as Appendix 2) was passed by Council on 4th May 2023, listing the dates and times of meetings to July 2024. As per the schedule, Planning Committee meetings have been agreed to meet with a start time of 1pm.

In November, the Governance and Audit Committee meeting overran, meaning those Members who are also members of Planning Committee had little time before the start of the Planning Committee meeting.

It has been requested by the Planning Committee that future meetings start at 2pm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the start time of Planning Committee Meetings be changed to 2pm from the December 2023 meeting until the end of the current Schedule of Meetings.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CHANGE OF MEETING TIME – PLANNING COMMITTEE
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1.01	<p>A Schedule of Meetings is produced on an annual basis and presented for approval to Members at the Councils Annual Meeting.</p> <p>The current schedule (attached as Appendix 2) was passed by Council on 4th May 2023, listing the dates and times of meetings to July 2024.</p> <p>As per the schedule, Planning Committee meetings have been agreed to meet with a start time of 1pm.</p> <p>With the exception of Full Council, other Council meetings that meet in the afternoon tend to have a start time of 2pm.</p>
1.02	<p>On the 22 November 2023, there were two meetings scheduled: Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) at 10am, and then Planning Committee at 1pm.</p>
1.03	<p>Some members of the Planning Committee are also a member of GAC. The GAC meeting did not finish until around 12:30pm.</p> <p>This did not leave a lot of time for those Members who were also due to attend the Planning Committee time to have a lunch break, prepare for their next meeting, or travel to County Hall.</p>
1.04	<p>As a result, at the November Planning Committee meeting, members of the committee requested that future meetings start at 2pm to enable them (and others) who attend an earlier meeting on the same day sufficient time between meetings.</p>
1.05	<p>Members will note from the Schedule of Meetings that there are a number of Planning Committee meetings where there is also a meeting in the morning of the same day.</p> <p>For those Members who are due to attend both meetings, this could present difficulties if the morning meeting overruns.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that the start time of Planning Committee meetings is changed to 2pm from December 2023.</p>
1.06	<p>There is currently no clear provision for the dates and timings of Council meetings to be changed after the Schedule of Meetings has been agreed. An appropriate mechanism will be considered ahead of the next AGM and presented with the report to agree next year's schedule.</p> <p>'Knowles on Local Authority Meetings', which provides guidance on administration of meetings, states the following:</p> <p><u><i>Who may convene</i></u></p> <p><i>10.14 The proper officer will normally convene committee meetings in accordance with the prearranged timetable and, in consultation with the committee chairman, convene special meetings as circumstances may warrant.</i></p>

	<p>There was an issue about changing the date and time of a Community & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier this year. Using the guidance provided in Knowles on Local Authority Meetings, it was resolved that meetings should follow the published and agreed Schedule of Meetings.</p> <p>To deviate from that now therefore requires Full Council approval.</p>
1.07	<p>The following Planning meetings would be affected by the change of time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 13th December* • Wednesday 10th January 2024* • Wednesday 7th February 2024* • Wednesday 13th March 2024 • Wednesday 10th April 2024* • Wednesday 19th June 2024* <p>Those marked with an * are where there is another Council meeting scheduled to take place in the morning.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There will not be any resource implications from the proposed change.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	None.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The Planning Committee provided feedback resulting in the proposed change. Wider consultation on this minor change is not necessary.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1: Report to Council May 2023 – Schedule of Meetings 2023/24. • Appendix 2: Appendix to Schedule of Meetings 2023/24 report – Draft Schedule of Meetings 2023/24.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
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7.01	Contact Officer: Steven Goodrum, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: steven.goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 4 th May 2023
Report Subject	Schedule of Meetings 2023/24
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains the proposed schedule of meetings for 2023/24.

It also explains how the schedule was prepared and details the consultation process which was undertaken with Members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the attached draft Schedule of Meetings for 2023/24 be approved.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/24
1.01	The Schedule of Meetings is produced on an annual basis and presented for approval to Members at the Annual Meeting.
1.02	Each year the Schedule of Meetings is designed based on regular meeting cycles, regular meeting days where possible and with wide consultation to ensure that reporting commitments and/or meetings do not clash.
1.03	It is the aim to avoid meetings being held in school holidays wherever possible. However, given the cycle of individual Committee meetings when statutory reports are required to be approved by this is not always possible.

1.04	A suggestion was made at a recent County Council meeting for meetings of County Council to commence at 1pm, not 2pm as has been the practice for many years. This was supported and has been reflected in the draft schedule.
1.05	A further suggestion was made that, where possible, meetings should be avoided on the mornings of County Council meetings. This can be achieved for all but for two meetings of County Council. To avoid holding two meetings on the same day, it has been necessary to schedule Council meetings on a Wednesday due to the reporting cycles of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings which limits the availability of dates.
1.06	A number of reserved dates for County Council have also been included in the diary in case special meetings be required. If they are not needed for County Council meetings, those dates will be made available for Workshops or Task and Finish Groups, as they will already be reserved in Members' diaries.
1.07	Shown in <i>Italics</i> are the known dates of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority meetings and North Wales Economic Ambition Board meetings (noting that when writing the report, the dates for the latter are only known until December 2023. We have avoided scheduling meetings which would clash with those external commitments.
1.08	Following the start of the new Council term, a survey was undertaken which contained questions of Members preference of meeting start times. This survey was undertaken in the autumn which allowed for new Members to experience meetings held in line with the preferences made following the last Council term, and to express their views on whether those arrangements were best suited to their needs. Following the completion of the survey, no recommendations for changing meeting days/times were made. Therefore, this Schedule of Meetings continues the previous pattern of meetings, noting the changes as outlined above.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Chief Officer Team. Group Leaders, Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	App 1 - Draft Schedule of Meetings 2023/24.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Nicola Gittins – Team Leader – Committee Services Telephone: 01352 702345 E-mail: nicola.gittins@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	None.

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SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2023/24

<u>DAY / DATE</u>	<u>10.00AM</u>	<u>2.00PM</u>
Monday 28 August 2023	Bank Holiday	
Tuesday 29 August 2023		
Wednesday 30 August 2023	Clwyd Pension Fund Committee (9.30am)	Planning (1pm)
Thursday 31 August 2023		
Friday 1 September 2023		
Monday 4 September 2023		Standards (6pm)
Tuesday 5 September 2023	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 6 September 2023	Climate Change Committee	
Thursday 7 September 2023		Social & Health Care OSC
Friday 8 September 2023		
Monday 11 September 2023		
Tuesday 12 September 2023	Environment & Economy OSC	
Wednesday 13 September 2023	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	
Thursday 14 September 2023	Corporate Resources OSC	Education, Youth & Culture OSC
Friday 15 September 2023	Planning Strategy Group	
Monday 18 September 2023	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>
Tuesday 19 September 2023	Cabinet	
Wednesday 20 September 2023		
Thursday 21 September 2023	School Budget Forum (9.30am)	Children's Services Forum (4.30pm)
Friday 22 September 2023	<i>North Wales Economic Ambition Board</i>	
Monday 25 September 2023		
Tuesday 26 September 2023		FCC (1pm)

Wednesday 27 September 2023	Governance and Audit Committee	Planning (1pm)
Thursday 28 September 2023		Constitution and Democratic Services
Friday 29 September 2023		
Monday 2 October 2023		Standards (Provisional 6pm)
Tuesday 3 October 2023	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 4 October 2023	Licensing Committee	
Thursday 5 October 2023		SACRE (4pm)
Friday 6 October 2023		
Monday 9 October 2023		
Tuesday 10 October 2023	Environment & Economy OSC	
Wednesday 11 October 2023	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	
Thursday 12 October 2023	Corporate Resources OSC	
Friday 13 October 2023		
Monday 16 October 2023	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>	
Tuesday 17 October 2023	Cabinet	
Wednesday 18 October 2023		
Thursday 19 October 2023		Education, Youth & Culture OSC
Friday 20 October 2023		
Monday 23 October 2023		
Tuesday 24 October 2023		FCC (Annual Performance Report) (1pm)
Wednesday 25 October 2023		Planning (1pm)
Thursday 26 October 2023		Social & Health Care OSC
Friday 27 October 2023	<i>North Wales Economic Ambition Board</i>	

Monday 30 October 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Tuesday 31 October 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Wednesday 1 November 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Thursday 2 November 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Friday 3 November 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Monday 6 November 2023		Standards (6pm)
Tuesday 7 November 2023	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 8 November 2023		Constitution & Democratic Services
Thursday 9 November 2023		Education Consultative Committee
Friday 10 November 2023	Planning Strategy Group	
Monday 13 November 2023		
Tuesday 14 November 2023	Environment & Economy OSC	
Wednesday 15 November 2023	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	
Thursday 16 November 2023	Corporate Resources OSC	Children's Services Forum (4.30pm)
Friday 17 November 2023		
Monday 20 November 2023		
Tuesday 21 November 2023	Cabinet	
Wednesday 22 November 2023	Governance and Audit Committee	Planning (1pm)
Thursday 23 November 2023	<i>(FCC Reserved)</i>	SACRE (4pm)
Friday 24 November 2023		
Monday 27 November 2023		
Tuesday 28 November 2023	Climate Change Committee	
Wednesday 29 November 2023	Clwyd Pension Fund Committee (9.30am)	
Thursday 30 November 2023		Education, Youth & Culture OSC

Friday 1 December 2023		
Monday 4 December 2023		Standards (Provisional 6pm)
Tuesday 5 December 2023	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 6 December 2023		FCC (1pm)
Thursday 7 December 2023		Social & Health Care OSC
Friday 8 December 2023		
Monday 11 December 2023		
Tuesday 12 December 2023	Environment & Economy OSC	
Wednesday 13 December 2023	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	Planning (1pm)
Thursday 14 December 2023	Corporate Resources OSC	
Friday 15 December 2023	<i>North Wales Economic Ambition Board</i>	
Monday 18 December 2023	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>
Tuesday 19 December 2023	Cabinet	
Wednesday 20 December 2023		
Thursday 21 December 2023		
Friday 22 December 2023		
Monday 25 December 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Bank Holiday	
Tuesday 26 December 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Bank Holiday	
Wednesday 27 December 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Thursday 28 December 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Friday 29 December 2023	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Monday 1 January 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Bank Holiday	
Tuesday 2 January 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Wednesday 3 January 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Informal Cabinet	

Thursday 4 January 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Friday 5 January 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Monday 8 January 2024		Standards (6pm)
Tuesday 9 January 2024	Environment & Economy OSC	
Wednesday 10 January 2024	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	Planning (1pm)
Thursday 11 January 2024	Corporate Resources OSC	
Friday 12 January 2024		
Monday 15 January 2024		
Tuesday 16 January 2024	Cabinet	
Wednesday 17 January 2024	Climate Change Committee	Children's Services Forum (4.30pm)
Thursday 18 January 2024	School Budget Forum (9.30am)	Social & Health Care OSC
Friday 19 January 2024		
Monday 22 January 2024	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>	
Tuesday 23 January 2024		FCC (1pm)
Wednesday 24 January 2024	Governance and Audit Committee	Constitution & Democratic Services
Thursday 25 January 2024		Planning Strategy Group
Friday 26 January 2024		
Monday 29 January 2024		
Tuesday 30 January 2024	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 31 January 2024		
Thursday 1 February 2024		Education, Youth & Culture OSC
Friday 2 February 2024		
Monday 5 February 2024		Standards (Provisional 6pm)
Tuesday 6 February 2024	Environment & Economy OSC	

Wednesday 7 February 2024	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	Planning (1pm) SACRE (4pm)
Thursday 8 February 2024	Corporate Resources OSC	
Friday 9 February 2024		
Monday 12 February 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Tuesday 13 February 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Wednesday 14 February 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Thursday 15 February 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Friday 16 February 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Monday 19 February 2024		
Tuesday 20 February 2024	Cabinet	FCC (Budget & Council Tax Setting) (1pm)
Wednesday 21 February 2024	Licensing Committee	Education Consultative Committee
Thursday 22 February 2024		
Friday 23 February 2024		
Monday 26 February 2024		
Tuesday 27 February 2024	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 28 February 2024	Clwyd Pension Fund Committee (9.30am)	
Thursday 29 February 2024		Social & Health Care OSC
Friday 1 March 2024	<i>(FCC Reserved)</i>	
Monday 4 March 2024		Standards (6pm)
Tuesday 5 March 2024	Environment & Economy OSC	
Wednesday 6 March 2024	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	Children's Services Forum (4.30pm)
Thursday 7 March 2024	Corporate Resources OSC	
Friday 8 March 2024		

Monday 11 March 2024		
Tuesday 12 March 2024	Cabinet	
Wednesday 13 March 2024		Planning (1pm)
Thursday 14 March 2024		Planning Strategy Group
Friday 15 March 2024		
Monday 18 March 2024	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>
Tuesday 19 March 2024	Climate Change Committee	
Wednesday 20 March 2024	Clwyd Pension Fund Committee (9.30am – 4.30pm)	Constitution & Democratic Services
Thursday 21 March 2024	School Budget Forum (9.30am)	Education, Youth & Culture OSC
Friday 22 March 2024		
Monday 25 March 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Tuesday 26 March 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Wednesday 27 March 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Thursday 28 March 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Friday 29 March 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Bank Holiday	
Monday 1 April 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Bank Holiday	
Tuesday 2 April 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Wednesday 3 April 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Thursday 4 April 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Friday 5 April 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Monday 8 April 2024		
Tuesday 9 April 2024		
Wednesday 10 April 2024	Governance and Audit Committee	Planning (1pm)

Thursday 11 April 2024		
Friday 12 April 2024		
Monday 15 April 2024	<i>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting</i>	
Tuesday 16 April 2024		<i>(FCC Reserved)</i>
Wednesday 17 April 2024		
Thursday 18 April 2024		
Friday 19 April 2024		
Monday 22 April 2024		
Tuesday 23 April 2024		
Wednesday 24 April 2024		
Thursday 25 April 2024		
Friday 26 April 2024		
Monday 29 April 2024	Bank Holiday	
Tuesday 30 April 2024		
Wednesday 1 May 2024		
Thursday 2 May 2024	Police and Crime Commissioner Election	
Friday 3 May 2024		
Monday 6 May 2024	Bank Holiday	
Tuesday 7 May 2024		<i>(FCC Reserved)</i>
Wednesday 8 May 2024		
Thursday 9 May 2024		
Friday 10 May 2024		
Monday 13 May 2024		
Tuesday 14 May 2024	FCC AGM – 11am	

Wednesday 15 May 2024		
Thursday 16 May 2024		
Friday 17 May 2024		
Monday 20 May 2024		
Tuesday 21 May 2024		
Wednesday 22 May 2024		
Thursday 23 May 2024		
Friday 24 May 2024		
Monday 27 May 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Bank Holiday	
Tuesday 28 May 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Wednesday 29 May 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Thursday 30 May 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Friday 31 May 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Monday 3 June 2024		Standards (6pm)
Tuesday 4 June 2024	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 5 June 2024		SACRE (4pm)
Thursday 6 June 2024		Social & Health Care OSC
Friday 7 June 2024		
Monday 10 June 2024		
Tuesday 11 June 2024	Environment & Economy OSC	Constitution & Democratic Services
Wednesday 12 June 2024	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	Children's Services Forum (4.30pm)
Thursday 13 June 2024	Corporate Resources OSC	
Friday 14 June 2024		

Monday 17 June 2024		
Tuesday 18 June 2024	Cabinet	
Wednesday 19 June 2024	Clwyd Pension Fund Committee (9.30am)	Planning (1pm)
Thursday 20 June 2024	School Budget Forum (9.30am)	Planning Strategy Group
Friday 21 June 2024		
Monday 24 June 2024		
Tuesday 25 June 2024	Climate Change Committee	
Wednesday 26 June 2024	Governance and Audit Committee	
Thursday 27 June 2024		Joint Education, Youth & Culture OSC and Social & Health Care OSC
Friday 28 June 2024		
Monday 1 July 2024		Standards (6pm provisional)
Tuesday 2 July 2024	Informal Cabinet	
Wednesday 3 July 2024		FCC (1pm)
Thursday 4 July 2024	Licensing Committee	
Friday 5 July 2024		
Monday 8 July 2024		
Tuesday 9 July 2024	Environment & Economy OSC	
Wednesday 10 July 2024	Community, Housing & Assets OSC	Education Consultative Committee Children's Services Forum (4.30pm)
Thursday 11 July 2024	Corporate Resources OSC	Education, Youth & Culture OSC
Friday 12 July 2024		
Monday 15 July 2024		

Tuesday 16 July 2024	Cabinet	
Wednesday 17 July 2024		Planning (1pm)
Thursday 18 July 2024	Social & Health Care OSC	
Friday 19 July 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Monday 22 July 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Tuesday 23 July 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	
Wednesday 24 July 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Governance and Audit Committee (Statement of Accounts)	
Thursday 25 July 2024		
Friday 26 July 2024 – 2 September 2024	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	

AUGUST RECESS

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Question from Councillor Andrew Parkhurst

Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in respect of Mold Memorial Gardens

Will the Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection please explain why he told Cabinet on 17.10.23 that Mold Town Council had requested that dogs be excluded from Mold Memorial Gardens, and why the Economy and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee (E&E OSC) was told the same thing on 12.9.23 when in fact Mold Town Council had asked that the PSPO be amended to state, "Dogs must be on a lead at all times", and in view of the incorrect information given both to the E&E OSC and to the Cabinet would he now agree that the decision to ban dogs from these Gardens should be reconsidered?

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