

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 15 MAY 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT: **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2014/15**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the content of the draft Improvement Plan 2014/15 and the “How achievement will be measured” document prior to final publication in June.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan. It is a statutory requirement for the County Council to adopt the Improvement Plan.

2.02 Improvement Objectives and an accompanying Improvement Plan were first set and adopted by the Council in 2011. For 2013/14 the Council thoroughly reviewed the priorities to streamline them and reset them with clearer outcome based aims. A revised set of eight priorities supported by a structure of sub-priorities was adopted.

2.03 The Plan presentation also changed providing detail for each of the priorities which were to have the most impact during the year. This has helped the organisation to concentrate on the outcomes where most immediate attention was needed.

2.04 The refresh also took into account the comments of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) on:-

- the opportunity to present a plan which would engage the wider public
- the adoption of a smaller set of ‘in-year’ priorities
- the further development of outcome based objectives which identify the impact for each priority
- the need to ensure that any revisions of the Plan are updated on the public website.

2.05 The WAO in its letter of September 2013 said that the presentation and content of the Improvement Plan (2013/14) “enables public

engagement with the Council priorities more effectively than in the past". It also commented positively that "The Plan is much shorter than before and now communicates clearly and succinctly how each of the Improvement Objectives relates to the Council's eight medium-term corporate priorities and to those of partners in the Local Service Board".

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 For 2014/15 a review of the current priorities and sub-priorities has been undertaken to set: -

- priorities that continue into 2014/15 for sustained attention;
- priorities that can now be removed as completion of a time-limited piece of work e.g. Single Status;
- priorities which could be merged e.g. School Improvement and School Modernisation; and
- emerging priorities for 2014/15 e.g. People Change and Development.

3.02 For each sub-priority which continues to be high profile for 2014/15 there has been a review based on: -

- the reasoning for the priority status;
- what we will do and how we will measure achievement; and
- the risks that will need to be managed.

3.03 The extract from the working draft Improvement Plan (Appendix A) is presented for member consultation by Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to adoption of the Improvement Plan in June. Any slight technical changes are to be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.

3.04 Appendix A contains the sub-priorities to be monitored and reviewed by Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the quarterly Improvement Plan monitoring process. A full draft version of the Improvement Plan is available for Members to view in the Members' Library.

3.05 Following Member consultation the Improvement Plan for 2014/15 will be presented to Cabinet and later the County Council for formal adoption in June. It will be accompanied by an appendix which details the specific measures and milestones on which achievement will be measured.

3.06 An extract of the supporting document "How achievement will be measured - supporting milestones and measures" is attached at Appendix B. This extract details the measures with targets and milestones with completion dates that will be reported as part of the quarterly Improvement Plan monitoring.

- 3.07 A further document is attached at Appendix C which gives benchmarking information (2012/13) for the national indicators which Flintshire has included in its Improvement Plan. This is attached for Members to compare Flintshire's historic performance with other Local Authorities in Wales. The national data for 2013/14 is not yet available.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 Members to consider the content of the draft Improvement Plan 2014/15 and the "How achievement will be measured" document prior to final publication in June.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan is aligned to resource these priorities.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 Poverty is a specific priority within the Improvement Plan 2014/15.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 Environment is a specific priority within the Improvement Plan 2014/15.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 Equalities will be taken into consideration through any policy changes determined by the Plan and its implementation.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 Any personnel implications will be considered through any relevant changes determined by the Plan and its implementation.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 Overview and Scrutiny Committees are being invited to review the priorities, and particularly the "How achievement will be measured" document.

- 10.02 Feedback on the Improvement Plan is invited to assist with both contributing on our priorities and further improvement in presentation and format. This feedback is encouraged from the public, workforce, our key partners and businesses.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Corporate Management Team and senior officers have contributed and helped shape the Improvement Plan 2014/15. In addition the Wales Audit Office has been informally consulted.

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Draft Improvement Plan Sub-priorities for Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix B – Extract of the supporting document “How achievement will be measured”.

Appendix C – Benchmarking data for 2012/13 for the national indicators included in Flintshire’s Improvement Plan.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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