

Improvement Plan

2012-2017





Improvement Plan

- » A statutory plan published annually
- » Flintshire re-adopts its Plan in June each year
- » The Plan title is a misnomer
- » With a review of the Local Government Measure underway a retitling is suggested for next year
- » This is the fourth year of the new and simplified format
- » The Plan is one of a set of corporate plans including the Medium Term Financial Strategy



How the Plan is put together

- » Continuity of work from the previous Plan
- » Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny priorities
- » Priorities of partners and partnerships
- » Local community needs, expectations and demands
- » National policy and legislation



Choosing in-year priorities

- » Statement of in-year priority work for the whole Council
- » A standing set of eight priorities across the years with in-year sub-priorities set annually
- » The Plan is by necessity selective
- » The remaining priorities of the Council not included within the Plan are still important and are treated as 'business as usual'

Priorities for the 2016/17 Improvement Plan





New content: national issues

- » National issues which may impact upon achievement of the priorities
 - » **New legislation**
 - Social Services and Wellbeing Act; Living wage
 - » **Funding streams and grants**
 - Major Repairs Allowance; European Social Fund Programmes
 - » **Demography**
 - Aging population
 - » **Government Funding Caps**
 - Social rents
 - » **Bureaucracy**
 - Simplification of processes
- » Inter-linked to the Medium Term Financial Strategy



Member consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with Members through Group Leaders and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

1. Are the priorities the 'best fit'?
2. Have we excluded any priorities which are critical?
3. Are the outcomes the right ones?
4. Do the performance measures fit the outcomes?
5. Are the risks ones you recognise?



Benefits of planning

- » clearer guide for the organisation
- » clearer performance framework
- » greater impact in delivery against commitments
- » better integration with financial planning
- » meeting the critique of key regulators and ongoing positive endorsement from Wales Audit Office



This year's 2016/17 Improvement Plan

- 8 continuous improvement priorities
- 14 sub-priorities
- Our in-year priorities:
 - continue for sustained attention e.g. – Education; Housing
 - have been merged e.g. – Poverty (Fuel Poverty and Maximising Income)
 - are more strategic e.g. – Business Sector Growth and Regeneration or
 - are emerging e.g. – Dementia

Priority: Housing



Sub Priority

Appropriate & Affordable Homes

Impact

Improving the choice and quality of local housing

What we will do in 2016/17:

1) Deliver a proactive Housing Solutions service to prevent homelessness for as many households as possible.

Achievement will be measured through:

- o Number of housing enquiries resolved at first point of contact
- o Maintaining the percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months

2. Stimulate the growth of affordable housing.

Achievement will be measured through:

- o Increasing the numbers of new Council and affordable homes through the SHARP programme
- o Maximising the number of new affordable homes provided through the planning system
- o Increase the numbers of affordable homes provided through the Social Housing Grant (SHG) programme (includes Extra Care provision)



This is a priority this year because we need to:

- Prevent homelessness.
- Meet the diverse housing and accommodation needs of the local population.
- Develop more opportunities for people to access affordable rent and low cost home ownership.

National Policy Issues:

- Capping of social rents to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels.
- Local Authorities to be able to access grant funding to support new build affordable and social housing.
- Sufficiency of resourcing to fulfil the new duties of the Wales Housing Act.

Risks to manage

- Homelessness will remain a growing area of demand due to the current economic climate.
- The supply of affordable housing will continue to be insufficient to meet community need.

What we mean by:

SHARP - Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme - programme to build 500 new homes over the next five years

Social Housing Grant (SHG) - funds housing schemes that meet local needs and priorities as identified by local authorities including providing housing for rent or low cost home ownership through new build or the use of existing buildings.

Priority: Economy and Enterprise



Sub Priority

Business Sector Growth & Regeneration

Impact

Growing the economy and creating jobs

What we will do in 2016/17

- 1. Strategic / Regional positioning in readiness for future accelerated growth.**
Achievement will be measured through:
 - o Contributing to the development and delivery of a clear cross border economic growth strategy for Flintshire
 - o Success in gaining approval and/or funding for programmes which will support economic growth
- 2. Maximise the economic value of transformation projects.**
Achievement will be measured through:
 - o Monitoring and supporting the implementation of the transformation projects
 - o Supporting supply chain development
 - o Converting business enquiries to investment within Flintshire
- 3. Facilitate the creation of jobs.**
Achievement will be measured through:
 - o Creating jobs within Flintshire
 - o Creating jobs within Flintshire through our large scale capital programmes (MHQS and SHARP)
- 4. Strengthen the economic benefits of town centres and the visitor economy.**
Achievement will be measured through:
 - o Supporting the development and management of visitor facilities in key urban areas and along the Dee coastline.
 - o Facilitating private sector investment in town centres.
 - o Expanding the North East Wales Ambassadors programme in Flintshire.

What we mean by:

Gross Value Added (GVA) - Measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector.

Northern Powerhouse - A collaboration concerned with redressing the North-South economic imbalance, aiming to attract investment into northern cities and towns.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) - Welsh Government's physical quality standard for modern social housing.

Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP) - Programme to build 500 new homes over the next five years.

North East Wales Ambassadors programme - a network committed to encouraging visitors to the region, projecting a positive image and generating more business for local suppliers.

Local Enterprise Partnership - Voluntary partnership between local communities and businesses to help determine local economic priorities, growth and job creation.

This is a priority this year because we need to:

- Grow the local and regional economy, with a target to increase Flintshire's Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK average (currently 66%) by 2030.
- Secure the infrastructure investment needed to facilitate growth both regionally and locally.
- Build upon the success of the advanced manufacturing sector in Flintshire and facilitate business innovation, adaptability and supply chain development.
- Protect the economic viability of our town centres and rural areas.
- Work collaboratively to achieve key priorities for major infrastructure projects which will support economic growth objectives.

National Policy Issues:

- Recognition that Flintshire is part of the Northern Powerhouse and a key player in the delivery of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth deal for the Mersey Dee area and for North Wales.
- Devolution of powers to support economic growth in North Wales (opportunity and possible threat if powers are insufficient and do not match those in England).
- Infrastructure investment to create the platform for advancing economic growth.
- Change from national to local control of business rates.

Risks to manage

- The Northern Powerhouse and LEP could pose risks to the growth of the Flintshire economy if there is not devolution of powers and freedoms to match those being developed in England.
- Infrastructure investment does not keep pace with needs and business is lost to the economy.
- Support for businesses in Flintshire doesn't meet their needs and fails to encourage investment.
- Devolved powers in Wales do not match those in England.

Priority: Environment



Sub Priority
Sustainable Development &
Environmental Management

Impact
Protecting our local environment

What we will do in 2016/17

1. Establish an Environment working Group to ensure that the Council adopts an integrated approach to service delivery which meets the aims and objectives of the Single Environment Grant (SEG):

Achievement will be measured through:

- o Gaining approval to the grant submission
- o Establishing a Single Environment Group
- o Monitoring progress and obtaining the equivalent grant funding

2. Agree the Local Development Plan's vision and objectives, and options to accommodate growth.

Achievement will be measured through:

- o Undertaking a renewable energy assessment for the LDP in partnership with Wrexham Council which will inform the pre-deposit and later deposit plan
- o Agree a revised timetable and delivery agreement with Welsh Government leading to the pre-deposit plan
- o Publishing the pre-deposit plan
- o Completing the public consultation on the pre-deposit plan

3. Reducing our Carbon footprint.

Achievement will be measured through:

- o Creating two solar farms on Flintshire County Council land
- o Install an electricity link between Brook Hill Landfill site and Altam Depot or agree a virtual private network with Scottish Power to fully utilise the energy generated and reduce costs
- o Creating a waste transfer station in Greenfield
- o Improving recycling performance
- o Reducing our carbon emissions

4. Reviewing the Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Achievement will be measured through:

- o Completing Flintshire's Local Flood Risk Management Plans
- o Developing a list of priority flood alleviation schemes based on transparent criteria

5. Reducing the occurrence and impact of environmental crime.

Achievement will be measured through:

- o Identification of environmental crime hotspots from local intelligence and service requests
- o Targeted enforcement campaigns in hotspot areas

This is a priority this year because we need to:

- Address the requirements of the sustainable development principles of the Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act and Environment Bill.
- Balance the need for sustainable development with the protection of the natural environment.
- Continue to reduce our carbon emissions to meet Welsh Government targets and play our part in helping to address the consequences of climate change.

National Policy Issues:

- Reduction of the Single Environment Grant whilst delivering the priority area of natural resource management.
- Reliance on external funding for large scale developments.
- Government cap on financial support for solar farms.
- Capacity and funding to address food risks.

Risks to manage

- Reduction of the Single Environment Grant.
- Recycling programmes are not supported by the public and employees.
- Limitations on suitable Council sites with sufficient area for larger scale renewables schemes and suitable connections to the electric grid.
- Funding will not be secured for priority flood alleviation schemes.
- Customer expectations around the delivery of flood alleviation schemes are not effectively managed.
- Environmental crime programmes are not supported by the public and employees.

What we mean by:

Single Environment Grant - a WG grant to support integrated delivery of natural resource management, waste & resource efficiency and local environmental quality.

Renewable energy schemes - schemes designed to use energy from a source that is naturally replenished e.g. sunlight

Carbon reduction commitment - a mandatory scheme aimed at improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions in large public sector and private organisations.

Energy Generation - generation of heat and electricity.

Waste Transfer Station - facility to bulk and bale waste for onward transportation.

Environmental Crime - e.g. dog fouling, littering and fly tipping.



Priority: Modern & Efficient Council



Sub Priority
Developing Communities

Impact
Supporting communities to become more resilient

What we will do in 2016/17

- Develop the community and social sectors through developing and growing social enterprises in Flintshire, in turn supporting and creating new forms of local business. **Achievement will be measured through:**
 - Monitoring the number of new social enterprises developed
 - Monitoring the number of social enterprises supported to thrive and prosper
 - Monitoring community benefits delivered by new social enterprises
- Encourage volunteers and active citizens. **Achievement will be measured through:**
 - Monitoring the impact of the local volunteering policy
- Ensure community benefit through our commissioning of goods and services. **Achievement will be measured through:**
 - Establishing a Community Benefits Board with an action plan
 - Monitoring the percentage of community benefit clauses included in new procurement contracts
- Design and implement alternative delivery models (ADMs) to sustain important services to meet future need. **Achievement will be measured through:**
 - Monitoring the level of efficiencies ADMs have supported
 - Monitoring the number of services sustained through delivery via alternative models
- Empower communities to run and manage facilities in their locality through Community Asset Transfers (CATs). **Achievement will be measured through:**
 - Monitoring the number of public assets safely transferred to the community
 - Monitoring community benefits delivered by Community Asset Transfers
- Ensure our Armed Forces Community and their families are not disadvantaged when accessing Council Services. **Achievement will be measured through:**
 - Monitoring the achievements of the Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan

National Policy Issues:

- Lack of support programmes for the development of alternative delivery models.
- Role of Town and Community Councils in cooperative working and local governance as detailed in the Local Government Bill 2015.
- Strengthening of the social sector to be more commercial and less reliant on grant funding.

This is a priority this year because we need to:

- Build on what has been completed in year one (2015/16) with support for local communities. In year two this will be concentrated on:
 - Developing the community and social sectors to support local communities to be more self-sufficient.
 - Creating alternative delivery models within the community and social sector to sustain valued public services.
 - Developing social enterprises, who are able to act for the benefit of local communities and create both employment and economic opportunities.
 - Realising social benefits in the community e.g. increasing volunteering and training opportunities for young people; keeping local money in the community.
 - Ensuring our Armed Forces Community and their families are recognised for their commitment.

Risks to manage

- The capacity and appetite of the community and social sectors.
- The willingness of the workforce and Trade Unions to embrace change.
- Market conditions which the new alternative delivery models face.
- Limitations on public funding to subsidise alternative models.
- Procurement regulations stifling our ability to develop local community and third sector markets.
- Newly established Social Enterprises fail in their early stages of development.
- Newly established Community Asset Transfers fail in their early stages of development.

What we mean by:

Social Enterprise - businesses with primarily social objectives whose surplus are mainly reinvested for that purpose in the business or community

Community Benefit Clauses - benefits to local communities from major procurements e.g. training and employment opportunities, community facilities

Alternative Delivery Models (ADMs) - new approaches to service delivery designed to sustain important services and meet future need.

Community Asset Transfers (CAT) - the licensed transfer of a Flintshire County Council asset to an organisation with a social purpose who plans to use it for the benefit of the local community.



2016/17 Improvement Plan

- » Supporting document 'How we measure achievement' outlines our measures of success in detail – for quarterly monitoring and progress checking:-
 - » key milestones for achievement
 - » 2016/17 targets for achievement

- » Used by Overview and Scrutiny Committees to monitor and check against progress
- » Used by Audit Committee to monitor strategic risks



Using the Plan

- » The Plan has successfully driven big change and performance improvements
- » The Plan is aligned to budget planning and the best use of our available resources including capacity
- » How we are performing against the Plan is reported quarterly to Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- » We report retrospectively through the Annual Performance Plan



Positive Feedback

» 2015 Corporate Assessment (WAO) stated:

“has established a wide-ranging set of clearly-stated priorities that have a broad base of support within the Council and among partners”

“Though wide-ranging, the Council’s vision demonstrates a clear commitment to continuous improvement, reflected by targets for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of its services”

“The Council has worked hard to improve the quality of this key plan and the Improvement Plan for 2014-15 is a clear and accessible document that sets out far more clearly than before what the Council plans to do and how its success might be measured and evaluated.”



Next Steps

- » Continue to share the plan and gather support and feedback
- » On-going engagement with the public and partners
- » Ongoing review and updating
- » Concentrate organisational attention on delivery and success
- » Working alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy

