

Year End Chief Officer Report

Report Author: Chief Officer – Planning and Environment

Report Date: April 2015

Report Period: 01 April 2014 to 31 March 2015

Introduction

The Chief Officer report is produced on a half yearly basis and provided to Cabinet Members for review and assurance focusing on the 'business as usual'. The reports are provided for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes. Chief Officer reports compliment the Improvement Plan monitoring reports.

Chief Officer reports are exception reports which summarise the key information Members should be aware of, including both good and poor performance. Emerging issues / operational risks are also detailed. The reports are split into three distinct sections: -

1. Performance Overview- this section is used to give an overview of the progress being made towards delivery of key plans for the services which include those Improvement Priorities which do not have an in year focus i.e. these are not reported within the quarterly Improvement Plan monitoring. It is also used to highlight good news and key issues (including operational risks) arising. In addition, summary progress is given for key projects and collaborative areas of work.

2. Internal and External Regulatory Reports - this section summarises regulatory work reported in the half year and its outcomes and intended actions arising from recommendations.

3. Corporate Reporting - this section summarises the performance in relation to corporate issues i.e. Sickness absence, Complaints

Plus supporting appendices: -

Appendix 1- Performance Indicators - summary table of the key performance indicators used to manage the services. In addition, any NSI and PAM (statutory PIs) reported by the services are included.

Appendix 2 - High level (red) operational risk detail - completed full risk templates for those risks currently assessed as high (red).

This is the first Chief Officer Year End Report following the development of the Planning and Environment portfolio in June 2015.

Section 1 - Performance Overview

This report covers the following functional areas:

- Planning Strategy
- Development Management
- Public Protection
- Environment and Countryside
- Minerals and Waste Planning
- Highways Development Control
- Rights of way
- Drainage and Flood Management
- Energy Unit

Areas of Positive Performance

Planning Strategy (comprising LDP team and Built Conservation)

- Maintained good progress on the LDP: Processing and publication of Candidate Sites Register; successful participation and engagement with Town and Community Councils (1:1 officer attendance at meetings); convened LDP Key Stakeholder Forum; Published 18 LDP topic papers, candidate sites assessment methodology, and SEA/Sa scoping report for consultation.
- Provided key advice to bidders in relation to submissions for the SHARP programme including attendance at dialogue sessions and comments on proposed site layouts.
- Co-ordinated planning input into the proposals and planning applications for the Flint Extra Care scheme (permission granted in March 2015) and the new Health Centre (application with the Council and aiming for May/June 2015 committee).
- Commissioned feasibility study into prospects for developing a Local Development Order for the Deeside Enterprise Zone.
- Have supported other areas of the Council in relation to Deeside Masterplan (as a part of the study group) and Northern Gateway strategic development site (as lead on the development team).
- Have maintained service quality and continuity in Built Conservation following departure of Jerry Spencer through EVR. Two professionally qualified team members supported by an information technician now provide this service. Have made important interventions on a number of Listed Buildings at risk.
- Input into the Council's response to the Welsh Government consultation on the National Transport Plan.
- Development of in-house evidence base and expertise in relation to development value and viability.
- Completed work on Supplementary Planning Guidance for approval to consult on and adopt.

Development Management

Performance against the P.I.s has been maintained during the second half of the year. This has been achieved through the willingness of officers to adapt and cover for colleagues and in reviewing existing procedures to improve efficiency and consolidate the ethos of the 'team'. Maintaining the level of public and customer service over this period has been challenging, but the staff have adapted to the changes required and to the more flexible approach and new roles and duties which have been asked of them.

This challenge has been heightened by the growing number of applications within the year; 623 applications received and 646 determined within this half, giving an annual total of 1299 received and 1256 determined. This compares to 1179 applications received and 1070 determined in year 2013/14, which itself was a significant increase on the preceding year's figures. This year on year increase partly reflects increased activity in the building industry, with a number of residential development sites now being active and partly the additional application procedure for dealing with non-material amendments following the grant of planning permission.

We are working towards the introduction of charges for pre-application advice, for confirming compliance with conditions and undertaking planning research and for managing Section 106 Obligations. This will involve a review of our current procedures with regard to advising the public and prospective developers, but by working closely with our customers on a more formal basis we can achieve better outcomes and reduce the number of incomplete and unsuccessful applications. This will bring additional responsibilities with regard to the consistency and robustness of the advice given and, again, new challenges with regard to the staff and other resources available.

From the Period 1 October 2014 to 31 March 2015 has been busy with a high level of complaints received by members of the Pollution Control Team. There were 176 New Complaint Service Requests received by the team between 1 October 2014 to 31 March 2015. One Noise Abatement Notice served in the period. This was for a dog barking nuisance at a property in Hawarden.

The Team are continuing to deal with a large number of Planning Consultations every month and have responded to 440 new consultations received between 1 October 2014 to 31 March 2015.

The Contaminated Land Officer has submitted a report on closed landfill sites for the Wales Audit Office

The first stage of a large scale investigation to assess the nature and extent of land contamination suspected to be present at the former landfill site at Etna in Buckley has been completed. Boreholes and monitoring wells have been installed and a programme of gas and groundwater monitoring will be carried out over the coming months.

Environmental Control

Officers within Environmental Health were successful in the multi-agency operation in March 2015 which saw the evacuation of 112 migrant workers from an unsafe property in Sealand and their successful rehousing / repatriation. An ongoing investigation into offences committed by the Landlord continues.

Trading Standards

The introduction of the North Wales Heads of Trading Standards (NWHOTS) Intelligence Operating Model (IOM) project has led to every officer across North Wales being trained on inputting intelligence onto a new intelligence system and this is informing the way that all of the TS teams prioritise their work. Locally, Team Leaders now meet bi monthly to analyse consumer complaints, identify problem traders and monitor any trade practices which cause concern. This method of working has been successful in allowing us to take timely enforcement action and offer advice to local businesses which might otherwise have caused considerable consumer detriment. Most businesses identified in this process have shown a marked improvement in trading behaviour following the intervention. The new approach is also allowing effective use of the provisions of The Enterprise Act to control trading behaviour.

There have also been a number of successful prosecutions including; the prosecution of local importer of unsafe E cigarettes, prosecution against a trader for possessing illicit tobacco and in late November we received over £8000 from Proceeds of Crime action against a man who had been selling counterfeit goods. This money was used to purchase a new up to date PACE Recorder, and over 4000 Doorstep Crime door stickers and has financed the intelligence system training referred to above for all trading standards staff and for two recent operations into car servicing and illicit tobacco.

A Survey undertaken and business advice to second hand clothes traders. (Cash for clothes) has also been a success.

Corporate Health & Safety

A key success has been the introduction of an “Agile Working Safely” campaign providing an Agile Health and Safety Standard, e-learning for Display Screen Equipment Users, e-learning for Your Responsibilities and Duties in Fire Safety and a Working from Home Self-Assessment to compliment the introduction of agile working across the Authority.

A further success is the realignment of the Corporate Health and Safety team which has been agreed by the Chief Officer Team to ensure effective service delivery based on need of the new Portfolio areas.

Environmental Health - Food Safety and Food Standards and Health & Safety Enforcement.

The Food Safety and Standards team ran two highly successful Food allergen workshop events for businesses to familiarise themselves with the new Food Labelling legislation introduced in December 2014. These were collaborative events between Flintshire, Wrexham and FSA Wales and over 250 food handlers received the benefit of this training. This was supplemented by presentations delivered by staff at the annual Food and Hospitality Conference held in October at Coleg Cambria which was attended by approximately 100 food businesses.

Food Hygiene Training in the medium of Turkish has also been provided as a successful project during the period under review. This was a FSA Wales-funded collaboration project between Flintshire and Wrexham.

High risk targets for inspections have been met in full and it is particularly pleasing to note that the % of food premises that are Broadly Compliant with relevant food hygiene legislation has increased from 86 % to 96% this year. Good progress also continues to be made to achieve full compliance with the Action Plan submitted to the FSA following their audit of the Food Service in October 2013.

In March 2015, the Food team also achieved a successful prosecution against a local Indian restaurant for selling food not of the substance demanded by the consumer and the false description of food on the menu. This was in relation to food being sold without declaring the presence of allergens, namely presence of peanuts, which can have fatal consequences to those people with peanut allergies. The FSA praised the Authority for taking the case.

The Health and Safety team also achieved a successful prosecution during the period under review against a local building supplies firm, in relation to an accident whereby a member of the public suffered amputation of his fingers when they were trapped in a brick grab. The company pleaded guilty and were heavily fined £10,500 with a £120 victim surcharge.

This team has also been active and successful in supporting the Council's strategy on promoting events by helping to write the Event small guide and participating in provision of a seminar for event organisers. They also produced a tattooing leaflet for young adults providing relevant health advice and took part and implemented the Tattooing registration project to ensure consistency across North Wales Authorities

Minerals and Waste (Shared Service for North Wales)

The Minerals and Waste Planning Service for North Wales commenced with Flintshire as the lead authority on 1st April 2011 and has now been operational for 4 years. The Service has been active in every partner authority area, including Powys and Snowdonia National Park. Wrexham Council withdrew from the service in 2014 for financial reasons. The contracts have been continued on an informal basis due to a combination of financial uncertainty, and reluctance to commit to longer term collaboration given other mergers or collaborations that may arise from the emergent Planning Bill and local government reorganisation. The service ended

the year with a small budget deficit, on account of the loss of income from Wrexham, the need to provide budget savings to the partner authorities, reduced income generating capacity due to staffing losses and increases in officer re-numeration. This should be reversed in 2015 because of an additional Welsh Government contract that will be entered into.

Operational activity within the minerals aggregates sector is improving, and activity in the waste sector remains buoyant, in particular biomass energy/energy from waste and the production of fuels from waste. Major planning applications for biomass/waste combined heat & power were submitted or approved at Warwick Chemicals, Mostyn, Potters Waste Management, Welshpool, and TATA steel in Deeside. An application for a 200ktpa local authority collected waste energy recovery facility "Parc Adfer" was submitted for a site in Deeside to serve 5 North Wales Local Councils. An application for 200 ktpa waste biomass combined heat and power and 100ktpa biomass pellet production on a site in Peboc in Anglesey was refused in line with officer recommendation and successfully defended by the service at a 2 week public Inquiry, leading to a ministerial decision to dismiss the appeal.

Interest in landfill remains strong, despite being the Government's least favoured option. Permission has been granted and implemented at for a major inert waste landfill and recycling project at Cambrian Quarry, Flintshire. The Parry's Quarry landfill in Alltami, won on appeal, has been implemented this year but is subject to ongoing legal challenges by a third party, and an integrated landfill and waste management project also at Alltami has been re-submitted despite having been previously refused on appeal.

The problem of some sites accepting waste and accumulating to unacceptable levels and fire risk remains. The former Laybond site in Saltney which had a planning application to manufacture biomass pellets is now the subject of ongoing planning enforcement investigation and prosecutions by Natural Resources Wales at the Crown Court. This site poses a significant fire risk. A similar operation which was proposed at the former Gelert Factory in Portmadog has been suspended due to fears of a similar outcome and to allow a planning application to be considered.

The Service has renewed a contract for the North Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party from the Welsh Government. The 2013 survey undertaken during 2014 shows a marginal improvement of sales of crushed rock, sand and gravel, which are the basic raw materials for the construction industry. The 2014 survey is expected to demonstrate an upturn.

The review of the Regional Technical Statement for aggregates, which is a collaborative working requirement of Minerals Technical Advice Note¹ provides guidance for the preparation of Local Development Plans has been completed and was endorsed by every council in North Wales. It has been translated into Welsh and informs the production and monitoring of local development plan policy making. This sets out the allocations that each local authority should be considering in their respective LDPs using 2010 as a baseline. Modest new provision will need to be made by some authorities, but with the exception of sand and gravel in Gwynedd, permitted reserves are not depleted to a critical level.

The Service has worked closely with the Welsh Government in relation to the monitoring of waste capacity for planning purposes which has arisen from the recently published Capacity, Infrastructure and Markets Sector Plan and Technical Guidance Note 21: Waste 2014. The service has sat on a steering group and was awarded a government contract to prepare an interim monitoring report for 2014 for North and Southeast Wales regions. The conclusion is that no new landfill capacity is required in either region, but new treatment and processing capacity is still required.

The Service has carried out chargeable monitoring and reporting visits to the majority of the key operational quarries and landfill sites across North Wales. The Service has provided ongoing support to Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd and Anglesey Planning Policy in preparation or monitoring of their respective Local Development Plans, including reviews of housing and employment allocations and candidate sites against minerals safeguarding areas.

The service continues to assist with queries and advice relating to the Aggregates Levy Fund for Wales (which is derived from a tax on aggregate production) for parties bidding for community-led projects across North Wales.

Quarry/landfill liaison meetings continue to be supported, but the reduction in staffing has put pressure on attendance where these are arranged by officers. Other liaison includes presentations given by officers to Community Council Forums, Community Councils and other local authorities, including unconventional gas and fracking.

Environment and Countryside

Grant aid programmes completed:

NRW - Core funding £48K; Wales Coast Path £50K; Halkyn Ranger £20K

Tidy Towns – Wepre Education £16K; Taliesin Nature Reserve £18K

RDP – Saltney £80K, Flints coast heritage £50K, Halkyn Heritage £15K

Lottery - Year 2 Wepre Park

Building Wildlife – Habitat improvements in Buckley £7,500

Continuing delivery of NRW's BWW and Sect.15 schemes –c£8K

The Wepre Park Visitor Centre extension has been started and is now nearing completion ready for a busy summer.

Secured funding from NRW (£37K) to create new habitat and replace the boardwalk along Wepre Brook

Three new coastal links have been developed in Shotton, Point of Ayr and Pen-y-Maes. Work has begun on developing a 'Wales's link' path to join up the Offa's Dyke National trail with the Wales Coast Path.

Celebration events were held in Saltney and Connah's Quay with sculpture and project unveiling. New leaflet launch for Llwyni Nature Reserve

Highways Development Control

Continual improvement in the quality of response and response times in relation to planning application consultations.

Exceeding performance indicators in the turnaround of highway related search enquiries.

Pursuing and bringing longstanding unadopted roadways to a standard suitable for adoption for inclusion as part of the Authorities network asset register.

Rights of Way

NRW Grant aid programme delivered in time and on budget:

- Drainage work to Bridleway 77, Cilcain
- Drainage work and clearance of FP 21, Holywell
- Improvements to circular walk (FP 60) in Treuddyn
- Surface improvements to various bridleways throughout County.

Other achievements

- Reopening of Church Walks (FP 58) Treuddyn and associated publicity following a landslide
- Successful closure of various footpaths in Connah's Quay obstructed by 1970s' housing development
- Inclusion of footpath in definitive map and statement at Hendre
- Completed reopening of last link of coastal path (FP 77) at Panton Cop after the Winter storms
- Modification of definitive map and statement at Mold Bypass so that OS maps are up to date
- Successful outcome of a Public Inquiry for an Order to realign FP in Gwespyr (FP 39)
- Launch of CAMS (Countryside Access Management System) web-based system to enable public to report PROW problems
- Publication of third Annual Report
- Award presented by British Horse Society to Rights of Way team to recognise their achievements in equestrian access work.

Drainage and Flood Management

Separation of the Flood and Drainage section from the wider Engineering Consultancy has now been completed. An Annual Action Plan to be prepared in Q1 of 2015/16 to set out key plans/deliverables for the service.

The team is presently collaborating with NRW, WWDC and neighbouring Lead Local Flood Authorities to better share resources across a number of work streams. e.g. project underway with the above bodies developing clearer guidance and processes with the Planning Department to provide consistent direction to developers on flood risk and drainage matters.

Energy Unit

Reported in Improvement Plan Priority Carbon Reduction

Areas of Concern

Planning Strategy

- Potential LDP timetable slippage and intervention by Welsh Government
- Implications of new TAN1 and speculative applications for housing development

Development Management

There remains a concern over maintaining efficient service delivery and improved performance through the adaptations outlined above (under 'Areas of Positive Performance'), particularly in light of the reduction in staff numbers and the new aspects of service delivery such as the charges for pre-application advice.

Within the next quarter the proposed changes identified in the previous Service Plan which include the introduction of area based DM teams, mobile working, a restructured Enforcement team and realigned Support Services, will be introduced.

These structural changes are to a large extent linked to the corporate Business Plan and the identified need for efficiencies. The rationalisation of the Council's accommodation and the relocation of the Planning Service from its existing office space will need to be carefully managed, as the difficulties with the Authority's external software provider and the knock on effect in relation to the Council's own ICT service result in us still having to rely on paper files. These difficulties are being addressed but in addition to this, further significant changes will be required to adapt our software systems to the capture and monitoring of the additional information required by Welsh Government's new range of performance indicators. Nevertheless officers have been equipped with the technology to allow them to work remotely and they are encouraged to spend at least a day a week out of the office (in a structured manner) as a precursor to full mobile working.

Building Control

Upturn in building trade and reduction in staffing numbers in Building Regulations potentially affecting Performance.

Trading Standards – Investigations, Compliance and Animal Health & Welfare

The main pressures have related to resource issues due to long term sickness absence of a couple of members of staff and uncertainty relating to a TSO post which has been a Temporary Fixed term contract extended on a 3 or 6 monthly basis for a long time. It is hoped to make this post a permanent post in the near future. A long running complex investigation is also impacting upon available resources within the teams.

An additional pressure relates to the fact that Cheshire West and Chester Trading Standards service no longer operate a Weighbridge Test Unit. Whilst NWHOTS are currently trying to make an alternative arrangement with another accredited provider, this is likely to cost more than the service previously provided by Cheshire.

A further significant pressure has been uncertainty relating to the continuation of funding from Welsh Government for Animal Health and Welfare work. Funding has been secured for a further 10 months until January 2016 but funding for this area of work remains a concern for the future.

The way in which funding for Animal Feed enforcement is given has changed with effect from 1st April 2015 whereby these monies are now allocated via the FSA whereas previously it was part of the RSG settlement. This may prove to be a pressure on the service over this forthcoming year depending on how well the proposed financing arrangements work out with the FSA.

Corporate Health & Safety

Loss of health and safety experience within the Corporate H&S team as a result of two members of staff leaving the Authority and only recent approval to recruit but in addition and more generally, loss of health and safety experience due to many experienced people leaving the Authority across all Portfolio areas. To overcome this, it is planned that Health and Safety will now be included as a consideration within the new appraisal system and these will be linked to the Corporate Health and Safety Training Matrix. Corporate Health and Safety and Corporate Training will be working together to raise the awareness of this.

Environmental Health - Food Safety and Food Standards and Health & Safety Enforcement

Resources need to be maintained in these service areas to cope with current and future legislative and consumer demands. In recognition of Flintshire's greater involvement in Event planning including many large, high profile events there is a need to streamline the process for setting up Safety Advisory Groups to ensure effective co-ordination with other areas of the Council and to make it easier for organisers to receive a holistic approach.

Environment and Countryside

Ash Dieback has crossed the 1000 site mark, nationally. However infected sites in Wales remains low.

NRW have confirmed intention to close the Talacre Beach car park within three years. Without an alternative for vehicles, it will have dire consequences for the community and businesses of Talacre and its ability to function as a tourist destination. Work is underway to re-visit the masterplan to seek an alternative.

Highways Development Control

The availability of staff resource to provide detailed highway consideration to the number of LDP candidate sites.

To secure the full advantages of agile and mobile working for the team.

To ensure the success of a move to an e consultation procedure to deal with planning application consultations.

To embrace the changes in standards and guidance for new highway design eg Active Travel Wales Bill.

Rights of Way

Ease of use of web-enabled CAMS. To be resolved by the contractor

Continued support of the Legal Department via a dedicated Rights of Way Legal Officer

Future of a dedicated source of grant aid for Rights of Way Improvement Plane (ROWIP) work from NRW

Potential for increase in irrelevant objections to statutory orders (particularly modification orders) Amount of resources to manage the network at a time of budgetary cuts.

Drainage and Flood Management

Grant Funding: Welsh Government's 'Revenue Support Grant' for Flood Risk Management will now be incorporated into a wider Environment and Sustainable Development grant from 2015/16. This may potentially result less available team funding than the £100k p/a received in previous years.

New Team structure and workload priorities remain to be determined to ensure delivery of core and statutory duties given the reduction in available staff and potentially financial resources.

Changes to the '1975 Reservoir Act' expected to be implemented in Wales in 2015. Potential impacts for the Council's legal duties as a reservoir undertaker to carry out improvement works on the system at Greenfield Valley (beyond those at Flour Mill already planned)

Energy Unit

Due to British Gas introducing a new billing system to all of its customers Flintshire

have been unable to pay any British Gas electricity bill since September 2014. Despite their best efforts there is currently no timeline when the billing problems, which for Flintshire C.C. are related to the electronic data interchange system and how it is configured, will be addressed.

Advice to all service users to make an accrual based on last year's electricity energy costs plus a 4% margin has been given.

Fortunately, as we moved into the new financial year our contract with British Gas was terminated so although we still have to resolve last year's billing issues and payments, it will not affect the current year (2015/16).

Improvement Plan (none in year priorities)

Planning Strategy

Delivery of LDP

Key Projects

Planning Strategy

- Local Development Plan (statutory requirement)
- Local Heritage Strategy (good practice)

Environment and Countryside

Flintshire Coast Park Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet and an application is currently being put together for Coastal Communities funding (£300K) to deliver schemes within the coast park.

Rights of Way

- Regular meetings with the Ramblers, the British Horse Society and the British Driving Society
- Good working relationship with NRW, in particular over grant provision
- Regular meetings with Rights of Way staff in Wales' other local authorities and National Parks
- Regular attendance at Local Access Forum meetings
- Close liaison with landowners to resolve rights of way problems
- Collaboration with Countryside Service over the Coastal path and co-ordination of work programmes

Highways Development Control

Support and input into major projects:

- Northern Gateway
- Crematoria applications
- Flint Extra Care Facility and Flint Health Centre
- SHARP Housing Programme
- New retail developments Aldi Broughton & Buckley
- Energy Recovery Facility, Deeside Industrial Park

Drainage

Mold Flood Alleviation Scheme – Design & Development. (Planning July 2015)
Flour Mill Reservoir – Safety Improvements. (Final design due by June 2015)
Flood Risk Management Plans (Due for completion by Dec 2015)

Collaboration / Partnership Working

Development Management

Following the publication of the Williams report a series of WG led meetings were held to identify those areas where progress on collaborative working could be made between Flintshire and Wrexham's Planning Services.

The support for this work at officer level has however been frustrated by Wrexham's lack of an appetite from a political perspective and there is likely now to be a new direction for collaboration dictated by Welsh Government

Public Protection

The Permitting Officer is working with the North Wales Pollution Group on a collaboration project looking at feasibility of providing a regional response to Permitting industrial processes.

Environment and Countryside

Tree Officer is continuing to undertake work for Denbighshire, and working on the Welsh Government's Task and Finish Group advising on better protection for veteran trees.

The ARC partnership and shared Officer is continuing with key projects:

- The re-introduction of sand lizards to Gronant and Talacre dunes SSSI
- Working with NEWW to deliver Great Crested Newt licensing course and Basic amphibian course.

Completed comprehensive pond assessment and compiled a report and work programme on great crested newt breeding ponds.

Brookhill - obtained funding via the section 15 agreement with NRW to positively manage this site which we consider an exemplar great crested newt site. The positive management has also benefited other species such as water vole and grass snakes.

Rivers Trust and Coed Cymru have been trialling a new project within the Nature Fund which highlights issues pertaining to soil and water management within the farming community.

Cemex have provided further funding to support the Halkyn Ranger over the next three years.

Strong partnerships with ENi, Presthaven Sands, Kimberly Clarke, Airbus, Kingspan have been maintained along the Dee Estuary and support the Countryside Service.

Tata and Countryside Service have established a new partnership to deliver coastal education using their Tern Centre at Shotton Site.

Inter departmental advice and licensing by environment team to ensure compliance:

Obtained NRW licence for Standard landfill; amphibian exclusion fencing now erected and trapping initiated on the area where waste will be re-profiled.

Cofnod commissioned to review LDP sites and Settlements for ecological constraints.

Site visit to Pen y Bont with Rural Crimes Team - due to a received bat complaint, which resulted in being filmed as part of BBC Wales's documentary on the Rural Crimes Team.

Drainage

Coastal flood defence survey commenced in Feb 2015. Project is led by NRW but covers Council owned and other private structures. Survey data to be made available to NRW/Council in late summer 2015.

Summary of Operational Risks (from the above sections)

Risk Type	Risk Ref. and Description	Net Risk Score	Risk Trend	Target Risk Score & Date	Status Open / Closed
Operational	Delivery of LDP	A	↔	A	Open
Operational / Collaboration	Legislative Changes	G	↓	G	Closed
Operational	Capacity of service to deliver changes required by Heritage Bill	A	↔	A	Open
Operational	Vacant affordable housing officer post	A	↔	G 15/16	Open
Operational	Maintaining performance in face of reduced staffing levels	A	↔	A	Open
Operational	Management of development of new IT systems to support service delivery	A	↑	A 15/16	Open
Operational	Upturn in building trade and downturn in staffing in Building Control affecting service delivery and performance (Downturn in performance for KPI's during Q1 and Q2)	A	↑	A 15/16	Open
Operational	Vacancy of Corporate H&S advisor since May 2014, coupled with loss of Asst H&S advisor in September 2014 due to officer leaving the Authority. Impact on service delivery and support for new Portfolio areas.	A	↓	G May 2015	Closed

Section 2 - Internal and External Regulatory Reports

Report: *EN0080U1 Internal Audit Pest Control Service*

Date Finalised: *October 2014*

Conclusion: *Some Assurance*

Recommendations: *0x High, 5 x medium , 5 x low*

Summary

Taking account of the issues identified, whilst Management can take some assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this area are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective, action needs to be taken to ensure risks in this area are managed.

Report: *Report on the Food and Feed Law Enforcement Service*

Flintshire County Council 28 October – 1 November 2013

Date Finalised: *September 2014 (published on FSA website)*

Conclusion: *Some assurance*

Recommendations: *6 x Strengths and 4 x Key areas of improvement*

Summary

The report was generally favourable of the work undertaken in the Food Service as illustrated by the number of Strengths identified in the audit and management can take reassurance from this finding. A key area for improvement related to Feed control and an Action Plan, which is currently being implemented has been developed to address these concerns.

Section 3 - Corporate Reporting

Complaints Handling (Source: Corporate Complaints Database)

In Q3 69.57 % of complaints were responded to in 10 working days and 82.61% in Q4. The Portfolio has significantly improved performance in each quarter of the year but is also keen to ensure the quality of responses is not compromised by providing a reply within the target time that would be unsatisfactory or fail to address the complaint.

Employee Appraisals (Source: I-Trent)

63 employees have entered their details on I- Trent

Data Protection Training (Source: I-Trent)

138 officers were identified as requiring mandatory DP Training and 93 % have now completed.

Equality and Welsh Language

List the Equalities and Welsh Language Impact Assessments: -

(1) Started/Work in Progress

(2) Completed (stating date completed)

during the period (1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015)

None

List the work areas / functions where diversity of customers are monitored.

Reception visitors

Planning applicants/agents

Describe any initiatives to increase the percentage of equality monitoring data held for customers.

Six monthly surveys of applicants and agents undertaken by planning.

Provide examples of initiatives to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and promote good community relations.

Consultation with stakeholder groups

Publication of information on website to increase accessibility

Diversity and equality training needs identified within appraisal process

Strategic planning and operational activity of Community Safety Partnership

Percentage of employees who have completed the Welsh Language Skills Audit (Source: I-Trent)

93 employees have entered their information into I-Trent

Describe any initiatives undertaken to ensure the provision of bilingual services.

Instructions to officers on bilingual greetings, bilingual signatures, use of language line, translation.

Describe any initiatives undertaken to increase the use of the Welsh Language

Welsh language scheme requirements embedded into Service Planning

Appendix 1 - Performance Indicators

Key

R	Target significantly missed or likely to be missed by a significant margin
A	Target missed or likely to be missed but within an acceptable level
G	Target achieved / exceeded or on track to be achieved / exceeded

The RAG status of the indicators for the **year end position** are summarised as follows: -

R	A	2	G	3
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Note 1 – NSI = National Statutory Indicator PAM = Public Accountability Measure

Note 2 – Change (Improved / Downturned) is based on comparison with the previous reporting period. Where it is more appropriate to compare performance with the same period in the previous year this should be stated in the commentary.

Indicator	NSI / PAM (Note 1)	Annual Outturn 2013/14	Annual Target 2014/15	Year End Outturn 2014/15	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
PLA/004b: The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks	Local	62.05%	66%	71%	G	Improved	
PLA/004c: The percentage of householder applications determined within 8 weeks	Local	92.46%	91%	95%	G	Improved	
PLA/003: The percentage of Planning Appeals determined during quarter which uphold the Authority's	Local	73.53%	66%	55%	A	Downturned	The low denominator (30 appeal decisions) means that performance against this indicator is always going to be

Indicator	NSI / PAM (Note 1)	Annual Outturn 2013/14	Annual Target 2014/15	Year End Outturn 2014/15	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
decision							volatile and vulnerable to influences outside our direct control. We continue to analyse appeal decisions through Planning Strategy Group, concentrating on those which follow a decision against officer recommendation. There has, during the year been a further training/workshop session with the Head of the Planning Inspectorate
PLA/005: The percentage of Enforcement cases resolved within 12 weeks	Local	77.85%	73%	70%	A	Downturned	The downturn in figures reflects the initiative to close long standing cases, reducing these from over 400 to 214 at the end of the year. Once back on an even keel the performance should recover but this will be closely monitored within each quarter
PLA 006b: The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all additional	NSI	37	Not Set	39	N/A	Improved	

Indicator	NSI / PAM (Note 1)	Annual Outturn 2013/14	Annual Target 2014/15	Year End Outturn 2014/15	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
housing units provided during the year.							
PPN 009: The percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with Food Hygiene standards	PAM	85.7%	80%	95.6%	G	Improved	